

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Information and Communication Technology Association of Saint Lucia (SLICTA) statement on **NEMAC Meeting Intrusion and need for proper meeting security**

Castries, January 20, 2021: Following media reports of a NEMAC video conference on 18 January 2021 being invaded by so-called 'freedom fighters', the ICT Association of St. Lucia (SLICTA) is reminding the Government of Saint Lucia, its various agencies, NEMAC, and the wider public of the need to ensure that virtual meetings are operated in a secure manner.

Popular video conferencing platforms (including Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Jitsi, etc) already provide tools to improve meeting security, particularly following reports of intruders interrupting and disrupting meetings ("**zoombombing**¹") last year when online meetings increased in popularity.

Video-conferencing platforms offer security options to secure meetings by using passwords and also '**waiting rooms**' or "**lobby**" to screen incoming participants. The meeting administrator can deter *zoombombing* attempts by preventing participants from 1) using their microphones 2) activating their video cameras, or 3) presenting content from their screens unless individually permitted by the meeting administrator.

Attendees could also be denied the ability to change their screen names to prevent them defeating these security checks by assuming another identity. More sophisticated tools may provide useful forensic details such as username, device ID, IP address, location, network type, and connection time.

Although details of this intrusion still remain unclear, potential breaches of meeting security and confidentiality should be anticipated and defended against by using the security tools available, especially for NEMAC meetings where important matters of National Security may be discussed. These meetings should be secured in a similar manner as regular face to face meetings, to prevent uninvited guests from casually defeating security and gaining access to cause mischief.

SLICTA strongly suggests that sufficient ICT and administrative support be allocated when arranging meetings and to prevent intrusions into sensitive meetings of national importance. SLICTA further reminds the public that cybersecurity concerns are critical in our increasingly digital and online environment.

With its network of skilled and capable members, SLICTA stands ready to assist the public at large, including the Government, its agencies and NEMAC in particular, if concerns remain regarding the correct setup of online meetings and other cybersecurity and ICT infrastructure concerns.

Let's do all we can to remain safe online.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoombombing>

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