

# CONNECT ARAB STATES SUMMIT

---

**Doha, Qatar, 5-7 March 2012**

## **Draft Concept Paper**

### **Overview**

---

The Connect Arab States Summit is being organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in partnership with the League of Arab States and hosted by the State of Qatar, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar.

This is the third in a series of regional Summits. Previous Summits were held for the Africa (2007) and the CIS (2009) regions.

By bringing together key global and regional players in the sector, the Connect Arab States Summit will help mobilize human, financial and technical resources needed to support ICT growth, widely recognized as the engine of future economic prosperity and sustainable development.

The Connect the World Summits encompass both an event (the Summit itself), but also a preparatory process, which is key in ensuring that the Summit is a success in all terms (political support, financial support and resource mobilization, project identification, and partnership commitment).

### **Themes**

---

The purpose of the Connect the World Summits is to identify priority projects, foster cooperation, engage partners, mobilize resources, and gather all stakeholders during a three-day event, to address the priorities identified for a specific region. Following the Summits in Kigali, Rwanda (Africa) and Minsk, Belarus (CIS), Connect Arab States will be focusing on the priorities as first expressed by the Arab States in preparation and during ITU's World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2010 in Hyderabad, India, and reviewed and approved by the experts of ITU and the League of Arab States.

#### **1. Accessibility:**

- Rapid deployment of broadband networks
- Building workforce skills to prepare for broadband-enabled economy
- ICT applications and services to respond to the special needs of persons with disabilities, women and those living in rural or remote areas
- ICT applications and services to support initiatives that promotes youth entrepreneurship
- Transitioning to digital broadcasting to enable mobile TV and interactive multimedia services and applications
- Affordability of ICT services

## 2. Trust and Security:

- National and regional regulatory policies and frameworks for data privacy and to combat cyber crime
- Establishment of and coordination between national CIRTs
- Protection of Arab children and youth from harmful content on the Internet

## 3. Digital content:

- Stimulating Arabic digital content through innovative ICT applications and services by youth entrepreneurs
- Supporting the use of Arabic domain names
- Creation of digital archives to spearhead e-government and to preserve the Arab cultural heritage

## Preparatory Process

---

The preparatory process entails four main stages, which can be categorized as Project Identification, Partner Engagement, Partnership Building, and Political Commitment Stage.

### Project Identification Stage

The purpose of this stage is to identify projects corresponding to the established themes and priorities. This entails a number of elements, including:

- Identify projects, including project holders and beneficiary countries/subregions;
- Define project budgets, required resources and timelines;
- Possibly define additional projects to complement the existing ones, with a view to complete the scope in line with agreed vision.

### Partner Engagement Stage

The purpose of this stage is to identify and engage the potential partners who could provide resources (financial and other) to bring the identified projects to life. This entails a number of elements, including:

- Identify potential partners from the region, already active in the ICT field, in the work of the ITU or of the League of Arab States, or of Qatar;
- Identify new potential partners, financial institutions, development agencies, etc.;
- Mobilize all partners by ensuring that they will contribute to the projects and to the Summit itself;
- Review accordingly the list of entities to invite to the Summit.

### Partnership Building Stage

The purpose of this stage is to engage the potential partners identified during the Partner Engagement Stage into the projects identified during the Project Identification Stage. The purpose is obviously to cover the needs of most or all the projects.

This stage consists in a match-making exercise during which the project experts and/or holders present, discuss and possibly adapt their projects to the requirements of potential partners, to facilitate their engagement and contribution to the projects.

Once a potential partner has agreed to provide resources to a project, the ITU will prepare the corresponding documentation in a form of partnership agreement (Memorandum of Understanding, Cooperation Agreement, Contribution Agreement, etc.) depending on the type of project and the scope of engagement agreed by the parties (a partnership agreement might cover several projects).

### Political Commitment Stage

Getting the political support, the engagement of the administrations of the Member States involved, is a must (as well as for some donor institutions a prerequisite) too ensure that the identified projects be successfully implemented.

The purpose of the Political Commitment Stage is therefore to engage the concerned countries at the highest level of the state, by drafting and getting adopted a Summit Declaration, to be finalized and officially signed by the Heads of State and Governments present at the Summit itself.

The ITU will prepare a draft declaration to be circulated through the host country and the League of Arab State, on the basis of the selected themes and priorities and of the agreed principles regarding the development of ICTs to foster socio-economic development.

**Note** – It is worth noting that the four stages should take place in parallel, with their finalization coinciding with the Summit itself.

## The Summit in Doha, Qatar

---

The Summit itself will take place from 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012 in Doha, Qatar, with the ITU acting as organizer, the League of Arab States as partner, and ictQatar as host. The Summit itself will include several phases and meetings at the Experts, Ministerial, and Head of State level.

### Expert Meeting

The purpose of the Expert Meeting is to review the projects and the partnership agreements reached in light of the identified priorities and themes, before their submission to the Ministers of the countries involved.

The purpose of the Expert Meeting is also to review the Draft Summit Declaration before its endorsement by the Ministerial Meeting.

Since the Summit Declaration is to be approved by the Heads of State and Governments, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be involved in the process and the Expert Meeting. (An alternative is to organize a separate meeting to review the Draft Summit Declaration).

