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 ASREN

 E-AGE 2012

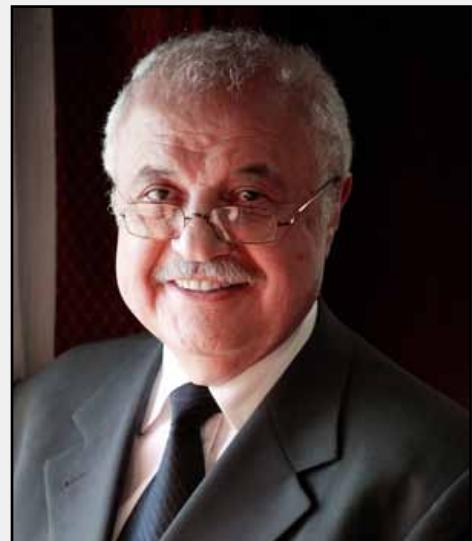
 MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TUNISIA
PRAISES ASREN AND COMMENDS FOR ITS ROLE

 EUMEDCONNECT3 A REAL NETWORK
WITH REAL BENEFITS

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FORWARD



"ASREN is becoming more visible and more active in the region and beyond. ASREN now enjoys more shareholders, more worldwide supporting organizations and receiving more support and appreciation from high level leaders around the region. We are working hard to build on these achievements and to tackle the new challenges to meet the needs of our research and education communities."

e-AGE 2012

ASREN had the honor that the 2nd International Platform on Integrating Arab e-infrastructure in a Global Environment e-AGE 2012 was officially held Under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al-Nahyan, UAE's Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, at Zayed University in Dubai, in coordination with the Emirates Advance Network for Research and Education (ANKABUT) and the National Research Foundation in the UAE.



"The name of your organization – the Arab States Research and Education Network – suggests creativity, innovation, forward thinking, receptiveness to change, and, to me, especially, regional development and global connections. It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you to the United Arab Emirates and to Dubai for this E-AGE 2012 Conference", His Highness Sheikh Nahayan said. Under the theme "Collaborate towards developing the regional e-Infrastructures," the Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in a Global Environment which is being held for the second year, more than 50 distinguished speakers and around 150 participants joined, among them, ICT experts, policy and decision makers, heads of stakeholder institutions and international organizations, experts of e-infrastructures of the Euro-Mediterranean, Pan-Arab, Africa, Asia, and North American regions, academia and active researchers, together with high-level representatives from the League of Arab States, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the European Commission (EC) Directorate General Information Society and Media (DG INFSO).

Mr. Fahem Alnuaimi, CEO of ANKABUT said: "ANKABUT is working on three important initiatives: e-library in the UAE, several data centers and a multi-purpose data warehouse."

Dr. Husam Al-Ulama, director of the National Research Foundation stressed on the importance of such a meeting saying: "This meeting is crucial not to a specific country but to all the Arab world as it contribute in exchanging expertise among experts and consultants in the knowledge age."

Dr. Sultan Abu-Orabi, secretary general of the Association of Arab Universities highlighted the work of scientific research saying: "Scientific research has become a necessity and not a luxury as it draws the map for a new world in a fast changing age."

Abu-Ghazaleh Announces the UAE as Knowledge and Connectivity Hub for the Arab Region

During the opening Ceremony of the e-AGE2012, HE Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh stated in his keynote speech: "I want to capture this historic moment of meeting here in UAE and under the patronage of my great friend His Highness Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and much more, to announce that I will be asking ASREN Management jointly with ANKABUT Management in collaboration with DANTE which is responsible for the pan-European GEANT Network and the US Internet 2 to work together towards the development of an action plan whereby UAE with its developed e-Infrastructure environment can host the hub of knowledge and connectivity for the Arab region with its international partners worldwide. If we succeed with this ambition, one day we will be proud all of us that we have enabled our educational institutions, researchers, and knowledge workers in the Arab world to become part of the world Research and Education globally."



