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REGIONAL ISSUES

SAMENA COUNTRIES

Afghanistan **Chairman: Mr. Zakria Hassan** info@atra.gov.af
www.atra.gov.af
[Afghanistan Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (ATRA)]

- ◆ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Algeria **Chairperson: Ms. Zohra Derdouri** info@arpt.dz
www.arpt.dz
[Regulatory Authority for Post & Telecommunication (RAPT)]

- ◆ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Bahrain **General Director: Mr. Alan Horne** ahorne@tra.org.bh
www.tra.org.bh
[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has named the licensed operators that have qualified to participate in the Local Loop Unbundling field test. The TRA has confirmed that only four licensees, namely 2Connect WLL, Kalaam Telecom, Lightspeed Communication and Northstar Communications comply with the requirements of the Access Order and thus have qualified for the field test. (October 12, 2009)
- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has called on the mobile operators to present their plans to perform quality checks and benchmark their mobile services before the end of the year. The measurements will be conducted by 'DIRECTIQUE', a specialized consulting firm dedicated to mobile telecommunications testing and measuring. The General Director TRA has informed that this will be the first measurement campaign of its kind to be carried out in the Kingdom. The results will be shared and reviewed with the mobile operators, with the objective to progressively improve the quality of service of all mobile services. The results will be published by the beginning of 2010. (October 5, 2009)

Bangladesh **Chairman: Brig Gen Zia Ahmed** btrc@btrc.gov.bd
www.btrc.gov.bd
[Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC)]

- ◆ The total number of mobile phone users in Bangladesh has reached 50 million, making the country one of the fastest-growing telecommunications markets in the region, BTRC has reported. The mobile phone subscribers crossed 50.4 million at the end of September, signifying that more than one in three people have a cell phone. Bangladesh issued its first mobile phone license in 1993. Growth was slow during the first 10 years, with total subscribers reaching just 1.5 million by 1Q-2003. (October 15, 2009)
- ◆ The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has issued a Terms of Reference for a local consultancy on 'Statistical Survey of Public Private Telecom Resources, Facilities in Bangladesh'. The final deliverable of the consultancy is to be made by December 25, 2009. (October 12, 2009)
- ◆ The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission seeks views from the industry on various issues discussed in the public consultation paper on "Unified Licensing Regime" and has requested the industry stakeholders to offer their comments by October 25, 2009. (October 6, 2009)
- ◆ The 8th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) CEO Conclave-2009 will be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on October 30, 2009. The two-day event will be attended by more than 100 telecom professionals from the SAARC region. The theme of the conclave is "Innovation for growth: How telcos can spend less and earn more". The conclave envisions providing a common platform to SAARC nations for open discussion to reduce geographical separation and disparity of the telecoms services. (October 1, 2009)

Egypt **Executive President: Dr. Amr Badawi** [National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA)]

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- ♦ Egypt's communications minister has stated that the government will not allow fixed-line state-owned incumbent Telecom Egypt (TE) to acquire any unit from Orascom Telecom. The state argues that such a purchase could hinder competition and TE will become too dominant in the market and would exceed 90% of the capacity. (October 9, 2009)
- ♦ The National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has approved to tender two "triple play" cable, telephone and internet services licenses for the private sector and expects to draw investment of \$1 billion within five years. (October 1, 2009)

Iran **President & Deputy Minister: H. E. Khusravi Mahmoud** [Communication Regulatory Authority (CRA)]

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- ♦ Tamin Telecom, which had originally bid in a consortium with Etisalat has been granted the license once again, and is seeking another outside partner. The company, which is an affiliate of the Social Security Investment Company of Iran, has said that that it is looking to partner with an "experienced telecom consultancy" with the objective of launching 2G and 3G services throughout Iran next year. (October 13, 2009)
- ♦ Iran's General Inspection Organization (GIO) is probing the US\$7.9 billion privatization of Iran Telecom Company, after its 51% share was purchased by Etemad Mobin Development, a consortium of three Iranian firms. According to GIO, some studies have been done on the "problematic areas" in the deal and the findings will be shared among concerned organizations. (October 10, 2009)

Iraq **CEO: Dr. Siyamend Zeid Othman** [Communication & Media Commission (CMC)]

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- ♦ Officials from the Iraqi Communications Ministry are visiting Turkey to negotiate with Turkish fixed line operator Turk Telekom to roll out a fiber-optic cable network in Iraq. The Ministry declined to comment on the project's size or the investment budget, but did reveal it would be on a similar scale to the Turk Telekom's projects in Syria and Iran. (October 13, 2009)

Jordan **Chairman & CEO: Dr. Ahmad Hiasat** [Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC)]

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- ♦ The government of Jordan is developing a comprehensive plan to develop the ICT sector and help emerging firms in the field. During a recent meeting with CEOs and representatives of local IT companies, King Abdullah II underlined the importance of the sector in boosting the national economy, noting that Jordan has made several recent strides in information technology. The Kingdom's ICT strategy was launched in 2007 to increase Internet penetration to 50% over the next two year. The government is aiming to raise the ICT sector's revenues to \$3 billion while creating 18,000 jobs over the next two years. (October 6, 2009)
- ♦ The Telecommunication Regulatory Commission received comments from the stake holders on public consultation document on 'Revised Quality of Service Instructions'. (October 1, 2009)

