ASREN

Arab States Research and Education Network

ASREN *Newsletter*

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*"**ASREN** is a non-profit company with limited liability (GmbH) and is officially registered in Germany, under the umbrella of the League of Arab States. The main goal is to connect Arab institutions among themselves and to the globe through high-speed data-communications networks. Such networks will enable sharing and access to a variety of R&E services and applications in addition to utilization of highly sophisticated and technologically advanced computing resources available only at very few institutions in the world."*

In this issue

The ASREN Community pays tribute to Dr. Abdulmonem Al Kharusi

The ASREN Community is extremely saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Abdulmonem Al Kharusi.

Dr. Abdulmonem was a much loved, highly respected and greatly admired member of the community. Indeed he was someone who truly worked with passion, integrity and energy, always engaging colleagues for discussions and share of knowledge. That he did this with friendliness and a sharp mind served to add to his charm of personality.

As a Director of the Oman Research and Education Network (OMREN), Dr. Abdulmonem was heavily involved in the regional and global NREN activities. He participated in various ASREN community meetings and

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conferences, working hand in hand with other Arab NRENs and significantly contributing to the strength of the community. He was an important driver for the Omani NREN, but also for the growth of the Arab NRENs and ASREN.

He will be sorely missed, and our thoughts are with his family and colleagues at this difficult time.

"I had the privilege to know my brother Abdulmonem for 7 years, he was enormously respected, immensely knowledgeable and truly wise; the ASREN community has lost a true leader, we will miss Abdulmonem deeply, and none of us will forget the pleasure and privilege it has been to work with him. Our condolences to our colleagues at OMERN, and most especially to Abdulmonem' family." ASREN Managing Director Yousef Torman.

Towards a New Role of NRENs - ASREN Takes Part in OMREN Technology Summit

The Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) took part in the virtual Omren Technology Summit, 31 May 2021. The first edition of OTS attracted wide participation from the regional and global research & education community, with a recorded virtual attendance of more than 500 visitors from 20 countries.

ASREN's Managing Director, Yousef Torman gave a presentation during the virtual summit titled: "Towards a New Role of NRENs". Torman provided insight into the new global trends to which National Research and education Networks can be of a great value.

Throughout the years, National Research and Education Networks have been struggling with many challenges making their own case towards their users, funders and partners. This is why NRENs sought to habitually identify and deploy new demand-led value added services, keeping up with the stakeholders' constantly changing needs and strengthening the overall case of the NREN from within.

To further foster the relationship of an NREN with its stakeholders, NRENs should also keep pace with the global trends and priorities recently aroused in the research and education arena. In his presentation, Torman highlighted a number of these trends such as; the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Science and Science Diplomacy, Open Science, Open Access, Open Data, Science Communities and Communities of Practice, Scientific Computing, Science Collaboration Platforms and Internet Access, Security and Governance. By engaging and taking an active part in promoting, adopting and achieving these initiatives and trends, the NREN will become more than just a network and thrive towards achieving the optimal model for its country.
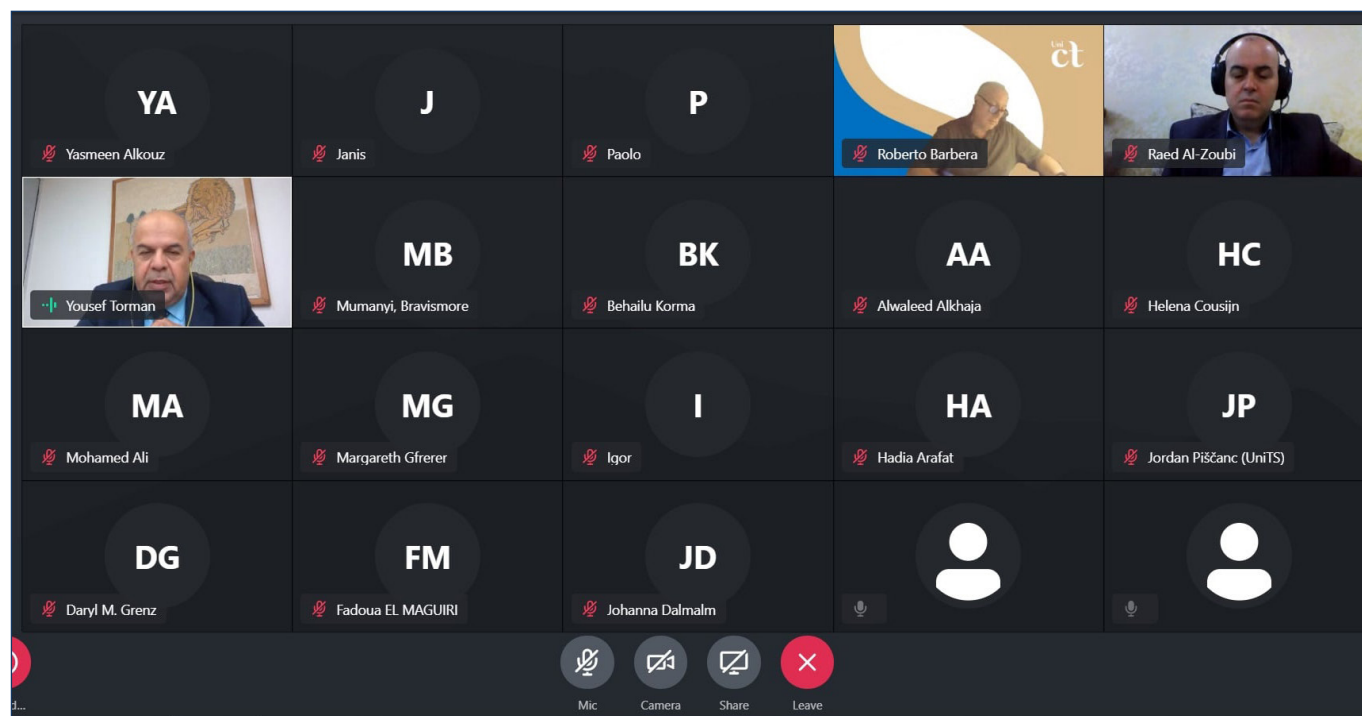
Torman called upon all NRENs to no longer live isolated form these global trends and grow beyond their typical role, moving from "Making the Case for NRENs" to "NRENs are Making the Case".

