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For More Information Contact:

Bob Cohen (703) 284-5301 bcohen@itaa.org

Douglas Sabo (703) 284-5325 dsabo@itaa.org <<mailto:dsabo@itaa.org>>

International IT Industry Survey: Cyber Security a Top Priority

Arlington, VA - A new survey released today by the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) finds cyber security to be the next “top priority” issue facing the IT industry around the globe. The results are based on a survey of 39 countries’ IT associations conducted in conjunction with the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA).

Respondents-IT industry trade association executives--expressed a high degree of personal awareness of the InfoSec issue, but four out of ten said customers in their countries are either “not very” or are “unaware” of computer protection matters. Sixty-five percent of respondents said their national or regional governments have strong awareness in this area.

While 94 percent of the trade association executives personally view InfoSec a top priority issue, this number dropped to 82 percent in reference to their member companies, 65 percent to their governments and 41 percent to end users. Seventy-six percent of respondents say they are meeting with their respective governments to raise awareness of InfoSec issues; almost 60 percent said their governments are seeking meetings with industry on the same issue.

“Cyber crime is not just an important national security issue, it’s a global security issue,” said ITAA President Harris N. Miller, who also serves as WITSA president. “We are gratified to see that the world is not only waking up to the InfoSec challenge but that IT industry groups around the globe appear to share a high level of concern and determination to take responsible action. Awareness is the first step. Education is step two. The technology needed to clamp down on computer criminals is available. IT companies and customers alike need to apply it and to make a commitment to adopt best InfoSec practices--barring the digital door to crooks, malcontents and others intent on cyber trespass.”

The ITAA/WITSA survey was conducted before the recent widely-publicized distributed denial of service attacks. Regions and countries represented by survey respondents include: Europe (Czech Republic, Finland, France, N. Ireland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the UK); Asia (Bangladesh, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand); Americas (US); and Africa (South Africa and Zimbabwe).

As appointed by the US Department of Commerce, ITAA serves as co-Sector Coordinator for the Information and Communications Sector on information security issues. In this role, ITAA facilitates public and private sector collaboration to address InfoSec issues including information sharing, awareness, research and development, security workforce, and legislative needs. ITAA’s InfoSec Web site can be found at <http://www.itaa.org/infosec>.

WITSA is a consortium of 39 information technology (IT) industry associations from economies around the world. As the global voice of the IT industry, WITSA is dedicated to advocating policies that advance the industry's growth and development; facilitating international trade and investment in IT products and services; strengthening WITSA's national industry associations through the sharing of knowledge, experience, and critical information; providing members with a vast network of contacts in nearly every geographic region of the world; and hosting the World Congress on IT, the only industry sponsored global IT event. Founded in 1978 and originally known as the World Computing Services Industry Association, WITSA has increasingly assumed an active advocacy role in international public policy issues affecting the creation of a robust global information infrastructure.

The Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) provides global public policy, business networking, and national leadership to promote the continued rapid growth of the IT industry. ITAA consists of 400 direct and 26,000 affiliate corporate members throughout the U.S., and a global network of 39 countries' IT associations. The Association plays the leading role in issues of IT industry concern including taxes and finance policy, intellectual property, telecommunications competition, workforce and education, encryption, critical infrastructure protection, online privacy and consumer protection, securities litigation reform, government IT procurement, and human resources policy. ITAA members range from the smallest IT start ups to industry leaders in the Internet, software, IT services, ASP, digital content, systems integration, telecommunications, and enterprise solution fields. For more information visit www.ita.org.