Arab Regulators' Network

ARNET

Regional Regulatory Associations Meeting

Tunis, 2005

Establishment of the ARNET

- **The Arab Network for Regulators was established on the occasion of the first Symposium for Arab Regulators that took place in Algeria in 2003.**

- **15 Arab representatives participated in the first meeting,**

- **Algeria took the responsibility of the general secretariat of the Network.**

- **Presidency of the Network was to annually rotate around the member states according to alphabetical order**

ARNET Mission

- **Developing the ICT sector in Arab countries**

- **Fostering a regional environment that attracts FDI**

- **Exchange expertise and various experiences of institutional development within the ICT sector**

- **Providing services for all stakeholders**

- **Enhancing and modernizing the role of regulatory authorities within the Arab countries**

ARNET Goals

- **Prepare general policies and *common regulatory guidelines* that will enable the provision of universal services and that will set standards for sustainable development within the sector.**

- ***Harmonize regulatory procedures* in the Arab World and work on *legislative convergence* among the Arab countries**

- **Provide regulatory models with enough transparency to encourage the development of high-quality affordable ICT services in a *liberalized and competitive business environment***

ARNET Duties

- **Facilitate the process of capacity building among member institutions.**

- **Follow up globally on developments relevant to the sector**

- **Encourage the deregulation of telecom services by advocating policies aiming for free competition and private sector participation**

- **Participate in paving the way for foreign investments within the ICT sector**

ARNET Duties: Cont'd

- **Encouraging the establishment of Telecom Regulatory authorities in countries that do not have such bodies up till now**

- **Set up foundations of cooperation with regional and international organizations as well as other regulatory bodies.**

- **Establish an effective mechanism for the exchange of information among member organizations**

- **Prepare studies on best regulatory practices suited for the region**

ARNET Strategy

- **A plan was drawn for the ARNET which included the initiation of a number of regional projects.**

- **The plan detailed short term as well as long term deliverables expected from each project.**

- **This working program covers four major aspects within the period from 2004 to 2007**

First Aspects: Develop the Institutional Capacity of ARNET

- *Projects of this Aspect:*

    – **Establish the ARNET website**

    – **Prepare a common Arabic glossary for technical terms**

    – **Establish the ARNET Database**

    – **Establish an ARNET Investment Fund**

Second Aspects: Prepare Common Guidelines for Regulatory Policies

- *Projects for this Aspect include preparing common frameworks for:*

  - **Licensing**

  - **Interconnection**

  - **Universal Service**

  - **Free Competition**

  - **Pricing and Billing**

  - **Dispute Settlement**

Third Aspects: Set Common Standards

- *Projects of this aspect include:*

  – **Identify a set of common standards for ICT equipment**

  – **Prepare a common framework for Type Approval**

  – **Identify common Health and Environment Protocols and Standards**

  – **Identify common standards for Quality of Services**

Fourth Aspects: Exchange of Expertise, & Human Resources Development

- **Prepare a common database for regional experts**

- **Establish a permanent interactive virtual forum on the ARNET's website**

- **Prepare common guidelines for best administrative practices and methods of HR development**

- **Prepare a detailed work plan for multilateral trainings on technical and personal skills**

Selected Projects

ARNET Database:

– **The project was broken down to seven well defined stages**

– **The first three stages of the project have been completed:**

- **Determining the information that should be provided by each member**

- **Prepare the initial layout and design of the database**

- **Prepare Data Collection Forms linked directly to the ARNET website; http://www.aregnet.net**

Selected Projects: *Cont'd*

- **_Universal Service:_**

  - The project was broken down to 11 well defined stages with a precise set of deliverables determined for each stage

  - Jordan and Syria provided comprehensive reports on their national experiences with Universal Service

  - A number of countries (Peru, China, and Brazil) were taken as role models to be studied and emulated based on their comparable indicators of economic development to Arab states.

  - An initial draft of the common framework was prepared and is now being reviewed by the members

Selected Projects: *Cont'd*

- ***Licensing:***

  - **Ownership of this project was given to Oman**

  - **The Omani regulator prepared an initial draft for the common licensing framework and this draft is now being reviewed by the members**

  - **The project aims at entrenching licensing best practices for every ICT service in a way that preserves each country's interests while facilitating the growth of services in a transparent and effective manner at the same time**

Selected Projects: *Cont'd*

- ## *Investment Fund:*

  – **The ownership of the project was given to Morocco**

  – **The object of the fund is to collect private capital and direct it towards investments within the ICT sector**

  – **A Data Collection Form was prepared and distributed asking members to provide information on prospective investment opportunities**

  – **The information provided through these forms is available on The ARNET website**

Selected Projects: *Cont'd*

- ***Interconnection:***

  - **The project aims at providing basic information necessary to ensure successful interconnection between Arab service networks.**

  - **A general framework is to be prepared which will emphasize commercial and legal aspects of interconnection**

Selected Projects: *Cont'd*

- **Dispute Settlement:**

  – The aim of this project is to prepare a unified framework for dispute settlement procedures to serve as a reference guide for all member authorities

  – The framework has already been prepared and a draft was sent to member authorities for their comments and suggestions

Selected Projects: *Cont'd*

- ## *Type Approval:*

  - The aim of the project is to approximate type approval procedures among Arab countries in a way that safeguards consumers' rights and prevents network interference

  - Information has already been collected on all Arab and a number of international experiences methods and procedures utilized for type approval

  - According to the time plan, this information will be analyzed and formulated in a common framework document during this November.

The ARNET within the International Arena

- **Registration of the ARNET as sector member at ITU.**

- **In the third ARNET annual meeting (Sharm El-Sheikh, March 2003) two working groups were created:**

  - **One for preparing ARNET's participation within the GSR,**
  - **and the other for preparing ARNET's contribution to the WSIS**

- **ARNET presidency participated in the Arab regional preparatory meeting for WTDC 2006 which was held in Algeria last May**

Cooperation with the League of Arab States

- ARNET enjoys observer status in all meetings of the Permanent Committee for Telecommunications, Executive Bureau and Permanent Technical Secretariat for Telecommunications

- ARNET participated as an observer in the following meetings:

  - Meeting of Arab WG on Interconnection pricing (April 2005)

  - 17th Meeting of Permanent Committee for Telecommunications (April 2005)

  - Executive Bureau and Council of Arab Communication and IT Ministers (Tunis, June 2005)

- Arab ICT Ministers mandated the ARNET to handle the issue of reforming interconnection pricing and tariffs among Arab countries

ARNET Contribution to WSIS

- **The ITU approved the inclusion of the ARNET in its new initiative "*Partners to Connect the World".***

- **In light of the recommendation of the last meeting of the GSR held in Geneva 2004, *ARNET prepared an official document* reflecting the views of the Arab Regulators to be presented to be WSIS.**

ARNET Contribution to WSIS *Cont'd*

- **The official ARNET document was endorsed by the meeting of the Arab WG for the preparation for WSIS in their meeting in Cairo last May,**

- **And was further endorsed by the Council of Arab Communication and IT Ministers in their meeting June 2005**

- **The Egyptian Pavilion in WSIS is honored to host a stand for the ARNET**

- *The ARNET will show case its success story at the VVIP area at the Summit, including brochures and multimedia reflecting its goals and achievements.*

THANK YOU