

## **HE Boutros Harb, Minister of Telecommunications, Lebanon**

HE Mr. Harb commenced his speech by expressing his gratitude to participate in the opening of the three conferences, e-Age 2016, AROQA 2016, and OSSCOM 2016, in their beloved city, Beirut.

He expressed his strong interest in advancing the Lebanese network infrastructure to support not only research and education communities, but also the citizens of Lebanon as motivated in the telecom vision 2020. He noted that Lebanon is acknowledged among the first three most dynamic countries in terms of the ICT development and the second biggest mover in the year 2015 on the Network Readiness Index. These developments will of course strengthen innovation and entrepreneurship movement in the Lebanese mobile Internet ecosystem supported by high-speed networks and open source technologies. He declared his support for the Lebanese Education and Research Network (LERN) for which highly discounted connectivity prices will be provided.

He added, “We live in an “eAge”. We live in an era where information and communication technology is no longer a “nice-to-have” commodity, but a basic necessity to foster economic development, improve levels of research, education and training. ICT infrastructure development is seen vital for entrepreneurship and small businesses that generate new ideas, new business models, and huge opportunities.”

His Excellency concluded his speech by wishing a successful conferences and fruitful discussions, and he was confident that the outcome of the meetings would be of great value and impact on the future of our youths and our economies.