

The Arab Regulators Network of Telecommunications and Information Technologies (AREGNET)



July 2017

I. AREGNET Founding

The Network was established on the basis of the final statement issued by the first symposium of the regulatory institutions of telecommunications in the Arab region, held in Algiers on 19th-21st April 2003 and in accordance with the provisions of these basic rules and the amendments thereto.

II. AREGNET Objectives

1. Exchange of views and experiences regarding the regulation of the sector.
2. Develop policies and models of fair and transparent regulations and procedures to guide the achievement of service comprehensiveness and sustainable development in the sector.
3. Coordinate in order to harmonize the regulatory practices in the Arab world through the exchange of information and seek to unify these practices and work to adopt similar positions.
4. Provide transparent and harmonized organizational models, policies and procedures aimed at promoting the development and modernization of networks and ICT services in an efficient and appropriate manner as well as aimed at creating a competitive environment, in order to ensure that these services are provided to the users at the most cost-efficient and at the highest level of quality.
5. Seek to coordinate the positions of Network members to adopt a unified opinion in the regional and international forums related to the regulation, within the limits of the functions and tasks assigned to the Network.

III. AREGNET Network Tasks

1. Facilitate and support the capacity-building process of the Network members through cooperation in providing training and exchange of experiences.
2. Coordinate in order to harmonize standards and to unify policies of organization policies and procedures related to standards that are universally adopted.
3. Follow-up the patterns of global developments related to the sector in order to facilitate its development in the Arab world.
4. Promote the large liberalization of the sector through stimulating competition and a greater participation of the private sector.
5. Encourage and cooperate for the establishment of regulatory institutions, endowed with enough prerogatives, in countries where such institutions do not exist.
6. Cooperate with regional and international organizations and other networks of the sector, exchange information with them and develop relations with their counterparts, within the objectives of the Network.
7. Establish and maintain an efficient system of information distribution among members and key concerned parties using effective and inexpensive media, including the creation of a website in Arabic, English and French.
8. Coordinate the preparation of studies on the regulatory aspects of the sector to serve the common interests of the members.
9. Organize meetings, workshops and conferences related to the regulatory aspects of the sector.
10. Coordinate the work of the members to achieve the Network goals, and follow the progress achieved in the implementation of close systems, policies and procedures, as well as providing support to members whenever necessary.
11. Contribute in creating an attractive investment climate and promote investment related to the sector in the region.

IV. Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Network

Introduction

The Arab Regulators Network of Telecommunications and Information Technologies (AREGNET) held its 14th meeting in Amman, Jordan from 26th to 27th April 2016. The meeting was attended by the heads and representatives of the Arab Telecommunications Regulators from 14 Arab countries.

Follow-up of the implementation of the Network projects

1) **Strategic plan draft of the Network**

The Network Secretariat shall follow up the implementation of plans and programs for the implementation of the strategic plan and report thereon to the Heads of Arab regulatory institutions.

2) **Broadband on services promotion project in the Arab Region:**

The project was extended for three (03) months so that the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) in Egypt could receive the remaining questionnaires from some Arab countries. The study has been completed.

3) **Big data project**

The project, which was chaired by the Regulatory Authority of Oman, was approved and circulated to the members by the Secretariat.

4) **Project on the effects of the Over-The- Top (OTTs) applications on the social, economic and security fields**

Following up the project under the presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The Secretariat was entrusted with following up consultations with the Member States to complete the formation of a team of high-level experts, whose task is to consult with companies in Arab countries (operators) and to engage with the companies owning the OTT applications. An expert meeting was indeed organized at the NTRA headquarters in Cairo and the report will be presented for discussion at the next meeting of the Network. Qatar, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Kuwait have joined the Group.

5) **Project on Cloud Computing**

The Arab Regional Office of ITU has prepared the final resolutions of the project on cloud computing.

6) **Project of national emergency group for internet accidents**

The annual report of the Regional Cyber security Center at Sultanate of Oman has been adopted. It has been agreed that the report will be given to all members to participate and to benefit from activities of the center.

