

## France Tackles Covid-19 Related Online Scams

**Dr. Mohamed Chawki**

International Association of Cybercrime Prevention (AILCC)  
Paris, France  
chawki@cybercrime-fr.org

### **Abstract:**

COVID-19 pandemic has made a phenomenal impact on all realms of life. Health, finance, safety, and even social and human values are not the same as they used to be in the pre-pandemic era. The world has witnessed exemplary acts of kindness and cooperation during this crisis. The pandemic has also provided criminals new opportunities to target their victims, who are now more vulnerable. France faced a massive surge in cybercrimes during the pandemic. In 2020, more than 14 million people became the victim of cyber-attacks in France, leading to a cumulative loss of 3 billion US dollars. Phishing scams, counterfeit protective goods and other medical supplies, malicious medical applications, and fake alerts on COVID-19 were the common techniques used by cybercriminals to target victims. French cyber-crime unit (FCU) has taken proactive measures to fight against such crimes.

On such a basis, this presentation seeks to address and analyse the following issues: Firstly, the impact of Covid-19 on the spread of online scams and the techniques used by offenders. Secondly, an analysis of the existing legislative and regulatory framework and their efficiency in combating this form of organised crime will be provided, taking France as a case study. Finally, the paper will conclude by discussing the steps that should be taken to protect Internet users and society and minimise the risk of utilising ICTs in illegal criminal activities, especially concerning Covid-19 scams.

**Keywords:** Cybercrimes, COVID-19, Phishing scams, France