ABOUT OMREN
Oman Research and Education Network (OMREN) is a central part of a sustainable infrastructure that contributes to the emergence of an effective national innovation ecosystem. It provides the research and education community in the Sultanate of Oman with a common network and collaboration infrastructure adapted to their needs.

OMREN works with a vision to enable innovation, research, education, strategic and International e- collaboration for the research and education community of the Sultanate of Oman.

Towards FAIR Compliant Commons in the ASREN Region

On 7th June 2021 Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) organized a workshop integrated in the program of the 16th International Conference on Open Repositories (OR2021) about "Brokerage Event towards a FAIR Compliant Commons in the ASREN Region". This workshop frames the landscape of actions carried out in Africa to promote FAIR principles and Open Science.

The workshop provided an interactive showcasing of a wide variety of tools, services and approaches to building FAIR-compliant repositories in the ASREN region and a "pitch-session" in which 3 organizations looking to implement FAIR compliant repositories shared their plans and sought collaborations with other workshop participants.

Additionally, the workshop included a hands-on tutorial session, led by Roberto Barbera from University of Catania, exploring the features of a FAIR compliant digital repository.

What made this event different from similar ones is its innovative co-creation methodology. By bringing in the same virtual place solution seekers, solution providers, policy makers and end users to trigger new collaborations and proposing a "try before you buy" approach.

The event had also draw on expertise and significant contributions from Somali Research and Education Network (SomaliREN), Qatar National Library, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), the Moroccan Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (IMIST), the Higher Education Strategy Center of Ethiopia (HESC) and DataCite.

"We are pleased to have had shared the lessons learned from rolling out SORER, the Somali Research, and Education Repository. Open Access and FAIR-compliance are key factors that help shorten the content access gap, and hence the knowledge gap between the developed and developing nations. It is also very promising to see ASREN community collaborations take off to bring great minds from within the community and beyond to tackle issues of global importance - Open Access in this case. I would like to thank ASREN leadership, and specially Yousef Torman, Roberto Barbera, and all the colleagues who contributed to this initiative. It is about time to build the next massive, open access repository at regional or global scale", said Abdullahi Bihi Hussein, the CEO of SomaliREN

Raed Al Zoubi from ASREN stressed on the importance of this opportunity to the research and education community: *"ASREN's participation in OPEN REPOSITORIES 2021 conference was an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the efforts in promoting and adopting best practices to support Scientific Research, Education and Open Science in particular. The workshop had participants from various countries in the ASREN region, Europe & Africa. ASREN always aims at keeping the momentum to enlarge and tighten its partnerships worldwide."*

"I collaborate with NRENs in the Arab countries since 2006, well before the birth of ASREN, and it's always a pleasure for me to support initiatives aiming at promoting Open Science in the region. In the specific case of this event, I am very happy to see several collaborations starting and I congratulate everyone who already achieved concrete and valuable results in the path towards a FAIR-principles compliant commons in Africa and the Middle-East", concluded Roberto Barbera from the University of Catania.

Limited Seats are available on Internet Security Course

This is the second module of the "Information Security" training programme delivered by Arab States Research and education Network (ASREN), with the support of Internet Society (ISOC) and the EU co-funded projects AfricaConnect3 and EUMEDCONNECT3.

The course focuses on a variety of attacks on the Internet. It systematically studies each layer of the TCP/IP protocols, discusses the vulnerabilities in its design and implementation, and demonstrates how to exploit the vulnerabilities in attacks. Many classic attacks are covered in this course, with great technical details.

For more information and schedule visit: https://asrenorg.net/internet-security

For registration send an email to: info@asrenorg.net

Registration is free and open to all ASREN members and member organizations. Registration submissions will go through a moderation process for audience management purposes.

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