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Abu-Ghazaleh: Moroccan Academic and Research Network (MARWAN) Connects to GÉANT and ASREN under the AfricaConnect2 Project



H.E. Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) and H.E. Prof. Mohamed Khalfaoui, Director of Centre National pour la Recherche Scientifique et Technique (CNRST) have signed an agreement under which ASREN will provide a high capacity connection between the Moroccan National Research and Education Network (MARWAN) and the pan-European GÉANT network through ASREN's Point of Presence (PoP) in London.

MARWAN is the Moroccan National Research and Education Network (NREN) which provides internet connectivity, applications and services to the research and education (R&E) communities in Morocco. This agreement will allow researchers, academics and students to get access to the global R&E network fabric, enabling them to collaborate with peers in Europe, USA, Latin America, Asia and Africa, in addition to other Arab countries.

The agreement marks Morocco’s re-joining the international R&E networking community with the support of the EU-funded AfricaConnect2 which aims to support the development of high-capacity internet networks for R&E across Africa. The project is managed by networking organisation GÉANT in conjunction with ASREN and sister regional network organisations in East-South Africa (Ubutunet Alliance) and in West and Central Africa (WACREN).

Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of ASREN said: “CNRST remains a strong partner of ASREN. Its interconnection at ASREN’s Point of Presence (PoP) in London allows direct peering with the NRENs of Jordan, Lebanon, and Algeria as well as with SESAME communities. The co-funding of the European Commission in the context of AfricaConenct2 and EUMEDCONNECT3 Projects has been crucial to the success of regional REN sustainability and development.”

Prof. Mohamed Khalfaoui said: “CNRST is always considering its partnership with ASREN and GEANT to be strategic. I truly believe that MARWAN’s interconnection with other

international research and education networks is extremely important. It will allow Moroccan researchers, academic and students to improve the regional, continental and international collaboration. I am really glad that we could re-establish this interconnection and partnership after a short interruption. I am thankful to ASREN, GÉANT and the European Commission for their support and I hope that our cooperation will be fruitful for all of us.”

Mr David West, GÉANT’s project manager of the AfricaConnect2 North Africa cluster added: “Since 2004, Morocco has been a longstanding and trusted partner in catalysing R&E networking in the southern Mediterranean, first during the EUMEDCONNECT project phases and now as partner in AfricaConnect2. Re-establishing international R&E connectivity means that Morocco’s researchers, teachers and learners are now well positioned to engage in international collaborations with their peers around the world and leave their mark. We look forward to continuing working with CNRST and ASREN to optimise the infrastructure in support of our R&E communities”.

UbuntuNet Alliance, World Bank Power SomaliREN’s Connectivity to the UbuntuNet Network under AfricaConnect2

UbuntuNet Alliance for Research and Education Networking is pleased to announce that it has successfully connected SomaliREN, the National Research and Education Network (NREN) of Somalia to the UbuntuNet network, the data network for NRENs in Eastern and Southern Africa under the €26.6m European Commission co-funded AfricaConnect2 project.

SomaliREN’s connection to the UbuntuNet backbone follows the awarding of a 10 year contract to telecom network provider Somcast



Networks LLC to provide an STM 1 circuit from the UbuntuNet Alliance's Point of Presences (PoPs) between Dar es Salaam and Mogadishu. The contract was awarded to Somcast Networks after the World Bank paid SomaliREN's AfricaConnect2 Advance Payment to UbuntuNet Alliance in November 2015 under a \$3.5 million project aimed at providing connectivity to the country's higher education sector.

The NREN's connection to the UbuntuNet network brings to 8, the total number of NRENs connected to the regional research and education backbone after KENET (KENYA), MoRENet (Mozambique), RENU (Uganda), RwEdNet (Rwanda), TENET (South Africa), TERNET (Tanzania) and ZAMREN (ZAMBIA).

Welcoming the development, UbuntuNet Alliance CEO, Dr. Pascal Hoba said: "UbuntuNet Alliance is proud to confirm that despite various challenges, SomaliREN is now connected to the UbuntuNet Network. It is exciting to welcome our colleagues from the Somali Research and Education networking community; we sincerely believe that this connection will stimulate collaborations between Somalia and the global R&E community.

Connecting SomaliREN is part of our strategic vision and mission to connect all NRENs in Eastern and Southern Africa between themselves and to others parts of the continent and the global R&E community. On behalf of UbuntuNet

Alliance, I would like to thank the European Commission, the Africa Connect2, the World Bank, Somcast LLC and the government of Somalia for their respective contributions that have been so critical for this achievement,' said Dr. Hoba.