### Ministerial Meeting

Once the experts have finalized their review, the corresponding documents can be submitted to the Ministerial Meeting. The Ministers can then endorse the documents presented to them, including the projects and the partnership agreements, as well as the Draft Summit Declaration.

The Ministerial Meeting should also agree upon the deliverables of the Summit which may include, in addition to the projects, agreements, and declaration, a Summit Report or elements deemed pertinent.

## Roundtables

The Summit will bring together all countries of the Arab States region represented by Heads of State and Government, Ministers, Heads of Regulatory Authorities as well as CEOs and senior officials from industry, regional and international organizations including financial institutions.

In view of the magnitude of the event, it should also attract representatives from the press, as well as leading ICT analysts and observers, possibly from outside the region.

The roundtables organized during the Summit itself provide a platform to publicly inform about the process engaged, the issues at stake and the proposed way forward, the commitment of the stakeholders, and the support to the Heads of State and Governments. The roundtables also give an opportunity to provide visibility to the projects and to the stakeholders involved in their success.

## Partnership Announcements

The promotion of the projects and of the partners who are contributing to them is also a mechanism to engage more. One of the strengths of the Summit is also to provide a number of opportunities (press meetings, signature ceremonies, interviews, etc.) to all those involved in the particular and coordinated effort, resulting from both the Summit and the preliminary process.

The Summit premises should therefore include a *Partnership Announcement Platform* where such ceremonies and interviews can be conducted during the three days of the Summit.

## Networking Platform

The Summit in Doha will provide an opportunity for intense networking for all those invited to attend.

Specific attention should be given to VVIP Bilateral Meetings, e.g. meetings between Heads of State and Governments, Crown Princes, ITU Elected Officials, etc. (as defined by Summit Protocol as VVIPs) as well as VIP Bilateral Meetings, e.g. meetings at Minister and C-level.

In the same spirit, an opportunity for other participants to gather and mingle freely should be considered as a priority.

It is therefore recommended that a *Networking Platform and Service* be put in place, including meeting rooms for bilateral services, a networking lounge, as well as the associated pertinent protocol service.

The networking platform should also be considered to facilitate the access of stakeholders to the Press covering the event on site.

## Format/Schedule

The following schedule takes into account the succession of meetings planned to take place during the meeting in Doha.

|                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DOHA SUMMIT DRAFT SCHEDULE</b>                                                                   |
| <b>5 MARCH 2012</b>                                                                                 |
| Expert Meeting to review the projects and draft Declaration to be tabled at the Ministerial Meeting |
| <b>6 MARCH 2012</b>                                                                                 |
| <b>10:00-12:00 Ministerial Meeting</b>                                                              |
| <b>12:30-14:30 Ministerial Lunch (TBC)</b>                                                          |
| <b>16:00-18:00 Opening Ceremony</b>                                                                 |
| <b>20:00 Summit Gala Dinner (TBC)</b>                                                               |
| <b>7 MARCH 2012</b>                                                                                 |
| <b>10:00-11:00 Roundtable</b>                                                                       |
| <b>11:00-12:00 Roundtable</b>                                                                       |
| <b>12.00-14.00 Lunch</b>                                                                            |
| <b>14:00-15:00 Roundtable</b>                                                                       |
| <b>15.00-15.30 Summit Declaration Signing and Summit Closing</b>                                    |

# ANNEX

---

## Example of Projects

The following are examples of projects that might be include in the list to be adopted during the Doha Summit.

### Developing Arabic Content

Developing Arabic content through youth entrepreneurship: Currently only 3% of content on the Internet is available in Arabic. Our objective is to increase this to X% by [date]. To help achieve this goal, a new ventures fund is being set up by partners [names] to increase resources available to young entrepreneurs either to replicate existing applications and services for Arab-speaking users, or develop new such services unique to the region. Example services include mobile payments and remittances, mobile-enabled homecare health services and disease tracking, mobile voting, special applications and devices for persons with disabilities and emergency response.

### Boosting Broadband Access

Currently X% of households and X% businesses in the region have access to broadband enabled service. To serve as a foundation for cross-regional connectivity and services, including in underserved communities, our aim is to bring broadband connectivity to X% of schools, hospitals and government offices by [year]. To help achieve this goal, the Governments of [names] have committed with partners [names] to ...

### Strengthening Cybersecurity

Currently, only five countries in the Arab region have their own national Cybersecurity Emergency Response Team (CERT). By [date], our aim is to ensure that every country in the region has its own CERT, all of which are interconnected as part of a connected regional network of experts capable of responding to emerging cyber-threats. To help achieve this goal, the Governments of [names] have committed with partners [names] to provide funding and expertise to establish CERTs in the underserved countries.

### Stimulating ICT Investment

Levels of ICT development vary widely from country to country within the Arab region. Our aim is to harmonize policies and regulations with the objective of creating a Pan-Arab ICT Investment Zone to stimulate new investment and opportunities, especially in countries with lower levels of development.

### Tracking progress towards Summit Goals

There is currently a lack of comparable ICT indicators available across the region. Our aim is to strengthen the capacity of statistical agencies in all Member States to develop, collect and report on a core set of regionally comparable ICT statistics so that we can better track progress towards achieving the goals of this Summit. To this end, the Governments of [names] and partners [names] commit to....

