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**The address of the League's Secretary-
General at the first Arab Cybersecurity
Ministers Council in Riyadh
23 December 2024**



Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege to join you today on this significant and exceptional occasion to partake in the inaugural session of the Arab Cybersecurity Ministers Council. I take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the pioneer behind the establishment of this vital council at such a critical and pivotal juncture. The world today faces numerous challenges and threats in the realm of cybersecurity, particularly as the drive to accelerate digital transformation across all sectors intensifies.

I am confident that this new council will serve as a foundational platform, reinforcing Arab efforts in the domains of information security and cybersecurity. It is my hope that it will become a valuable addition to the framework of joint Arab action, reflecting our collective commitment to proactively engage with the tools of the modern age and to adapt to the rapid advancements in technology. Notably, the recent revolutionary strides in artificial intelligence over the past two years underscore the urgency of such endeavours.

Your Excellencies,

The League of Arab States has long recognised the gravity of the challenges and threats stemming from the failure to keep pace with advancements in modern technologies. This awareness has driven the League to prioritise these issues, with cybersecurity receiving particular attention. Through its specialised ministerial councils and affiliated agencies, including the Arab Council of Ministers of Communications and Information, the League has consistently undertaken the responsibility of addressing cybersecurity concerns in various regional and international arenas.



I trust that this Council, along with its technical secretariat, will draw upon the wealth of ideas and decisions emanating from these agencies and councils to lay the groundwork for a unified Arab framework. Such a framework is essential to combating cybercrime and safeguarding Arab cyberspace, ensuring it remains resilient in the face of evolving threats.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I must take a moment to highlight some of the significant efforts that have paved the way for this council's work. Among these are the Arab Communications and Information Strategy (Digital Agenda 2023–2030), adopted at the Riyadh Summit in 2023, and the Arab Cybersecurity Strategy, meticulously prepared by the Arab Information and Communications Technology Organisation in implementation of the Beirut Economic and Development Summit's 2019 resolution. This strategy was referred to your Council following the decision of the Arab Council of Ministers for Communications and Information.

In this regard, I urge your Council to continue building upon these milestones by initiating coordinated efforts with the Council of Arab Ministers for Communications and Information to implement the Arab Cybersecurity Strategy. This will be a decisive step towards establishing a robust and secure Arab cyberspace. Furthermore, I encourage collaboration with the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers for Communications and Information, as well as with its technical teams, to unify Arab positions in international forums addressing cybersecurity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Several Arab nations have achieved remarkable progress in the realm of cybersecurity, making significant strides in enhancing



their infrastructure and establishing comprehensive systems and regulations. These efforts are reflected in the commendable rankings of Arab countries in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) issued by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in its latest 2024 report. Notably, eight Arab countries ranked in the top category, four in the third, six in the fourth, and one in the fifth.

However, despite these encouraging indicators, the Arab region continues to confront formidable challenges. Cyberattacks are evolving at an unprecedented pace, with their frequency and sophistication intensifying over the past two years due to geopolitical and security instability in various parts of the world, including the Arab region. Addressing this high-risk security landscape necessitates substantial investment in cybersecurity and placing it at the forefront of the priorities of Arab governments, industrial institutions, and businesses of all scales.

In conclusion, cybersecurity remains one of the most pressing challenges of our time, profoundly impacting both comprehensive security and the sustainability of economic growth. Joint and collective Arab action offers the most effective means of building a unified and resilient Arab system, enabling us to confront these critical challenges together. I am confident that the Arab Cybersecurity Ministerial Council will serve as a valuable addition to the Arab national security framework.

Once again, I extend my deepest gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its visionary initiative and gracious hospitality. I wish the Council every success in its endeavours.

May the peace, mercy, and blessings of God be upon you.