



## ASREN Envisions Sustainable Pan-Arab Network Infrastructure in IST – Africa 2016

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AMMAN – June 22, 2016 – The Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) together with international research and education network partners participate in IST – Africa 2016, which was held in Durban - South Africa. State of the art of research and education networking infrastructure in the North Africa region was presented during AfricaConnect2 workshop.

Partners of research and education networks in Africa agreed to report regularly on the status of national research and education networks and their international connectivity. They have presented best practices and shared technical experiences in an effort to accelerate progress and development of high-speed networks that can provide researchers and students in Africa with seamless access to varieties of services, repositories, and applications.

On this occasion, HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, chairman of ASREN, indicated, "National research and education networks are essential sources of development and can provide advanced networking services to the research and education communities in many countries around the world," adding, "Many of these networks have been established for decades as in Europe and America, but they are being established in the Arab countries."

Regional research and education networks in Africa work together to establish a specialized African research and education Network through the AfricaConnect2 project that is co-funded by the European Commission. The network interconnects the Arab NRENs in North Africa and the NRENs in Eastern and Southern, and Western Africa.

ASREN was established in 2011 as a non-profit organization that links the national scientific research networks in the Arab states to each other and with the international research and education networks. It runs, operates and represents the network in the similar global communities and institutions. This aims to facilitate the connection and interaction between the educational institutions, universities and the scientific researches centers.



## **ASREN Participates in Symposium in Victoria Falls**

### ***Abu-Ghazaleh: ASREN is Building an Arab World Infrastructure for Research and Education Infrastructure***

*VICTORIA FALLS – June 12, 2016* – The first Symposium of the AfriGEOSS Initiative was hosted by the Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ). African nations presented their readiness to commit to mobilizing the Earth observation community to contribute to the implementation of the Africa Space Policy and Strategy. The African Heads of State at the 26th African Union Summit, which was held in January 2016, adopted the strategy.

Representing ten Arab countries in the African continent, the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN), chaired by HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, participated in this symposium to extend the collaboration between researchers and research organization that work on Earth observation in these countries with the rest of the groups by providing them with necessary e-Infrastructures.

AfriGEOSS, an initiative of the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO), was formed in 2014 to coordinate access and use of Earth observations from satellites, airborne and ground- and marine-based systems across the African continent. The 27 AfriGEOSS members are focusing their efforts on data access and dissemination, forest management, food security, urban planning and water resources management, as well as contributing to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Africa.



The AfriGEOSS Symposium, “Earth Observations for the Africa We Want”, concentrated on ensuring that AfriGEOSS activities respond to the broader African agendas and objectives, including the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063. Minister Ambassador HE Mr. S.K. Moyo of Zimbabwe opened the proceedings stating: “Earth Observation and Geo-Information Science provide ample tools to tackle issues to do with the prediction and response to natural disasters such as droughts and floods.” HE Mr. Moyo cited the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessments: “Earth Observation is of critical value to the planet and Africa is rated as most vulnerable to changes in climate.”

Additional outcomes of the symposium include a commitment to establish national GEO mechanisms in the AfriGEOSS nations to leverage existing Earth observations investments, as well as improve the use of Earth observations for evidence-based policy formulation and decision-making. The participants also pledged to improve communication and outreach to the broader society about the value and benefits of Earth observations to the daily lives of people across the continent.

GEO Director Ms. Barbara J. Ryan urged all of the national and regional institutions to contribute their data resources to GEO’s global data infrastructure in order to broaden African access to, and dissemination of, critical Earth observation data.

In closing remarks, Dr. Philemon Mjwara, Director General of the South African Department of Science and Technology, indicated: “As Africans we have demonstrated that passion, as shown in the last three days, even without financial resources, can make things happen,” and pledged that the AfriGEOSS leadership “shall go out and secure the financial resources so that the ideas coming out of the symposium are realized and AfriGEOSS is implemented.”

## ASREN Supports Pan Islamic Research and Education Network Developments

*RABAT – June 9, 2016* – The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) decided to establish the Pan Islamic Research and Education Network (PIREN). PIREN will be comprised of the National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) of the 57 Islamic member states.

PIREN will be responsible to create and maintain collaboration between the research and education communities in the Islamic member states by providing necessary state-of-the-art e-Services to help in boosting the innovation and enable R&E communities to collaborate with researchers in other member states and with the rest of the world.

For this purpose, ISESCO requested a technical taskforce meeting to set the objectives, vision, strategic goals and strategic plan for this network. The taskforce included members from Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN), chaired by HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, and the NRENs of Pakistan, Egypt and Morocco, in addition to the participation of ISESCO.



The meeting was inaugurated by HE Dr. Amina Alhajiri, Deputy Director General of ISESCO and in the presence of directors and experts from ISESCO. Dr. Alhajiri highlighted the importance of PIREN in boosting research and education developments in the Islamic countries. PIREN is more than a regional network as Islamic countries are present in all over the world. It cooperates with regional and international research and education networks.

Mr. Yousef Torman, managing director of ASREN, said: “PIREN should work as a platform for collaboration rather than building a physical network like other regional research and education networks do”.

