

01/04/2008

**ICANN Regional Meeting
Dubai, April 1, 2008**

**Keynote speech by Talal Abu-Ghazaleh
on "Initiatives for Empowering Arabic on the Internet"**

I. AKMS & ICANN

- We support the goal of an independent private sector-led ICANN, and business around the world looks forward to contributing to the discussions about a solid transition path for the organization toward that end.
- We remain confident that ICANN will be able to put in place mechanisms to ensure the future stability and security of the DNS, establish effective accountability mechanisms and strengthen relationships with the business community, as well as other stakeholders.
- Stability and security, of the various technical parameters of the Domain Name System (DNS) including among others IP-addressing, to ensure the consistent functioning of the Internet is of great importance to business;
- Creation of a structure and environment that remains flexible enough to encourage continued creativity and innovation on issues pursuant to ICANN's management needs is important;
- Ensuring multi-stakeholders participation within ICANN is essential;
- Continued and strengthened private sector leadership which includes business and the ICANN community, especially building of the relationships between business users, the Board and ICANN to ensure the voice of business is respected and considered in decision-making in shaping the structure of the organization going forward, and on all policy areas since the interests of business users and business in all sectors are broadly affected;
- We support continued efforts to internationalize ICANN's structures, both through its presence in different regions, and the involvement of stakeholders from more parts of the world. This outreach meeting in Dubai is an excellent example.

II. TAGORG & ICANN

- TAGOrg serves on ICANN's: CCNSO, APRALO (Chair), GNSO, At-Large, and served the Arab region on the new gTLD .Asia during the sunrise period, ICANN accredited registrar for all gTLD extensions

TAGBOOK – a basic laptop project

TAGKS – Knowledge Society Project

500 x 12 – 500,000 refurbished computers for schools before 2012
TAGPEDIA (with the Union of Arabic Universities) – An Arabic content initiative

We collaborate together as members of the UN Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

III. MII (an ICANN – AKMS initiative)

- The "Multi-lingual internet initiative" (MII) is a partnership between ICANN and AKMS
- It aims at fostering the use of Internet in Arabic.
- ICANN has been very supportive to this objective.
- Once ICANN issues its IDNs structures we should be ready with TLDs in Arabic.
- We also need to develop applications and services for Arabic Content.
- MII intends to be a catalyst with all stakeholders for that purpose.
- MII will hold its second meeting here in Dubai tomorrow, chaired by AKMS (Samar Labbad) and ICANN (Baher Ismat) and Members: UNESCO (Dr. Tarek Shawki), ESCWA (Ayman El-Sherbini), Sudan ccTLD (Mohammad Bashir), Tunisia ISOC (Khaled Koubaa), KuwaitNet (Bashar AbdelHadi), TAGIDomains (Mahmoud Lattouf) and AGIP (Charles Shaban). We are inviting others to join such as Emirates Internet Group (Sultan Shamsi).

IV. What next?

- What ICANN is expected to do, ICANN is doing with professionalism and competence.
- IPR protection on the internet needs to be enhanced (Agip is a global leader in this field and here is our internet). Who will?
- Abuse of the internet of all kinds needs to be addressed to who will?
- A possible internet doomsday scenario has to be thought of (often talked of). Perhaps technology needs to develop a situation similar to the generation in case of electricity failure!
- I have just led (as GAID co-chair) a forum on Web 2.0 at the UN and met with the S.G. on the conclusions.