"We look forward to having all NRENs of Arab countries to become part of ASREN as owners and shareholders to help support and sustain the development of the Pan-Arab research and e-infrastructure. ASREN will continue to serve the Arab region in developing best practice NREN model and provide pan-Arab e-Infrastructure connectivity at the regional level," he said.

"We hope to see high speed networks with Gigabits bandwidth connecting neighboring countries in the Arab region, and to the world regional networks for research and education as this will help to introduce tools for developing collaboration and cooperation between scientists, researchers and students and to enhance the quality of education and research. We are happy to announce that ASREN is investing in its first STM1 cable connection between ASREN and the European research and education Network "GEANT," he added.

ASREN - EUMEDCONNECT3 Meeting, Al Ain, 19 September 2012.

EUMEDCONNECT3 – ASREN Meeting Concludes, Calls to Enhance Joint Research through ASREN

Al Ain, UAE 19 September 2012.

The meeting was inaugurated by Ankabut CEO Mr. Fahm Al-Nuaimi who highly commended efforts exerted by ASREN and by its Chairman HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh on the Arab world level stressing Ankabut's support to the Network's work and goals related to building a high framework research and education network that connects all Arab universities and research institutions.

Alagtas expressed ASREN's appreciation to the European Union's support for a number of strategic projects relating to EUMED CONNECT and applications in research and education. He pointed out that ASREN will start technical linkage with a number of Arab research networks including the UAE's Advanced Research and Education Network – Ankabut.

From his part, Project Manager David West at DANTE which currently manages the EUMEDCONNECT2 program stressed on the importance of integrated linkage in the Arab region and the support provided by the EU in its endeavor to contribute to the technical and scientific development on the level of some Arab countries.

The main meeting recommendations included:

- Joint cooperation to mobilize scientific research at the UAE through benefiting from experiences and best practices at the global advanced universities.
- Working to connect the UAE's Research and Education Network with ASREN through the EUMEDCONNECT2 project so that the UAE universities become part of ASREN not only on the level of the connected Arab countries but also on the level of the European and American universities and other global universities.

Enhancing communication and cooperation between researchers at the Arab universities and working on research issues related to the region.

TRC organizes the Oman Research Education Network (OMREN) workshop

Under the patronage of HE Dr Khalid bin Mohammed Al Azri, Secretary General for the Education Council, the Oman Research Education Network (OMREN) workshop was inaugurated on December 15th 2012. Organized by The Research Council (TRC), the workshop aimed at reviewing the project strategy to establish a sustainable National Research and Education Network as part of the activation of the national innovation system. The workshop touched upon the collaboration benefits that will enrich the scientific society in the Sultanate, through benchmarking and understanding the best international practices as well as assessing the local technical, financial and operational conditions, in order to choose the best way forward to be applied in the Sultanate.



The establishment of the network comes as part of TRC's vision to establish a strong infrastructure that helps to develop the research and education in the Sultanate and to work as a foundation stone in building the local research capacity .

Speaking about the project's ideas, Dr Yaqoub bin Juma Al Raisi, director of Information Technology at The Research Council and the project director said that the project includes a number of direct and indirect objectives. The direct objectives include establishing the network which will provide the users with high speed network and will enable them to communicate with the international researchers and log into the equivalent international networks. Regarding the indirect goal, Dr Al Raisi added, OMREN aims at training the Omani cadres in network administration field and establishing virtual science and research communities and enriching the Omani researchers with the latest research and scientific periodicals besides networking with international researchers and research centers. The project will benefit many sectors such as education, higher education, health institutions, cultural centers, IT and telecommunication centers.

In addition, Dr Al Raisi said that the project passed through four main phases including primary planning and gathering information, studies and international experience in this field followed

by the assessment phase to assess the current and future needs of the Sultanate besides designing a roadmap for the project.

