ASREN
Arab States Research and Education Network

Tunis Declaration

Announced During the

3rd International Platform on Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in a Global Environment – e-AGE 2013

Held under the Patronage of His Excellency Minister of Higher Educational and Scientific Research of Tunisia

Hosted by Computing Center Al Khwarizmi - Tunisia

12-13 December 2013

Abu-Ghazaleh announces Tunis declaration during e-AGE 2013

TUNIS --- December 13, 2013 ---- Chaired by His Excellency Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh (Chairman of ASREN), the 3nd "International Platform on Integrating Arab e-infrastructure in a Global Environment, e-AGE 2013" concluded under the patronage of His Excellency Dr. Moncef Ben Salem, Tunisian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and participation of Her Excellency Ambassador Faeqa Al-Saleh, representing His Excellency the Secretary General of the League of Arab States.

It has been recognized that the Arab region has attained a certain level of development towards developing advanced e-Infrastructure and it is important for the Arab States Research and Education Network to make use of its current potential in strengthening research connectivity and make it available for use on a regional scale.

It is our duty at ASREN to provide the regional e-infrastructure and services, for the benefit of the research and educational institutions that are members of ASREN together with the wider regional research and education community.

The e-AGE platform organized by ASREN on December 12-13, 2013 has set among its priorities, the development of pan-Arab e-Infrastructure and services, coordination with regional e-infrastructures, and enhancement of research and education cooperation in a wide range of activities, among the Arab countries and with communities in Europe, the US, Canada, Latin America, Africa, and the world at large.

In addition, it is our objective that a suitable medium for dialogue is created to facilitate investments needed for regional links and capacity for research and education through preparation and execution of national and regional e-Infrastructure projects. It is important that this dialogue and debate are based on objective grounds motivated by the long-term strategies and interests of our countries in the Arab region.

We deem it inspiring that e-AGE was attended by esteemed speakers, policy makers, experts, and scientists representing all the Arab countries, Europe, the US, Africa, Latin America, Canada, Asia, and international organizations and companies in a larger audience scale, representing over 30 countries. We see this as a manifestation of the sound basis and the respectable sustainability of the dialogue environment towards developing Arab research and education networks.

It is of the utmost importance that we build on the success of e-AGE and take necessary steps towards developing Arab e-Infrastructure and linking to the world research and education communities on a global scale.

It is also of great importance that we make use of the support of the League of Arab States, Europe, the US, and the international donors to initiate cooperation and develop sustainable projects towards connectivity and ensurance of a sense of self dependence.

It is of significant value that the Arab NRENs, the European GEANT, the US Internet2, the Candian Canarrie, the African UbuntuNet, and the Asia Pacific APAN have come together and declared to continue cooperation in order to develop sustainable and interoperable e-Infrastructures, providing support to scientists and researchers across the world.

After presenting topics, holding meetings and deliberating between delegations and participants, e-AGE concluded,

- To address a thanks and appreciation to the Government of Tunis for their host and support
- To strengthen collaboration with the League of Arab States towards developing an e-integration of educational networks in the Arab countries.

- To adopt ASREN programs and strategy for the upcoming stage, with focus on “Arab Connect” and pan-Arab e-infrastructure.
- To continue to focus on the ASREN main exchange points in London currently being deployed, and those being planned at Fujairah and Alexandria with UAE Ankabut and Egypt Universities Network, respectively
- To plan for the fourth e-AGE in December in 2014

It was also concluded on a concrete basis:

- To accelerate the integration of Arab e-infrastructure and connecting them with the European, the US, the Latin American, and the African research and education Networks through three main exchange points in London, Fujaira, and Alexandria.
- To continue to suport the relatively well established NRENs such as in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Palestine, especially where facing temporary sustainability issues
- To continue to support the development of research and education infrastructure in Lebanon, Bahrain, and Iraq.
- To continue to support peering of emerging networks in Qatar and Oman.
- To continue to support and initiate concrete discussions with Yemen and Libya towards taking concrete steps in developing their national e-Infrastructures
- To emphasize the importance to extend effective participation of ASREN, integrate Arab unified e-infrastructure and promote the role of research and education communities in the Arab world.
- To encourage the participation of Arab NRENs in ASREN regional network and peering at the evolving ASREN hubs in London, Fujairah, and Alexandria.
- To deploy network services of direct benefit to Arab NRENs and researchers including EduRoam, EduGain and the Catania Science Gateway.
- To benefit from and build upon the success of the EUMEDCONNECT, CHAIN-REDs and other EC funded projects in the field of developing cooperation and coordination between Arab and European researchers, and should tackle joint scientific research projects that use scientific infrastructure between countries.
- To encourage and attract donors, research foundations and supporting organizations in the Arab region, Europe and the world to support ASREN development as well as research infrastructures in the Arab world.
- To promote private sector’s participation and cooperation in developing research and education.

This year e-AGE has witnessed signing an MOU between the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq and ASREN to support the development of Iraq National Research and Education Network. ASREN role will be in the technical analysis and design of network topology as well as operational framework of Iraq REN. It has also witnessed signing an MOU with Telecity Group for the setup of ASREN PoP in London for research and education traffic exchange with Europe, the US, and other regional networks. The ASREN PoP will be supported through the EUMEDCONNECT3 project and in partnership with Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization.

On behalf of Tunis Ministry of Higher Educaiton and Scientific Research, the League of Arab States, the shareholders of ASREN, EUMEDCONNECT, CHAIN-REDs, and the participating organizations, we thank all those who have contributed to e-AGE and we hope that it has successfully served as an effective medium in attaining a convincing environment towards achieving our goals in developing stronger research and education communities in the Arab region and beyond.
With all respect and appreciation,

Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh
Chairman of ASREN