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## Abu-Ghazaleh Releases a Report on the Fifth Anniversary of ASREN

*AMMAN – June 7, 2016* – HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN), launched ASREN’s 5-years report, emphasizing its efforts to connect Arab technical research and education networks with their international counterparts and enable effective collaboration and communication between research communities worldwide.

Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh indicated: “ASREN provides high-speed networks for research and education to interlink Arab national research and education networks with the European networks through



ASREN's Point of Presence in London and other exchange points being established by ASREN throughout the Arab region."

The report emphasized the significance of research and education networks at the national, Arab and international levels, and ASREN's role in establishing such networks. It also emphasized the nature of research, education, and technology services that are provided by ASREN as well as the main activities and projects ASREN has carried out since its establishment as a non-profit organization in 2011 under the patronage of the League of Arab States. These projects include the EUMDECONNECT, AfricaConnect, CHAIN and CHAIRES, and MAGIC.

The report sheds light on the status of national research and education networks in the Arab countries and the Arab e-Infrastructure being established in cooperation with the national networks.

The Euro-Mediterranean Interconnection Project Director, Mr. David West of the GÉANT research and education organization in Europe, which contributed to the founding of the Arab connectivity for research and education, indicated, "The dedicated technical connectivity for research and education is very important, especially to link with the Research and Education Networks in Europe in order to create more opportunities for researchers and students to engage in cooperation international research with their peers in Europe and the world, and access to advanced research and educational resources."



## **G7 ICT Ministers' Meeting Highlights Importance of NRENs and GÉANT**

*CAMBRIDGE – June 6, 2016* – At the recent G7 ICT Ministers' meeting held in Kagawa, Japan, strong and clear recognition was made of the importance of national research and education networks (NRENs) and of the global networking of the research and education community. The ministers addressed the themes of:

- Innovation and economic growth



- Unrestricted flow of information, and ensuring the safety and security in cyberspace
- Contributing to the resolution of global issues
- International understanding and international cooperation in the future

The outcome of the meeting was the issuing of a Joint Declaration signed by Vice President Ansip for the Digital Single Market on the European Commission that focused on three main areas: recognition of a digitally connected world; commitment to mutual goals; and the reaffirming of a multi-stakeholder model for governance issues facing the deployment, development and evolution of the global internet.

In particular, the Joint Declaration states: "We recognize the importance of development, interconnection and utilization of national research and education networks as providing an open infrastructure for education, research and development purposes that also serve to enhance connectivity around the world."

A separate document was attached to the Joint Declaration, "Opportunities for Collaboration", which aims to "strengthen international cooperation and collaboration" to help achieve those actions mentioned in the Joint Declaration. It states: "The European Union welcomes continued collaboration on GÉANT, which aims to network the research and education community globally via extensive global partnership."

This recognition of the importance of NRENs and of the central role of GÉANT is welcomed. Together, GÉANT and our 38 NREN partners interconnect over 50 million users across 10,000 institutions throughout Europe, and connect Europe to an additional 60-plus countries worldwide.

This networking of the community is vital to accelerating science, enriching education and driving innovation, and the GÉANT community is extremely proud to be part of this.

## Happy 1,000,000,000th!

### *June 5, 2016 – eduroam Celebrates One Billion Roaming Authentications – Helping Create a Global Village for Research and Education*

It's not often you celebrate a billionth "birthday", so to be able to celebrate two at the same time must be pretty rare. On 17 May 2016, eduroam clocked up two amazing milestones – registering both one billion roaming authentications (either in-country or international) since the beginning of the year and the one billionth international authentication (when users are connecting from outside their home country) since the service was launched.

#### **eduroam – an International Success Story**

Since its launch on September 1, 2008 as a GÉANT service, the aim of eduroam has been to help the research and education community collaborate both nationally and internationally.



From its early beginnings with a handful of European universities, the service has grown to cover over 70 countries and tens of thousands of WIFI hotspots on every continent around the globe.

Now researchers can travel to each other's university and can instantly and securely connect to eduroam without the need for guest identities, sharing passwords or insecure webpage logins. What is most amazing about eduroam is its seamless and virtually invisible operation – truly the mark of a successful service. Put simply, it just works!

eduroam stands as an example of the success of international collaboration. Experts from around the world have all contributed time, effort and expertise to ensure that research and education can benefit from advanced technology.

#### **eduroam and GÉANT**

The eduroam service is a large-scale collaboration between hundreds of institutions, the majority of which own and operate the service's infrastructure. The national and international coordination of this infrastructure is undertaken by the Roaming Operators (ROs) and, within Europe, by a central eduroam Operational Team that is funded by the GÉANT (GN4-2) Project.

eduroam was pioneered by the GÉANT research and education networking community in Europe. The GÉANT task force on mobility and network middleware – TF-MNM – and the GÉANT

Project work together and with relevant industry and standardization groups to find and share solutions related to eduroam technology and security.

The GÉANT organization coordinates and supports the Global eduroam Governance Committee (GeGC), which sets technical and organizational standards for the service, and authorizes compliant Roaming Operators to provide eduroam around the world.

### **GÉANT Project**

The GÉANT project is co-funded by Europe's NRENs and the EU. As part of the GÉANT 2020 Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), the project receives funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 731122 (GN4-2).

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This project is funded  
by the European Union