Regarding the future plan for the project over the next eight years, Dr Yaqoub mentioned that the foundation of the network will last for three years followed by four years to deliver the service to the relevant departments and in the last year the network application will be increased. The network is expected to cover 120 institutions inside the Sultanate.

Ankabut User Meeting, Al Ain, 18-19 September 2012

Al Ain September 18-19 2012: Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Nahayan bin Mabarak Al Nahayan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ankabut, the United Arab Emirates' Advanced Research and Education Network held its first day of the two-day Fall Users meeting at the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU). The theme of the meeting was "Discover Ankabut". Attendance was estimated at 400.



The keynote was presented by H. David Lambert, President and Chief Executive Officer of Internet2 who spoke on the topic of "The Case for National Research and Education Networks (NRENs)." This was followed by Ankabut's Chief Executive Officer Fahem Al Nuaimi and Chief Operating Officer Dr. Steven Winstanley with a presentation on "Discover Ankabut".

Day Two of the event featured a keynote presentation by Dr. Salem Alagtas, Managing Director of Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN), who spoke on "Regional connectivity in the Middle East".

Fahem Al Nuaimi, Ankabut's CEO said: "This event will facilitate further development of the education networks in the UAE and help to spread awareness among the academic community of the importance of such initiatives in building a sustainable economy, as well as, assist in knowledge share and transfer from abroad, and expand education opportunities."

ASREN hosted the 11th conference of the Middle East Network Operators Group

Under the patronage of HE Eng. Atef Al Tal, Minister of Information and Communications Technology, the Arab States Research and Education Network hosted the 11th Middle East Network Operators Group (MENOG 11) in Amman 7-8 October 2012.

From his part Osama I. Al-Dosary, MENOG chairman said "MENOG is concerned with Internet operations and its technical community. It's all about experience sharing and education of this community. This goes hand in hand with objectives of the RENs (Research Education Networks), especially given that the Internet grew out of RENs."



The MENOG 11 was preceded by several technical workshops on IPv6 for ISPs and Network Management Tools and followed by some tutorials on IX, Peering and security.

ASREN participated in the 7th conference on Sharing Knowledge across the Mediterranean

ASREN actively participated in the 7th Conference on Sharing Knowledge across the Mediterranean, in Tunis 17-20 May 2012. All participants agreed that ASREN is an important basis for the development of education and research in the Arab world. Following are the main recommendations points to reinforce the effectiveness of ASREN:



- a. Establishing NREN (National Research and Education Networks) in all Middle-Eastern and Maghreb countries and connecting them to ASREN.
- b. Obtaining political, financial and technical support to promote services and applications connected to research and education in the region.
- c. Establishing the infrastructure and technology of CLOUD COMPUTING to respond to the massive increase in dataflow.
- d. Encouraging the development of NTIC to improve e-science and e-accessibility, especially for handicapped persons.
- e. Taking advantage of African cable connections (through GEANT and Ubuntunet) which are revolutionizing African science via such projects as the South African Radio Telescope and the Neutrino Observatory at Taza in Morocco.
- f. Taking account of the recommendations of the CHAIN project for e-infrastructure and e-science in Africa concerning the reduction of the digital divide.

CHAIN-REDS, a new collaboration Research infrastructures project under the FP7 Program

The project on Co-ordination and Harmonization of Advanced e-Infrastructures for Research and Education Data Sharing (CHAIN-REDS) is coming with a vision to promote and support technological and scientific collaboration across different e-Infrastructures established and operated in various continents, in order to facilitate their uptake and use by established and emerging Virtual Research Communities (VRCs), also by single researchers, promoting instruments and practices that can facilitate their inclusion in the community of users.



The project aims to support and disseminate the best practices currently adopted in Europe and other continents, and promote and facilitate interoperability among different regional e-Infrastructures. CHAIN-REDS gathers the main stakeholders of regional e-Infrastructures, collectively engaged in studying and defining a path towards a global e-Infrastructure ecosystem that will allow VRCs, research groups and even single researchers to access and efficiently use worldwide distributed resources (i.e. computing, storage, data, services, tools, applications).