Kuwait **Director of International Relations & Information: Mr. Walid Hamad El Giran** [Ministry of Communication(MOC)]

www.moc.kw

- ♦ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Lebanon **Chairman & CEO: Dr. Kamal S. Shehadi** [Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

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www.tra.gov.lb

- ♦ The technical sub-committee of the Children and Youth Online Safety Committee is exploring measures that can be taken as a common industry-wide goal to protect children from harmful content in cyberspace. (October 9, 2009)
- ♦ In order to guarantee the proper functioning of telecommunications services and to avoid confusion in the telecom equipment market, the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has postponed the implementation of Type Approval procedures. The implementation of Type Approval regulation is currently being examined by the TRA and will be communicated soon. (October 7, 2009)

- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority is preparing for the Global Industry Leaders' Forum and the Global Symposium for Regulators (GILF/GSR). Jointly organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Ministry of Telecommunications and the TRA, it is the largest annual gathering of regulators and operators in the region. This year's regulatory agenda will focus on "Hands-on or Hands-off? Stimulating growth through effective ICT regulation". (October 2, 2009)
- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority recently organized a roundtable meeting to discuss the introduction of IPv6 and its implications. The meeting was attended by the representatives from Cyberia, IDM, Solidere, and Broadband Plus and covered the following important topics:
 - Status of IPv6 capability in the current ISP setup (including the scarcity of IPv4 real IP addresses) and the main cost factors to upgrade any premises that do not support the Dual Stack.
 - Available Plans for a smooth IPv6 Introduction including Double Running, as well as the readiness of Tier-1 providers to IPv6 transition and parallel running.
 - The Status of lb domain registrar towards the Double running and the technical and financial implications.
 - The Status of the existing IXP Node.
 - Industry's and other stakeholders' role. (October 2, 2009)

Libya

[General Department of Communication (GCD)]

www.gcd.ly

- ◆ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Morocco

Director General: M. Azdine El Mountassir Billah

[Agence Nationale de Réglementation des Télécommunications (ANRT)]

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- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulator in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) held an Arab Regional Workshop on "New Approaches to Frequency Spectrum Management" in Morocco from October 5-7, 2009. The topics under deliberation included:
 - Introduction of technologies, standardization and propagation.
 - Introduction of the general policy of frequency spectrum management.
 - Introduction to the economic aspects of the frequency spectrum management.
 - National management of the spectrum.
 - Technical control of the spectrum. (October 2, 2009)

Nepal

Chairman: Mr. Bhesh Raj Kanel

[Nepal Telecommunication Authority (NTR)]

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- ◆ The Nepal Telecommunication Authority has issued a consultation paper on "Fully Opening up of VOIP/Internet Telephony" and requested the industry to offer their comments by November 5, 2009. (October 6, 2009)
- ◆ The Nepalese telecom regulator has allowed the incumbent fixed and mobile operator Nepal Telecom to team up with Laxmi Bank Ltd (LBL) to provide a mobile banking service, which would offer fund transfer and bill payment facilities, in addition to providing non-financial transactions such as balance-checking and transaction alerts. (October 5, 2009)

Oman

Chairman: Mr. Mohammad Al Khasibi

[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

traoman@tra.gov.om

www.tra.gov.om

- ◆ The Chairman of National Telecommunication Authority, while inaugurating the Middle East Spectrum Conference reiterated that the government is taking steps to open the market for great competition and investment. Government sponsored research is being carried out to develop new mechanisms to create new generation networks. (October 1, 2009)

Pakistan

Chairman: Dr. Muhammad Yaseen

[Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA)]

chairman@pta.gov.pk

www.pta.gov.pk

- ◆ Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has seized two networks of illegal gateway exchanges in the city of Lahore. The latest seizure is part of the major crackdown, launched against illegal gateway operators earlier this year by the telecom regulator (PTA) and the Federal Investigation Agency. Raids are being conducted based on the information obtained through PTA's in-house facility, designed specifically for detecting illegal telecom traffic. (October 7, 2009)

Palestine

Minister: Dr. Youssef Mahmoud Hamid

[Ministry of Telecom & Information Technology (MTIT)]

www.mtit.gov.ps

- ♦ The Palestinian Authority (PA) has sent a letter to ITU seeking its help in trying to release radio spectrum controlled by Israel. The ITU has confirmed the receipt of the letter. Presently, the Palestinian Territory has one operational mobile network (Jawwal), though Wataniya, a second mobile operator, was awarded a license in 2006 for a payment of US\$354 million, and was promised necessary radio spectrum by the PA under the terms of license. The Israeli government recently announced the release of 3.8x2 MHz slot. However, this slot is not sufficient for fulfilling the commitment made to Wataniya for a frequency slot of 4.8x2 Mhz. (8th Oct, 2009)

