المنظمة العربية لضمان الجودة في التعليم
The Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in EDUCATION
AROQA

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Recommendations issued by

The 7th International Platform on Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in A Global Environment

The 9th Annual Conference of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education (AROQA 2017)

3-4 December 2017,
League of Arab States, Cairo, Egypt

Under the patronage of His Excellency Ahmed Aboul-Gheit Secretary General of the League of Arab States and chairmanship of His Excellency Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, the (7th International Platform on Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in A Global Environment: Education, Science and Innovation) and the «9th Annual Conference of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education: Challenges and Prospects at the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States during 3-4 December 2017 with participation of academics, researchers, scientists, and experts from Arab and international institutions and regional and national research and education networks in Europe, America, Africa and Asia.

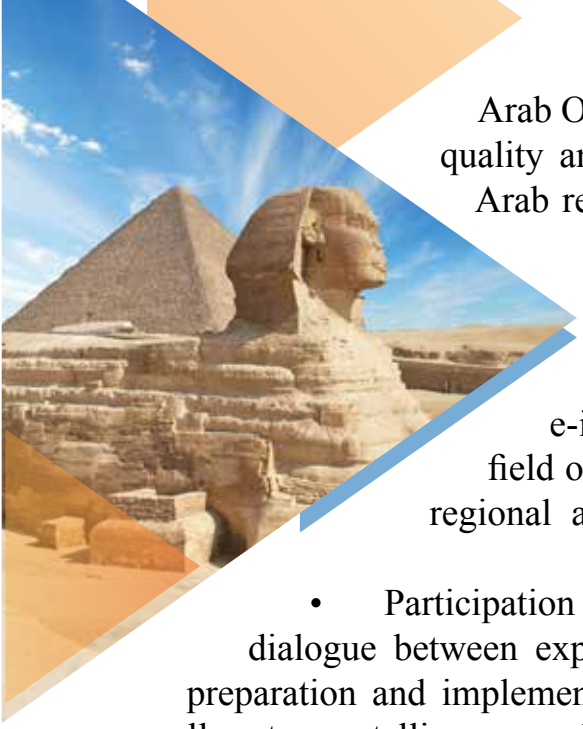
- The participants expressed their gratitude to the Arab Republic of Egypt and to its leader, President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, for announcing the launch of the first Egyptian mobile phone and the President's plan to establish five technology cities.

- The participants expressed their appreciation to HE Ahmed Aboul-Gheit for patronizing the 7th International Platform and the 9th Annual Conference. They also their appreciation to the Department of Education and Scientific Research at the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and to the Egyptian Universities Network for host and support.

- The participants praised the technical e-infrastructure currently available at the Arab countries, as were demonstrated during the platform. A number of Arab countries have developed specialized e-infrastructure for research and education that can be beneficial to enhance research connectivity and make it available for use at the regional level through a Point of Presence in London. Coordination is underway to utilize Fujairah and establish other Points of Presence in Cairo and Jeddah to connect with other regional research and education networks around the world.

- The participants discussed the quality of education and cooperation frameworks for improving quality of education at the Arab regional level, including entrepreneurship and innovation as the main components of economic growth.

- The participants commended the role of the Arab States Research and Education Networks in providing specialized high-speed networks and regional e-infrastructure services to serve research and education institutions and the wider regional research and education community, and linking them on a global scale. They have also commended the role of the



Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education in enhancing quality and accreditation services for educational institutions at the Arab regional level.

- The meeting identified priorities for the future focusing on the development of Arab e-infrastructure and services, the coordination with regional and international e-infrastructures, and the strengthening of cooperation in the field of research and education among the Arab countries and with regional and international communities.

- Participation is encouraged in the upcoming events as they aim to enhance dialogue between experts, researchers and decision makers to cooperate in the preparation and implementation of national and regional e-infrastructure projects as well as to crystallize research and education on important topics such as energy, water, environment and other pressing issues in the Arab region.

- Continuing cooperation between the League of Arab States, the European Union, the Arab, European, American, Asian and African research and education networks to develop sustainable e-infrastructures and points of interconnection in order to support scientists and researchers around the world.