Overall, CHAIN-REDS will provide input for future strategies and decision-making regarding collaboration with other regions on e-Infrastructure deployment and availability of related data; it will raise the visibility of e-Infrastructures towards intercontinental audiences, covering most of the world and will provide support to establish globally connected and interoperable infrastructures, in particular between EU and the developing regions.

Among several partners covering many regions, ASREN will play a major role with responsibilities and actions to cover the Arab region and to extend and consolidate cooperation with Europe and other regions in the domain of e-Infrastructures for R&E and to promote, coordinate and support the collaboration and interoperability of Grids and cloud computing.

EUMEDCONNECT3, a Real Network with Real Benefits

EUMEDCONNECT3 provides a high-capacity dedicated Internet network for the research and education (R&E) communities across the southern and eastern Mediterranean region. By accessing the network through their respective national research and education networks (NRENs), that are partners in the program, scientists and academics are able to collaborate among each other and engage in innovative, data-intensive international projects.

With its direct links to GÉANT, the pan-European R&E network, EUMEDCONNECT3 provides access to over 40 million users at over 8000 research and education establishments across Europe. Via

GÉANT's connections to networks in other world regions, EUMEDCONNECT3 is a gateway for Mediterranean researchers to be truly global players.

Running from 2011-2014, EUMEDCONNECT3 is co-funded with EUR 3.3m by the European Union and is the third phase. Through its earlier phases, the EUMEDCONNECT program has connected Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia since 2004, promoting regional development and addressing local challenges, such as telecom monopolies and poor infrastructure. In the current phases, connections are being re-established, initially with Algeria, Egypt and Palestine, with additional countries eligible for EC funding support.

EUMEDCONNECT3 forms a platform for the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) which has been launched to create an R&E network for the wider Arab region. As Mediterranean neighbors, the NRENs of Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy and Spain are particularly interested in the collaboration opportunities offered by the program and are active partners. EUMEDCONNECT3 is run by international research networking organization DANTE, in collaboration with ASREN, the European and local NREN partners.

EUMEDCONNECT3 project upgrades Algeria's research and education network capacity

Algeria has recently upgraded the international connectivity available for its scientists and academicians to 622 Mbps through its participation in EUMEDCONNECT3, the regional high-capacity Internet network serving the research and education (R&E) communities across Northern Africa and the Middle East. Algeria is a long-term partner in the EC-funded EUMEDCONNECT project and has seen its research networking capacity increase by a factor of 15 - from an initial 45 Mbps in 2004 to the current 622 Mbps to meet researchers' growing demands for high-speed international connectivity.



Aouaouche El-Maouhab, ARN Manager at CERIST, underlines the importance of being part of EUMEDCONNECT: "Over the last decade the connectivity needs of academic and research institutions in Algeria have increased significantly, and so have their opportunities to collaborate with peers in Europe and other parts of the world. We therefore welcome the upgrade as it puts ARN in a position to fulfill those needs. Our participation in the EUMEDCONNECT project has given our universities valuable advanced network services. The plan is to continue increasing our network capacity and efficiency and to work closely with NRENs in Europe and the wider Arab world".

New Grid Site at Kuwait University

UNESCO-HP Brain Gain Initiative (BGI) Project links African and Arab Region universities to global knowledge. Kuwait University is one of the beneficiaries of this project. ASREN (Arab States Research and Education Network) has a similar vision which aims to provide pan Arab e-Infrastructures dedicated to collaborative research and education among Arab countries.

Kuwait University with ASREN has implemented and installed a Grid Site in Kuwait University as a pilot project and makes it a part of the ASREN Arab Grid infrastructure. A full grid site with all related services is installed and configured at Kuwait University. The new site KU-01-KUGRID is now part of EUMEDGRID Project sites. The KU Grid Node extends the collaboration between ASREN and Kuwait University and further connects the users in Kuwait University to ASREN Grid.