His counterpart, Abdullahi Bihi Hussein, CEO of SomaliREN says: "We are pleased that SomaliREN is finally connected to the UA regional backbone. It is a dream come true for our NREN as well as the Somali higher education and research community and institutions. This marks the beginning of the realization of a grand vision to connect all our research and education institutions among themselves and with their global partners so that access to research and education facilities and resources is achieved. We thank all partners for making this possible despite the challenges and limitations imposed by the realities on the ground. The UbuntuNet Alliance, the EU, the World Bank Group, the KTH and Al-Azhar Skolan in Sweden, the Ministry of Post, Telecommunications and Technology of the Federal Government of Somalia and our own community comprising of the member institutions of SomaliREN have all contributed to the achievement of this remarkable milestone."

Source: <https://ubuntunet.net/2018/06/ubuntunet-alliance-world-bank-power-somalirens-connectivity-to-the-ubuntunet-network-under-the-africconnect2/>

Call for Papers

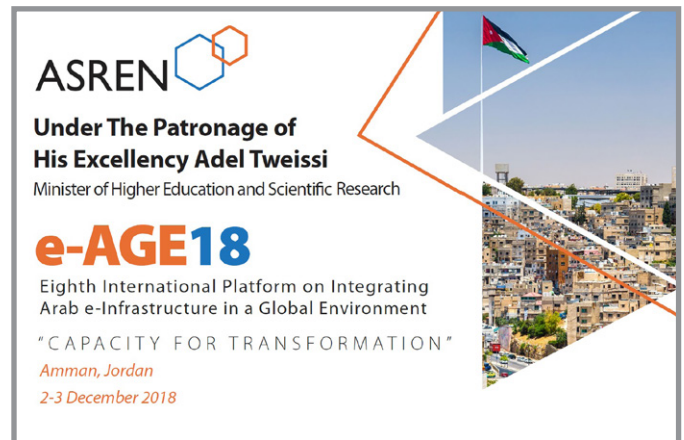
The e-AGE18 Conference

The e-AGE conference had established itself as an important venue for networking among experts and scientists. In 2018, e-AGE will be held under the patronage of HE Professor Adel Tweissi, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, in Amman, Jordan during 2-3 December 2018. This year e-AGE is technically sponsored by IEEE, , and the presented papers will be submitted to the IEEE Xplore digital library. Selected papers will be published in a special issue of the International Journal of Advanced Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing (IJAPUC). The focus will be on demonstrating successes in using the research and education e-Infrastructures at national, regional and global levels. In short words, e-AGE18 “CAPACITY FOR TRANSFORMATION” as the main theme of the conference.

e-AGE18 will include events, workshops and meetings centered around the following:

- 11th Event on Euro-Mediterranean e-Infrastructure
- 8th Annual Meeting of ASREN
- EUMEDCONNECT3 Project meeting
- AfricaConnect2 Project meeting
- Internet2 Middle East SIG Meetings
- Workshops dedicated for e-Infrastructures users
- Technical Workshops on R&E networking

Moreover, special sessions will be dedicated to specific domains, mainly focusing on experiences in connectivity and e-Infrastructure, applications and services across a variety of scientific domains. It is also important to show how research infrastructure creates tangible



benefits to communities and collaborations. It is still critical to demonstrate how research connectivity can promote collaboration and innovation. Different discussions will be stimulated during e-AGE to drive outcomes and concrete results on practical steps towards developing a regional e-Infrastructure.

Authors are invited to submit full papers reporting on their original and unpublished research in e-Infrastructures and computational and data-intensive sciences. All papers will be peer-reviewed for relevance, quality and originality of research.

Posters are also welcomed, an effective poster presentation is not just a standard research paper stuck to a board. It should summarize your work with graphs and images to tell the story and should use text more sparingly. Featuring a poster at e-AGE will serve as an excellent advertisement for your work, and can act as a great conversation starter with e-AGE participants.

Topics of interest include, but not limited to:

- Scientific computing and data-intensive e-Science in areas related to energy, environment, health, climate, water, agriculture, biology, economy, medicine, as well as in social sciences and humanities.
- Perspectives on NRENs, including challenges, operation, sustainability, funding, governance, business models, security and services.
- Problem-solving environments, Virtual Research Environments, Science Gateways and collaborative tools, applications and services.
- Education and e-Learning Technologies, access to educational resources, repositories, libraries and contents, clouds, grids, parallel and distributed computing, and high performance computing.
- Internet technologies and trends, Internet of Things, Security, SDN and AAI.

For more details, please visit the conference website at: <http://asrenorg.net/eage18/?q=Page/call-participation>

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