Internet Society Highlights Rapid Internet Growth in Asia-Pacific; Points to Growing Online Security Challenge

[**Bangkok, Thailand– 16 November 2016**] – The Asia-Pacific region has experienced tremendous Internet growth in the past few years and is now home to the largest population of Internet users in the world. However, this rapid growth in Internet users brings with it a new set of challenges, warns the Internet Society, with security issues and their impact on user trust emerging as the existential threat to the future of the Internet.

By 2020, the region will account for more than 53% of the global Internet population, with over a billion new Internet users expected to come online in the next four years.[[1]](#footnote-1)1

The Asia-Pacific is seen as a mobile-first region. As the adoption of smartphones and tablets accelerate in the region, growing prosperity through an expanding middle class, and increased focus by government on building the digital economy will continue to drive this growth. The Internet Society predicts that by 2019, the region will generate the most mobile Internet traffic in the world.

The Internet Society report “[Unleashing the Potential of the Internet for ASEAN Economies](http://www.internetsociety.org/doc/unleashing-potential-internet-asean-economies)” underscores the importance of Internet interconnectivity and interoperability of systems and platforms between and within countries as instrumental in driving the free flow of information, goods, services and investment across Southeast Asia.

This increase in Internet adoption will naturally warrant greater attention to online security and threats. [A survey conducted this year](https://www.internetsociety.org/doc/internet-society-survey-policy-issues-asia-pacific-2016) by the Internet Society in Asia-Pacific revealed that 58% of respondents cited cybersecurity as the topmost issue that warrants attention by governments. In addition, 59% of survey participants felt their privacy was not protected online.

Large scale data breaches, uncertainties about how personal data is being used, cybercrime, online surveillance and other online threats are impacting the level of trust users have in the Internet. In addition to these security concerns, Internet affordability and locally relevant content will impact continued Internet growth. With more than half of the world’s languages, accommodating lingusitic and cultural diversity will be important in bringing the next billion online in the Asia-Pacific.

“Trust in the Internet has been core to its success to date,” explains Kathryn Brown, President and CEO of the Internet Society. “However, this level of trust has been constantly eroded in recent years and can potentially have a detrimental effect on the future of the Internet. The Internet Society’s [Collaborative Security framework](http://www.internetsociety.org/collaborativesecurity) is a useful reference point that can be used to address these issues. A trusted Internet is key to the global economy, and urgent attention is required by all stakeholders to collectively work together to maintain trust in the Internet and all the opportunities it brings,” added Brown.

**About the Internet Society**

The Internet Society, www.internetsociety.org, is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership from around the world. It is also the organizational home for the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). With its principled vision and substantial technological foundation, the Internet Society promotes open dialogue on Internet policy, technology, and future development among users, companies, governments, and other organizations. Working with its members and Chapters around the world, the Internet Society enables the continued evolution and growth of the Internet for everyone.

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1. 1 Cisco Visual Networking Index™ (VNI) Complete Forecast for 2015 to 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)