The site is also included in the Arab Regional Operation Center so that it will be visible on the regional grid environment.

E-AGE 2011

AMMAN-December 19, 2011- Under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, the 1st International Platform on Integrating Arab e-infrastructure in a Global Environment was inaugurated under the chairmanship of HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN).

The event witnessed wide and effective participation of more than 200 figures of high-ranking decision-makers from governments, enterprises, NGOs, academia, and civil society.



His Majesty King Abdullah II deputized HE Dr. Ruwaida Al Ma'itah, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, to inaugurate the Conference. Dr. Al Ma'itah delivered a speech in which she conveyed His Majesty's greetings to guests and participants, appreciating their efforts and wishing them success in reaching their objectives while pledging to provide all necessary support and facilitation.

In addition, Dr. Al Ma'itah thanked Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization under the leadership of Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh for his considerable efforts in various professional fields to develop the society, in particular, in the fields of education, training, qualification, and capacity-building, as well as his ongoing efforts in the field of education quality and scientific research.

Dr. Al Ma'aitah said that the Ministry has endeavored to provide a healthy environment for scientific research in strategically significant fields to increase Jordan's competitiveness at the long term, namely; energy, water, environment, technological applications as well as supporting intellectual property rights.

HE added that Jordan national strategy focuses on achieving advanced research and educational standards to meet the present and future needs of our society to keep abreast of the international development in the field of education and scientific research.

In his speech, Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh called for Jordan to be a regional hub for e-infrastructure integration, saying: "We look forward to having national scientific research networks in all Arab countries, and we hope that these networks join ASREN as partners to maintain research and scientific communication between Arab countries, confirming ASREN's willingness to extend all required assistance to establish national networks as per the internationally recognized model." He also announced the launch of three new initiatives at the beginning of 2012; namely: TAGITOP®, TAGIPEDIA®, and TAG Corporate Virtual University, which shall provide all educational and training programs in business field to public, private and educational sectors at the Arab world level.

HE Eng. Basem Al-Rossan, Minister of Information and Communications Technology, delivered a speech during which he addressed in details Jordan experience in the field of e-infrastructure, saying : "The Government of Jordan started the e-integration plan in 2003 to technically link schools and universities in line with the vision of His Majesty towards an integrated knowledge-based economy in Jordan."

His Excellency added that "these programs have developed in 2007 to include the public institutions, medical centers and hospitals, while schools in rural areas were chosen as distribution points for the Internet services."

Dr. Khaled Touqan, President of Jordan Atomic Energy Commission, gave a detailed presentation about scientific research based on e-integration and on SESAME.

Dr. Fa'eqa Al-Saleh, Representative of the Secretary-General of the Arab League and Director of Research and Education Department, conveyed the greetings of the Secretary-General Mr. Nabeel Al-Arabi and his wishes for success.

Dr. Al-Saleh praised the cooperation between Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization and the Arab League in the field of education and scientific research as well as the interest in youth issues, indicating the Knowledge Youth Summit to be jointly held in Morocco in March 2012 by the Arab League and Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization.

Moreover, Mr. Kostas Galenus, Head of the Technology Unit in E-infrastructure at the European Commission and Mrs. Juana Ronika, Head of the EU delegation to Jordan delivered speeches in the Conference.

The event is considered the first of its kind in the Arab region and the world, and is a distinguished opportunity for the Arab researchers and those developing scientific infrastructure in the Arab world to benefit from this gathering. Also, the event constitutes a forum through which partnerships are motivated and encouraged and best practices are exchanged to integrate scientific research networks with the global ones as well as in the field of such network sustainability.

Lebanon Declares NREN

National Lebanese Network for Scientific Research and Education Launched BEIRUT - October 25, 2011 - Under the patronage of HE the Lebanese Minister of Education and Higher Education Professor Hassan Diab, the Lebanese Network for Scientific Research and Education was inaugurated during a workshop that was held in cooperation with the National Council for Scientific Research, Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) and the EUMEDCONNECT3, the high-capacity Internet network for research and education in the Mediterranean in the presence of HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of ASREN, Minister's counselors, heads of private universities in Lebanon and other concerned people.



