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## Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the latest edition of Teletimes International.

First of all, a belated Eid-ul-Adha Mubarak to all who celebrate it! I hope that everyone enjoyed a good time off with their families/loved ones and my thoughts are with those who are in hardship during this time.

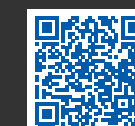
This edition of Teletimes features three really interesting interviews from three different verticals of the ICT market. The first is with the DG of Broadband World Association talking about how the world is realizing the importance of fixed broadband fiber. The second interview is with Stanley Song, Deputy General Manager, Oversea Sales Department, Hytera who talks about the evolving needs in the critical communications sector. Last but not least, we have an interview with Andrey Kirillovich, Director of Strategy, Marketing, and Business Development at Intersputnik who talks about the strategy of the inter-governmental organization and how the next five years will be critical for their members.

On the events side, the next month or two will be a little quiet before the exhibition calendars get busy starting in September with IBC Amsterdam. As always, Teletimes is a media partner to the event and we look forward to meeting our partners and collaborators in Netherlands soon!

As always, you will find the latest news and updates from all major ICT players in Teletimes. Your feedback is welcome on info @ teletimesinternational DOT com

Enjoy Reading!

**Khalid Athar**  
Chief Editor



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# ITU's Partner2Connect tops US \$50 billion for global connectivity at WSIS+20 Forum High Level Event

## Digital Coalition surpasses half its US \$100 billion goal for closing the digital divide

ITU announced US \$4.8 billion in investment commitments toward global connectivity. The announcement brings the total pledges aimed at closing the digital divide through ITU's Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (P2C) to US \$50.96 billion, over half the US \$100 billion goal set for 2026.

The pledges to Partner2Connect, ITU's platform to advance universal meaningful connectivity, were announced during the opening day of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 Forum High-Level Event in Geneva, Switzerland.

Among the new commitments announced at the WSIS Forum event are pledges that leverage artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance digital access, adoption and inclusion.

"Closing the digital divide requires a team effort, and today we scored a huge win for global connectivity," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "I am thrilled to see these amazing new commitments and that we have united P2C and WSIS to break through the halfway point in our goal to help bring the benefits of digital connectivity to everyone, everywhere."

**AT&T:** Help 25 million people in the hardest-to-connect areas in the United States to get and stay connected by 2030 through a commitment of US \$3 billion. This brings to US \$5 billion the total committed by AT&T since 2021 to narrow the digital divide. The additional US \$3 billion commitment will address the main barriers to connectivity – affordability and adoption – for those who need it most.

**Government of Canada:** Investment in computing infrastructure to support AI businesses and researchers in Canada through the CA \$2 billion (US \$1.46 billion) AI Compute Access Fund. Also, an additional commitment to invest CA \$400 million (US \$292 million) in the adoption of AI across Canada's economy; help small and medium size enterprises introduce AI into their businesses; protect workers with skills development; and to create a new Canadian AI Safe Institute to help Canada better understand and protect against the risks of advanced AI systems.

**Elle International:** Three pledges worth US \$106 million to improve the quality of life of 20 million women and girls in South Africa through the provision of digital platforms,

smart solutions, data, and AI models that drive connectivity, digital transformation, and open science in women's health.

**Microsoft:** A new pledge to support projects and prioritize partnerships to rapidly accelerate how people with disabilities are included in and represented by the systems, designs and features of technology, including AI. This raises to five the total number of P2C commitments from Microsoft.

"Because of the leadership, vision and ambition of P2C's pledgers, millions of people will be given the opportunity to have more accessible, more affordable digital technologies for socio-economic growth, improved health and everything that makes connectivity meaningful," said Bogdan-Martin.

### Connecting the WSIS and P2C Communities

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event was held on 27 to 31 May to address challenges and log achievements in the two decades since the multi-stakeholder WSIS process was established.

At the WSIS Forum event, government

ministers and officials from over 160 countries as well as representatives from the private sector, civil society, academia, the technical community, the UN System and intergovernmental organizations are analysing key trends shaping the world, including artificial intelligence, space for sustainable development, and other fast-evolving topics.

