

## ***Dr. Ranjana Kumari's Welcome Speech on the occasion of Launch of Alliance for Trust and Safety***

**Good afternoon distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends,**

It is my pleasure to welcome you today as we launch the *Alliance for Cyber Trust and Safety*. This moment is not just a milestone in our digital journey, but a bold step toward ensuring that the digital world reflects the values we hold dear: trust, safety, and inclusion. The digital age presents us with limitless possibilities, but it also places a tremendous responsibility on all of us to create a space where every person can thrive without fear or exclusion.

### **Our Vision**

At the core of this Alliance is a vision as powerful as it is simple: we want to build a digital future where trust, safety, and fairness guide every interaction. Imagine a world where every voice—especially from the Global Majority—has the opportunity to shape the future of technology. We are not just reacting to today's problems; we are building a digital ecosystem that mirrors the principles of equality and justice for generations to come.

### **Why We Need This Alliance Now**

The digital landscape is transforming at an astonishing pace. As of today, over **5.3 billion people** are connected to the internet, representing **66% of the global population**. By 2025, the Global South will see **500 million new users**, and with this surge comes an explosion of **175 zettabytes** of data. Yet, along with this connectivity comes vulnerability: **cybercrime**, **misinformation**, and **data exploitation**. These threats often disproportionately harm those who are already marginalized. Entire communities are at risk of being left behind in the global conversation about digital governance.

One recent report revealed that misinformation now spreads **six times faster** than factual news on social media platforms. For many, especially in the Global South, the internet can be a place of deception rather than opportunity. This widening gap—the digital divide—underscores the urgency of an initiative like the *Alliance for Cyber Trust and Safety*.

### **The Era of AI: A Double-Edged Sword**

In this era of artificial intelligence, the stakes are higher than ever. AI has the power to revolutionize industries, but if unchecked, it can also deepen the harm already caused by misinformation, cyberbullying, and malicious technologies like deepfakes. Picture a young activist from the Global South, fighting for climate justice, only to have their identity stolen and manipulated by deepfake technology to spread false messages. Imagine communities torn apart by AI-driven disinformation campaigns, where neighbors are made to distrust one another.

We cannot afford to be passive. Society must not just react to AI's challenges but lead the way. This means educating the public on ethical AI usage, setting up regulations to curb harmful AI practices, and ensuring that **digital literacy** becomes a right, not a privilege. We must ensure that AI serves humanity, not undermines it.

## The Role of the Alliance

The *Alliance for Cyber Trust and Safety* is uniquely positioned to take on these challenges. It is more than a coalition of governments, companies, and civil society—it is a call to action. We are here to ensure that the voices of the Global Majority are no longer sidelined in discussions about cybersecurity and digital rights.

Here's how we'll do it:

- **Advocacy:** We will champion inclusive policies at the global level, ensuring that the concerns of the Global Majority are front and center.
- **Education:** We will raise awareness and provide resources on cyber threats and digital rights to communities that need them the most.
- **Collaboration:** We will unite governments, businesses, and civil society to work together on proactive solutions that tackle the root causes of cyber insecurity, rather than just reacting to its symptoms.
- **Accountability:** We will push tech giants and governments to prioritize trust, transparency, and the protection of user rights.

## A Whole-of-Society Approach

This brings us to the heart of our strategy: a whole-of-society approach. Cybersecurity cannot be the responsibility of any one group. Governments alone cannot secure cyberspace. Businesses cannot ensure privacy without collaboration. Civil society cannot advocate for fair digital rights in isolation. Every sector, every voice, must be part of the solution. The Alliance serves as the bridge that connects these voices, so together, we can build a digital future that works for everyone.

Imagine a world where users can trust the information they see online, where they are confident that their personal data is secure, and where their digital rights are protected by laws that reflect their needs. This is not a distant dream—it is within our reach.

The *Alliance for Cyber Trust and Safety* is not just another initiative—it is the start of a movement that will change the digital world for the better. Together, we will shape an internet that empowers, not exploits; that connects, not divides; that includes, not excludes. We will ensure that no one—especially from the Global Majority—is left behind in the digital age.

I want to thank each of you for being part of this transformative journey. Let's seize this moment and work together to create a safer, more inclusive, and more trusted digital world for all.

Thank you

