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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><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Ramanathan, Sankaran.</td>
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Paper No. 3
OPENING ADDRESS AT THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
SOCIAL USAGE OF INTERNET IN VIETNAM

BY

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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