7) **Project on comparative study of telecommunication tariffs in the Arab countries**

Updating and checking data periodically and generalization of data has been continuously made in order to enable member countries of the network to have access to the results of the study. The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Bahrain has finished the last report of this study.

8) **Project on access to telecommunication services and information technology in rural and remote areas**

The presidency of group (Mauritania) is assigned, on the demand of member countries of the network to provide them with all experiences on access to telecommunication services and information technology in rural and remote areas, which enable them to prepare a global report on experiences of Arab countries, challenges and difficulties they have encountered.

The actual presidency of the network (The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) has organized a workshop to expose the experiences of Arab countries and international organization in this field.

9) Project on access of people with disabilities to the telecommunication services and information technologies

The presidency of the group (Mauritania) has sent the document to all participating countries. It has been agreed to keep working on the project and provide a period of three months for countries who couldn't make remarks on the document to answer during this period in order to finalize the document. The group has benefited of experiences of the ITU on enabling people with disabilities to have access to telecommunication services and information technologies.

10) Infrastructures sharing project

Member countries have been encouraged to participate to project by filling in the questionnaire and send it to the presidency of the group (Morocco). All questionnaires have been received and the final document of the project is prepared to be presented on the next meeting of the network at UAE.

11) Project on exchanging experiences on controlling the quality of mobile communication services (QoS/QoE) and protection of beneficiaries (new project presented by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan)

The project has been adopted with the presidency of Jordan and the membership of: Sudan, Sultanate of Oman, Egypt, Mauritania, Tunisia, UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Algeria, Bahrain and Libya.

The working group will present the draft of the project during the annual meeting in UAE for discussion.

12) Project on facilitating internet of things (new project presented by UAE)

The project has been adopted with the presidency of the UAE and the membership of: Jordan, Tunisia, Sultanate of Oman, Saudi Arabia and Sudan.

The working group will present the draft of the project during the annual meeting at UAE for discussion.

13) Project on using means of telecommunication and information technologies in the service of Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (new project presented by UAE)

The project has been adopted with the presidency of the UAE and the membership of: Sultanate of Oman, Jordan, Bahrain, Egypt, Mauritania and Kuwait.

The working group will present the draft of the project during the annual meeting at UAE for discussion.

Organization of workshops

In addition to monitoring the projects of the network, Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Jordan, as the present president of the network, has organized many workshops with the participation of representatives of the members of the network and Regional and international organizations:

- 1- Specialized workshop on the sidelines of fourteenth official meeting of AREGNET on "internet of things" on 25th April 2016.
- 2- Specialized workshop on: "competition, new trends of organization, frequency spectrum between 24th - 26th July 2016, in collaboration with GSMA and with the participation of many representative members (countries) of AREGNET.
- 3- Specialized seminar on "Impact of exposure to electromagnetic fields on health and public safety" on 4th September 2016 and with the participation of the representative administration members of the AREGNET in collaboration with GSMA.
- 4- Regional Workshop on Terrestrial and Space Radio communication Services for Arab States on 29th November – 1st December 2016 in collaboration with Arab regional office of ITU and with the participation of Arab countries.
- 5- Specialized workshop on access to telecommunication services and information technologies in rural and remote areas on 13th – 14th march 2017 in the collaboration with Arab Regional Office of ITU and GSMA

in order to complete activities related to project of access to telecommunication services and information technologies in rural and remote areas which is considered as one of current network projects.

- 6- Workshop on the protection of children from the means of ICTs in the period from 10-11/05/2017 in cooperation with the GSMA.

V. In the field of promoting the Arab cooperation and coordination:

Insisting on the increased and effective cooperation links and coordination between the Member States in order to bring about unified positions on many regional and international issues which concern the AREGNET, in particular the composition of the group in charge to address the GSMA Association about the lifting of the embargo on the participation of the republic of Sudan in the events and the conferences of association, which ended by allowing the Sudan to participate as a result of the lifting of economic sanctions by the United States.

VI. The meeting of the fifteenth ordinary session of the network

The fifteenth ordinary session of AREGNET will take place on 18th – 20th September 2017 at UAE.