Qatar

Executive Director: Mr. William Fagan

[ICT Qatar]

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www.ict.gov.qa

- ♦ The ictQatar has invited expression of interest for pre-qualification stage of the licensing process for three additional VSAT licenses in its market. The launch of this process followed a public consultation that ictQatar conducted earlier in 2009 on its intention to license new VSAT providers in Qatar. (October 14, 2009)
- ♦ The ictQatar Secretary General, Dr. Hessa Al Jaber, led an official delegation to attend the 11th ITU Telecom World 2009 in Geneva. This year's theme was "Open Networks, Connected Minds". Every year, ITU Telecom World focuses on a number of areas, including new regulatory models around the world, ICT and climate change, cyber security, ICT and economic growth, ICT & development, future spectrum needs, and the future of the Internet. (October 6, 2009)

Saudi Arabia

Governor: H.E. Dr. Mohammed Al-Suwaiyel

[Communication & Information Technology Commission (CITC)]

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www.citc.gov.sa

- ♦ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Sri Lanka

Director General: Mr. Priyantha Kariyapperuma

[Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC)]

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www.trc.gov.lk

- ♦ The Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has decided to introduce the much-awaited and debated Interconnection Regime Regulations by the end of November 2009. (October 5, 2009)
- ♦ The Eleventh South Asian Telecommunications Regulators' Council (SATRC) Meeting will be held in Sri Lanka, from November 24 to 26, 2009. This regional regulators' meeting is being organized by the APT and will be hosted by the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka. (October 2, 2009)

Sudan

Director General: Abbas Arabi Abdalla

[National Telecommunication Commission (NTC)]

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www.ntc.org.sd

- ♦ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Syria

Minister: H. E. Dr. Imad Sabouni

[Ministry of Communication & Technology (MoCT)]

www.moct.gov.sy

- ♦ Ministry of Communication and Technology controlled Syrian Telecom, the country's only fixed-line operator has completed 75% of the project to install 334,000 phone lines in rural areas. The operator has secured all needed supplies for the third rural project, which aims to service 4,300 remote communities and villages. Syrian Telecom, which is Syria's sole provider of internet services, has invested US\$150 million in projects so far. (October 5, 2009)

Tunisia [National Telecommunication Commission (INTT)]dir.coop@intt.tn
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- ◆ No recent developments, including regulatory actions, issuance of licenses or policy frameworks, have been made public in the news/newsletters or on the regulator's website.

Turkey **Chairman & CEO: Dr. Tayfun Acarer**
[Information & Communication Technologies Authority]tacarer@btk.gov.tr
www.tk.gov.tr

- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulator has issued technical regulations on the design, production and setup of BTS towers. The purpose of these regulations is to effectively use the radio resources for investment and service cost minimization, competitive environment, facilitation of new operators into the market entry, environmental protection and to minimize public health and safety threats. (October 10, 2009)
- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulator has issued a draft regulation on Short Range Radio Access Devices (KET) for public consultation for the comments from the stake holders. November 6, 2009 has been set as the last date for the submission of the comments. (October 7, 2009)

UAE **Director General: Mr. Mohamed Al Ghanim**
[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]info@tra.ae
www.tra.gov.ae

- ◆ The UAE's Telecom Regulatory Authority is collaborating with the two national telecom operators to introduce VoIP in the market and is in the process of upgrading the national VoIP policy. Currently, VoIP is considered illegal and the regulator blocks all calls made through Skype and Yahoo. The regulatory body is encouraging the market players to reach an infrastructure-sharing agreement, which would help reduce charges on internet services and may also help in the introduction of VoIP. (October 18, 2009)
- ◆ The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has approved plans to introduce mobile number portability by early 2010. (October 14, 2009)
- ◆ The TRA feels that black market trade in internet domain names will increase, given the popularity of UAE domain names. The number of organizations registered with ".ae" domain names is expected to grow by more than 100% by 2010. The regulatory body is initiating a process whereby investigation will be done on fake domain names and domain name registrations may be cancelled, and transferred to "rightful owners". (October 12, 2009)
- ◆ Telecommunication Regulatory Authority has begun the second phase of its marketing campaign to enhance the registration of the country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) of the United Arab Emirates - .ae. The objective of this campaign is to encourage businesses to register domain names. (October 11, 2009)
- ◆ The United Arab Emirates Computer Emergency Response Team (aeCERT) is soon opening its threat intelligence operations center (Tioc) in Abu Dhabi to consolidate cyber security measures. The aeCERT is the cyber security co-ordination center in the UAE, established by the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority in efforts to better manage cyber security related challenges in the federation. (October 8, 2009)

Yemen **Minister: H. E. Eng. Kamal Hussain Al-Jabry**
[Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology (MOT&IT)]ptc@mtit.gov.ye
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- ◆ The government of Yemen is collaborating with the Office of the French Development Agency (AFD) in Yemen to implement better policies toward the evaluation study of Internet in Yemen, which the latter would finance. (October 1, 2009)



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