Title: NREN Cybersecurity Challenge (for students)

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Type: idea / collaboration invitation

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Short summary:
This talk aims to promote the establishment of an NREN-lead cybersecurity challenge/contest/competition for students interested in information security. We will expand on what we mean, ideas so far, call for interest from the community and follow up with an opportunity to collaborate.

Description:
As an NREN, one of SANReN/TENET’s challenges is to get students interested and exposed to NREN activities and the community. Taking the lead from a similar initiative by our national Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC), an effective means of attracting students to “our world” seems to be via a contest/competition. Enter the NREN Cybersecurity Challenge!

SANReN would like to run such a challenge within South Africa and are willing to lead a collaborative effort for national and international level competitions ideally culminating in an International NREN / GÉANT Cybersecurity Challenge. These challenges could be run at national events (e.g. NREN conferences) with the final hopefully at a future TNC?!! This may alternatively serve as a platform for NRENs to coordinate national competitions aligned to the European Cybersecurity Challenge (www.europeancybersecuritychallenge.eu) and/or send the finalists to. Capture-the-flag, red- and blue- team exercises, etc. would typically form part of such a challenge.

We are just starting this exercise and would like to find out whether the community is interested in getting involved, knows of similar initiatives, etc.

Background:
The Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC) in South Africa has successfully hosted four national student cluster competitions and won the International competition three times [https://www.chpc.ac.za/index.php/training-workshops/scc ; https://csir.co.za/chpc-wins-2016-student-cluster-competition]. SANReN have taken this as an incentive to start something similar in the networking space with information security emerging as an obvious, “sexy”, relevant and high impact candidate (without needing to completely re-invent the wheel).

Education/training initiatives would typically form part of preliminary exercises for participants with the added benefit of improving overall cybersecurity awareness (together with the challenge itself) and creating a pipeline of future cyber warriors!

Thanks for your consideration!