Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is evident that our societies derive many benefits from the development and use of new communications and information technologies.

It is also all too evident, however, that terrorist organizations are among the most determined and sophisticated users of such technologies.

Experience has demonstrated that the use of new technologies of communication and information can do wonders in terms of research, education, public health, connecting people in the most remote areas of the world. At the same time the misuse of these technologies particularly by terrorists can be an arm of mass destruction.

As we have seen on all too many occasions over recent years, terrorist groups did not hesitate to exploit such technologies to incite, prepare and perpetrate acts of violence.

The rapid pace of development of new communications and information technologies is one of the most challenging aspects of the current counter-terrorism environment.

Terrorist abuse of mobile-telephone-based communications and financial transactions, border controls and the Internet poses a particular challenge.

The international community has expressed a clear determination to counter this growing threat to international security.

The General Assembly first expressed its resolve to respond to this threat in its resolution 53/70 on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, adopted in December 1998.

More recently, in its resolution 66/24 adopted in December 2011, the Assembly stated that:

“the dissemination and use of information technologies and means affect the interests of the entire international community and optimum effectiveness is enhanced by broad international cooperation, these technologies and means can potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure of States to the detriment of their security in both civil and military fields,”
it is necessary to prevent the use of information resources or technologies for criminal or terrorist purposes.”

The resolution further calls upon Member States to:

“promote further at multilateral levels the consideration of existing and potential threats in the field of information security, as well as possible strategies to address the threats emerging in this field, consistent with the need to preserve the free flow of information.”

In its Presidential Statement S/PRST/2013/1 adopted last January, the Security Council expressed its concern at "the increased use, in a globalized society, by terrorists of new information and communication technologies, and the Internet, for the purposes of the recruitment and incitement as well as for the financing, planning and preparation of their activities and underlines the need for Member States to act cooperatively to prevent terrorists from exploiting technology, communications and resources to incite support for terrorist acts, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and in compliance with other obligations under international law".

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We see today’s special event as a way to reinforce the momentum of the international community to effectively take on this challenge.

In the course of its dialogue with Member States on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), the Counter-Terrorism Committee has become increasingly aware that it is not sufficient to be reactive to terrorist use of new technologies.

This has proven to be the case in all areas addressed by the resolution, including the prosecution and adjudication of terrorism cases, counter-financing of terrorism, law enforcement, border control, and international cooperation.

As such technologies develop, so should Member States' ability to harness them to prevent terrorist acts and to apprehend those who perpetrate them. Member States and all stakeholders must anticipate and stay ahead of new terrorist methods. We must also ensure that these new technologies do not fall into the wrong hands.

It is also important for States to ensure that their legal frameworks adapt alongside these new technologies and that their use of such technologies does not contravene human rights, the individual right to privacy, or the rule of law.

Furthermore, it is not sufficient to provide short-term solutions that address specific security aspects alone. Instead, we must deliver them within a broader framework designed to be of sustained, long-term benefit to Member States’ development.

The goal of today’s event is to facilitate active discussion on ways to harness technological advances to prevent terrorist acts, as well as on good practices and effective measures taken in this area within the framework of the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001).
We also hope that this event will serve as a catalyst in identifying new areas in which the technical capacity of Member States can be built to counter terrorism.

The development of new technologies is of course largely driven by the private sector. It is therefore vital to develop a broad dialogue between international organizations, Governments and civil society.

As you are all aware, the United Nations is actively engaged in building partnerships with the private sector in all areas of its work and in a number of ways, ranging from fundraising to jointly developing normative principles and frameworks.

It is within this spirit that we have invited here today a number of distinguished experts from international and regional organizations, think tanks, universities and the private sector.

I would draw particular attention to the presence of experts from a number of private corporations, including AOptix Technologies, Cherry Biometrics, and Kaspersky Lab.

It is our hope that our interaction will generate new ideas about ways to maintain and strengthen our collective response to terrorists’ use of new technologies.

Before giving the floor to the Deputy Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Governments of Argentina, Australia, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America for making their experts available for today’s event.

I also wish to acknowledge and thank the Vice-Chairs of the Committee for taking on the role of moderators for our three thematic discussions.

I now invite Mr. Weixiong Chen, CTED Deputy Executive Director, to say a few words about today’s agenda and about the significance of today’s topic within the framework of the global counter-terrorism effort and of the work of the Committee and CTED, in particular.

Thank you.