



NEWS RELEASE

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WACREN-OCF sign MoU to develop CSIRT community in West and Central African region

Accra, Ghana – The West and Central Africa Research and Education Network (WACREN) and the Open CSIRT Foundation (OCF) have signed a three-year cooperation agreement to build and strengthen computer security in the research and education network (REN) space in the West and Central African region.

The two parties have agreed to work closely and constructively together on increasing the maturity of the Computer Security and Incident Response Team (CSIRT) community of WACREN and Africa.

To execute this, WACREN and OCF will co-create a TrustBroker service for CSIRTs in the WACREN region and provide essential capacity building for teams in the region during the tenure of the Agreement (2021 – 2023). Key areas under the training programme include TRANSITS I, CSIRT maturity, measurements, and improvements. The parties, as they find relevant, can add other topics to the training schedule.

Signing on behalf of WACREN, the CEO – Dr Boubakar Barry, expressed hope that the cooperation under the Agreement would help to establish a formidable CSIRT ecosystem in the region.

“We have been promoting and building cyber teams in our NRENs and campuses through the Africa Training Initiative as it is central to our cybersecurity strategy. As more countries join our expanding research network, providing the cooperation platform and service infrastructure these teams need to safeguard the security of our REN communities and the Internet in the region is a critical next step.” Dr Barry said.

For his part, the Chairman of Open CSIRT Foundation – Don Stikvoort MSc, said the cooperation between the two parties would bring concrete outcomes for the benefit of the user community within the WACREN region and beyond.

“With the coronavirus crisis, it has also become more apparent than ever how essential it is to have good cooperation on the handling of cyber security threats and incidents, and well educated and motivated people working in this field, in all countries and regions on the planet. Traditionally, ever since the beginning of the

Internet, it has always been the REN communities who have played important pioneering roles in this area. I am very happy to see the same happening with WACREN,” Mr. Stikvoort said.

Under the terms of the Agreement, WACREN will handle the organisation and administration of the capacity building events, while OCF provides trainers and resources.

Regarding the TrustBroker service which enables the cooperation framework, OCF will share concepts and software for WACREN to exploit and implement as part of its service portfolio from Q1 2021.

About the parties

WACREN is a not-for-profit organisation registered in Ghana to pioneer efforts to get National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in West and Central Africa to enhance research, education, innovation through technology. See: www.wacren.net

OCF's goal is to stimulate the state-of-the-art in Internet security and resilience worldwide, in order to contribute to democracy as well as personal freedom. To achieve this goal, the Foundation stimulates and facilitates relevant services, research, trainings, education, standardisation, best practices and any other associated activities. See: <https://www.opencsirt.org>

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