- Adopting the programs and strategy of the Arab States Research and Education Networks and the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education for the next phase, with a focus on establishing e-Infrastructure links between the Arab countries and on enhancing the quality of education.

- Enhancing cooperation with the League of Arab States and Arab countries towards the development of integrated research and education networks as well as the development of quality assurance in education.

- Developing internet exchange points in the region such as in Fujairah, Cairo and Jeddah in cooperation with the League of Arab States and with the respective regulatory commissions and ministries to establish the “Arab Connect” for research and education and setting up high-speed networks at subsidized promotional costs.

- Focusing on the quality of education in the Arab world to enhance and develop its outputs to meet the needs of communities and the requirements of the labor market and to improve Arab educational systems in light of rapid changes and information revolution and progress of technology.

At the closing of the conference, the following recommendation were declared:

- To accelerate the integration of Arab e-infrastructures and connection with Europe, the United States, Latin America and Africa through the exchange points in London and Fujairah.

- To contribute to the establishment of national research and education networks in Kuwait, Iraq, Bahrain, Yemen, Libya, Djibouti and Comoros, as well as to continue to support research networks and infrastructure development in Arab countries.

- To provide legal mechanisms to facilitate the joining of national research and education networks in the Arab countries to the Arab States Research and Education Network as members of Board of Trustees instead of joining as shareholders. The current shareholders will be the founding members.

- To emphasize the importance of effective participation in the Arab States Research and Education Network and the unified integration of Arab e-infrastructure in order too enhance the role of research and education communities in the Arab world, as well as to provide computational services and resources, including eduroam, edugain, and science gateways.

- To emphasize the importance of linking Arab research and education networks to their counterparts through developing regional such as in Fujairah, Cairo and Jeddah and to work with regulatory bodies to provide practical mechanisms to facilitate high-speed connectivity at these points and at promotional costs

- To benefit from and build on the success of the EUMEDCONNECT and AFRICACONNECT and other European funded projects to enhance collaboration between Arab and European scientists as promote the development of research that focuses on the use of e-Infrastructures.

- To encourage the participation of the private sector and enhance cooperation in research and development of education as well as to raise funding of donors, research institutions, and organizations in the Arab region, Europe and the world to support the development of pan-Arab network and research infrastructure.

- To focus on the training of teachers and faculty members and to adopt the effective lecture method as a requirement to achieve the quality of the learning process in Arab universities and to adopt joint rather than individual research

- To adopt a set of unified Arab standards for education with focus on innovation and digital education as one of the criteria of educational quality in the Arab educational institutions.

The development of standards should also include criteria of technical education, curricula, and teaching methods. The standards need to be agreed upon between the Arab countries as they would be appropriate to context of Arab educational institutions and not to exhaust Arab institutions to try to adapt and meet to western standards.

- To mainstream self-assessment methods in all educational institutions in the Arab world in order to achieve best quality standards while introducing the concept of engineering administration as a tool for measuring and activating quality. Focusing on evaluating quality of teaching performance of faculty members from the point of view of the students is also important.

- To take advantage of e-learning and distance education as basis to enhance quality of higher education. This will require to work on the preparation of e-learning standards to be adopted in the framework of joint cooperation with the League of Arab States.

- To add language component or language skills to the quality standards of education because of the importance of these skills and the fact that 80% of knowledge is in English.

- To develop criteria and ranking mechanisms for schools and universities in accordance with the ranking project that is undertaken by the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education is in cooperation with the Ministry of Education in Jordan. The criteria and ranking mechanisms should be adopted by the Department of Education and Scientific Research at the General Secretariat at the League of Arab States and to be classified through an independent committee of experts, scientists and researchers in the framework of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education. It is also important to focus on the establishment of a special ranking system at the country level and at the level of the Arab region, so that indicators for ranking Arab universities commensurate with their cultural and historical nature.

- To plan for the 8th e-AGE and the 10th Aroqa annual conferences in December 2018, while adding scientific research dimension to attract researchers and scientists from the user communities of e-infrastructures, and to include new themes in the 10th annual conference on digital education and innovation with relevant standards.

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