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<th>International Workshop on Social Usage of Internet in Vietnam: Hanoi, Sep 29-Oct 2, 1999: [opening address at the international workshop on social usage of internet in Vietnam]</th>
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<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Ramanathan, Sankaran.</td>
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OPENING ADDRESS AT THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON SOCIAL USAGE OF INTERNET IN VIETNAM

BY

DR. SANKARAN RAMANATHAN, HEAD, SPECIAL PROJECTS AND SENIOR PROGRAMME SPECIALIST, ASIAN MEDIA INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CENTRE (AMIC), SINGAPORE

May I first express the regrets of the AMIC Secretary-General, Mr. Vijay Menon, for his inability to be with you all today. He is currently going to Paris to attend a special meeting of UNESCO. Nevertheless, he has asked me to assure you that this is a project that is close to his heart and that AMIC will continue to support such projects.

The genesis of this project goes back to June 1996, when Prof. Becker visited AMIC, which was celebrating its 25th anniversary then. The concept was briefly discussed and a preliminary draft of the proposal was prepared within three days. Then it was Prof. Becker who “carried the ball” so effectively, refined the proposal, put some flesh into it and submitted it to the European Union. The project was finally approved in March 1998. It will be completed by April 2000, when the third and final seminar is expected to be held, this time in Vienna, Austria.

AMIC’s role is as the Asian coordinator for the project. Effectively, this means that we are responsible for appointment of country researchers in Vietnam and Malaysia and coordinate their activities from the inception stage. This includes assisting in drafting the questionnaire for the survey, making suggestions regarding the sampling frame, coordinating the analysis of data and ensuring that reports are written. This includes the periodic status reports and the two country reports (for Vietnam and Malaysia), the first drafts of which will be presented at this workshop.

As this is the first workshop for this project, there may be some overlapping, repetition and gaps. We look forward to receiving feedback from workshop participants, feedback which can be used to improve the reports as well as to improve future workshops and seminars that we plan to hold.
We are pleased that our local partner for this project is Dr. Dang Ngoc Dinh from the Hoa-Lac Hi-Tech Park. Ever since the beginning of the project Dr. Dang has been very cooperative. The smooth and efficient way in which this workshop is being organized is adequate testimony to his professionalism.

Let me mention something about my organization, AMIC, which is 29 years old. It was established in 1971 by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the Government of Singapore. AMIC’s mission is to spearhead the development of media and communication so as to bring about socio-economic development in the Asia-Pacific region. AMIC does this in four ways:

- through research activities, such as this project,
- through publications, principally the Asian Journal of Communication, Media Asia, Asian Mass Communication Bulletin and books and monographs,
- Through its documentation unit, which has more than 10,000 records and is possibly the largest collection on Asian mass communication, and
- Through seminars, annual conferences, workshops and other training programmes.

As one of the oldest regional communication centres, AMIC is well-poised to fulfill its mission and role at the beginning of the next millennium, which is regarded as the information age. We shall play our part in fostering socio-economic development, particularly in Asia, which we believe has great potential for development.

Finally, I would like to thank the local organizer for inviting me to attend this workshop and give this address. I wish all workshop participants a fruitful session of deliberations and look forward to reading the report of the workshop.

Hanoi,

29 September, 1999