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event outcome will inform the UN General Assembly

WSIS+20 review scheduled for September 2025 to identify how WSIS processes can support the Global Digital Compact expected to be agreed as part of the Summit of the Future later this year.

The Partner2Connect Digital Coalition is aligned with the WSIS "Action Lines" – a set of 11 priority areas for UN efforts to connect technology and development that also provide guidance to policymakers and other stakeholders. P2C is designed to address

core issues related to access, adoption, value creation, and investments in connectivity, reflecting the key objectives outlined in the digital cooperation framework established by WSIS two decades ago.

ITU has called for US \$100 billion in overall investments by 2026 to provide the expertise and resources required to extend universal, meaningful connectivity and sustainable digital transformation to every corner of the globe. **IT**

## United Nations AI meet gives everyone a voice

Leaders from government, industry and the global artificial intelligence community took bold steps towards making AI more inclusive at the AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, Switzerland from May 29 to 31.

A series of actions, commitments and new initiatives reflected strengthened diversity of viewpoints and the vision of ITU – the UN Agency for Digital Technologies – to make AI work for the good of all.

"All voices need to be at the AI table," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "At this decisive moment for the future of global cooperation, the AI for Good Global Summit sets the path for inclusive AI governance, the fight against AI-driven disinformation, and rescuing the SDGs."

### Using AI to benefit people and the planet

ITU's AI for Good platform, established by ITU in 2017, identifies practical applications of AI to accelerate progress toward the SDGs. It also connects AI innovators with public and private-sector decision-makers to help scale up AI solutions globally.

At AI Governance Day, ITU and UNESCO launched UN Activities on Artificial Intelligence, a compilation of more than 400 projects by 47 UN agencies addressing all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A partnership announced between ITU and the United Nations University aims to

tap into the wealth of knowledge within the AI for Good community, including nearly 10,000 AI experts from academic institutions around the world.

The resulting flagship report will offer this expertise as a resource for stakeholders, helping them create innovative solutions and make informed decisions as they navigate the evolving world of AI.

### Commitments to Comprehensive Standards

The world's leading international standards organizations – ITU, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) – announced a unified framework for AI standards development, highlighting the push to translate AI governance principles into practical, actionable standards.

A new multistakeholder initiative was also announced to support coordinated standards development for AI watermarking, multimedia authenticity, and deepfake detection. This partnership includes the Content Authenticity Initiative, Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity, Internet Engineering Task Force, IEC, ISO, and ITU.

### New Stimulus to Capacity Development

The AI for Good Impact Initiative launched

at the summit aims to expand the scope and impact of AI applications for sustainable development. The initiative will link AI innovators with opportunities to scale and fund promising AI solutions for every SDG equally across every region.

Activities will include regional AI for Good Impact events; global competitions to crowdsource AI solutions and boost AI expertise; research and policy guidance on AI for sustainable development; and accelerators for start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises.

### Dynamic Discussions and Demos Forecast the Future

This year's AI for Good Global Summit showcased innovations in generative AI, robotics, and brain-machine interfaces that can accelerate progress in areas such as climate action, accessibility, health, education and disaster response.

Summit speakers, including some of the world's most recognized voices on AI, explored the latest breakthroughs in AI and examined actions to ensure that AI works to humanity's benefit.

Demos featured technologies using AI to translate brain waves into written and spoken words, and mind-controlled robotic prosthetics that included an AI-powered exoskeleton to allow people with severely limited mobility to walk again. **IT**

## Middle East Glasses-free 3D Industry Initiative announced at 2024 SAMENA Leaders' Summit



During the SAMENA Telecommunications Council Leaders' Summit 2024, the Middle East Glasses-free 3D Industry Initiative was announced by Zain Group, Omantel, LAiPIC AI, LITITONG, LANSHEN 3D, and others. This initiative seeks to standardize glasses-free 3D technologies, build ecosystem capabilities, and incubate innovative applications using 5G and 5G-A, artificial intelligence (AI), and computing network capabilities. The ultimate goal is to create a next-gen experience for users and new value for the industry at large.