HE Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh said at the opening session: "The National Lebanese Network for Scientific Research and Education will integrally connect all research and education institutes to better provide communication facilities in Lebanon through integrated broadband services."

In his speech, Minister Diab addressed the ongoing efforts which the government is making to update higher education and quality education which will eventually decrease the high costs required for scientific research on all national, regional and international levels.

Secretary General of the National Council for Scientific Research Dr. Moeen Hamzeh commented: "The Lebanese Network for Scientific Research and Education reflects the significant role of scientific research in boosting higher education and the educational level of the Lebanese universities." He stressed that none of the Lebanese universities was listed among the 500 top universities globally due to weak scientific research in these universities.

Minister of Higher Education in Tunisia praises ASREN and commends for its role

H.E. Prof. Moncef Bin Salem, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Tunisia, received the Managing Director of ASREN and the General Manager of Al Khawarizmi Computing Center, the Tunisian R&E Network. They discussed the importance of ASREN as an opportunity for developing collaboration in research and education in the Arab World. The Minister also encouraged for more collaboration between the Arab R&E organizations and to build on the experience gained in the Arab Countries in the last decade. H.E. also instructed that CCK should join ASREN as a shareholder.



Shareholders development

In addition to Talal Abu Ghazaleh Consulting GmbH, JUNet of Jordan and MARWAN of Morocco, the Sudanese Research and Education Network SudREN recently joined ASREN as full shareholder of ASREN. "I'm sure that we need to establish more NRENs in the region, and then get them connected to ASREN. We need to see the map of the Arab REN fully connected" Said Iman Abu El Maaly, CEO of SudREN.

ASREN received requests to join from Tunisia, Somalia, Algeria and Palestine to join ASREN as shareholders. ASREN is in the process of including them as shareholders.

ASREN cordially invite the remaining Arab NRENs to join ASREN as shareholders / members. A number of NRENs have already expressed interest in joining ASREN and others are encouraged to formalize their membership. It noteworthy to mention that there are no financial obligations and ASREN will pay all fees and expenses incurred during the membership legalization process. ASREN shareholder and membership is open to ARAB NRENs.

ASREN's Active Participation

ASREN was very active and participated in most of the relevant conferences, events, workshops, meetings and other activities specially those under the EUMEDCONENCT3 and CHAIN Projects. In summary ASREN joined and participated in the following:

- The 7th Conference on Sharing Knowledge Across the Mediterranean, Tunisia, May 2012
- AfREN and AfNOG Conference and meeting, Banjul, May 2012

- The 10th Conference of the Middle East Network Operators Group, MENOG 10, Dubai April 2012
- The kickoff meeting of the Pan Islamic Research and Education Network –PIREN- Rabat, March 2012, ASREN was represented by Redouane Merrouch, Director of the Moroccan Research and Education Network (MARWAN).
- EGI Community Forum, Munich 26-30 March 2012
- Beirut, May 2012
- Arab ICT Ministerial Meeting, Algeria, 5 June 2012, ASREN was represented by Aouaouche El-Maouhab, Director of Algerian Research Network (ARN), Algeria
- World Summit on the Information Society WSIS Forum 2012, 14-18 May 2012, Geneva, ASREN was represented by Ahmed Dabbagh Technology & Services Development Manager, Ankabut, UAE
- Internet2 Middle East SIG meeting, Abu Dhabi, 17 September 2012
- IEEE Cluster 2012 on Cloud computing, September 24-28, 2012, Beijing, China.
- National Knowledge Network “First Annual Workshop on the e-Infrastructure of India”, 31 October – 2 October 2012, Mumbai, India
- The fall 2012 Internet2 Member Meeting, September 30–October 4, 2012, Philadelphia, USA.

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