



## **Bank Hapoalim Announces Strategic Partnership with CYBERGYM to Establish Global Network of Centers of Excellence and Cyber Training for the Financial and Banking Industry**

*The new initiative will enable financial organizations around the world to qualify their workforce effectively through real-time cyberattack scenarios, and develop a global knowledge-sharing network in the field of cyber finance.*

**[TLV, Israel, 29 January 2020]** — Bank Hapoalim, the largest banking and financial group in Israel, announced today the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding its cooperation with and investment in CYBERGYM, a global leader in cyber training and qualification solutions, headquartered in Israel. The partnership will establish a center of cyber excellence, knowledge and technology for the finance sector and banking industry in Israel and around the world.

Following seven years of successful collaboration between CYBERGYM and IEC (The Israel Electric Company) - one of the most threatened and attacked organizations in the world - which led to the cyber company establishing a global network of training arenas, this new partnership with Bank Hapoalim will focus on building similar capabilities for the finance sector. The partners will establish the first finance arena in Israel, and has plans to establish additional arenas in financial capitals around the world.

The new network will make use of and expand CYBERGYM's existing global spread of 10 Cyberwarfare Arenas, in cities including New York, Melbourne, Tokyo and Amsterdam. CYBERGYM's Arenas use advanced technologies for skills and knowledge training of staff throughout a company, enabling unique *live training* in which hackers run complex cyberattacks on infrastructure systems designed to emulate those used by the client. CYBERGYM's live-training programs have been proven to be the most effective and long-term way to give cyber skills and awareness to employees and professional staff of organizations in high-risk industries.

“This new joint-venture will drive the knowledge and excellence of both Bank Hapoalim and CYBERGYM, and will enable the establishment of the first ever cyber knowledge and training platform, specifically tailored to the needs of the finance industry,” says Ofir Hason, CYBERGYM’s CEO. “It will broaden our current proven capabilities, to include solutions that are relevant to financial organizations globally.”

“Financial organizations all over the world are having to deal with increasing intensity and sophistication of cyber threats by criminals, activists and even state attacks,” says Elik Etzion, Chief Information Security Officer of Bank Hapoalim. “This level of threat requires the implementation of advanced cyber-protection technologies along with the strengthening of the operational capabilities of cyber and IT professionals in the organization. As in the Army, operational training in cyber protection is required to re-enforce their ability to deal with diverse attacks, in real time. This partnership with CYBERGYM will enable a leap forward in cyber training in Israel and around the world, by means of relevant attack scenarios, advanced training arenas that simulate the finance industry’s business and technological environment, and the sharing of operational knowledge in the field of cyber defense.”

“We are living in challenging times in terms of the ability of financial organizations to secure their customers’ assets from advanced cyber threats,” says Dov Kotler, CEO of Bank Hapoalim. “As banking becomes more digital and technology connectivity with business partners increases, this challenge is intensifying. We believe that, if we are to leverage the large technological investment being made in cyber defense capabilities, the knowledge and skills of the professionals in our industry must be enhanced. This partnership with CYBERGYM will enable the bank to strengthen its cybersecurity capabilities, and will provide financial institutions in Israel and around the world with added value services for dealing with future cyber threats.”