Today, with a largely mature ecosystem in place, the user experience for glasses-free 3D has become natural and comfortable thanks to a plethora of device choices. Further development to make glasses-free 3D more immersive and more convenient will be enabled by the high speeds and low latency of 5G and 5G-A networks, powerful computing networks, and AI. In addition to improving the visual experience for users, this will also create good opportunities for scaled commercialization of glasses-free 3D. 2024 will be key to scaled commercialization of glasses-free 3D, hence the urgency of collaborative development of glasses-free 3D display and AI technologies as well as content, applications, and networks.

The Glasses-free 3D Industry Initiative will channel industry resources to further

explore the development of the glasses-free 3D industry as a whole and new directions for the technology. This initiative will promote collaboration among operators and industry partners, which will accelerate the technology's commercialization.

Moreover, this initiative underscores the urgent need for the market presence of glasses-free 3D devices in diverse form factors and at low costs. The industry will need to develop 3D applications in consumer electronics, such as those for large-, medium-, and small-screen devices like smartphones and tablets.

Furthermore, this initiative promotes the inclusion of new technologies such as AI, AR, and VR to improve the 3D user experience. These technologies can enable more real virtual applications and more intelligent image processing, improve 3D image quality, control crosstalk, and implement lossless 2D-to-3D content conversion.

Lastly, this initiative calls for exploring glasses-free 3D applications across diverse fields, which will help identify business opportunities. Glasses-free 3D is expanding from recreation and entertainment to domains like education, healthcare, and manufacturing. For example, it can help make learning more interesting and

intuitive. In healthcare, it can be used for medical image visualization and surgical simulation.

Overall, the Glasses-free 3D Industry Initiative will further the 3D ecosystem, improve the 3D user experience, and create new business opportunities.

The SAMENA Telecommunications Council Leaders' Summit 2024 was held at Atlantis, The Palm in Dubai with the theme of "Evolving toward Integration, Intelligence & Sustainability in Infrastructure". Over 20 regulators, 30 operators, and 300 industry leaders worldwide discussed key topics such as Leading the 5G-A Era, Digital Transformation, and Spectrum Opportunities for the GCC Region. The stated purpose of the summit was to catalyze digital prosperity across regions in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

The Leaders' Summit was attended by renowned ICT industry players, including regulators from the UAE and Saudi Arabia; industry organizations like GSMA and the World Broadband Association (WBBA); operators from the Middle East, Asia, and Africa; and ICT infrastructure representatives like Huawei and Nokia. Enterprise representatives, analysts, application ecosystem partners, and media partners were also in attendance. ■



Interview: Khalid Athar

## Recognizing the need for a solid backbone of fiber and a growing focus on sustainability are two of the top trends in the broadband industry today

**Martin Creaner, Director General of the World Broadband Association talks to Teletimes International in an exclusive interview**

**Khalid Athar: Could you share a bit about your journey, and how you came to be the Director General of the World Broadband Association?**

**Martin Creaner:** First of all, I've been in the

telecom industry for nearly 40 years, which is quite shocking. I have worked in all different parts of the industry for operators and suppliers. But I spent about 12 years as the president and CEO of the TeleManagement Forum, the TMF. Running a big global

*Now, there's a recognition that adding a solid backbone of fiber in the access, backbone network, and data centers is really important*

organization like that was a very interesting experience. So when the World Broadband Association was launched, I was approached to see if I could bring some of that experience into forming a truly global broadband organization. So that's how I've ended up as Director General of the WBBA.

**Khalid:** How long have you been with the WBBA?

**Martin:** The WBBA was launched at the end of 2022. So it's been nearly two years since I've been involved with the WBBA.

**Khalid:** What are the major trends currently shaping the global broadband industry?

**Martin:** I think one of the most interesting facts about the global broadband industry is that the importance of fixed broadband is growing. For the last 20 years, the world has been really dominated by mobility and getting people connected on a mobile basis. Now, there's a recognition that adding a solid backbone of fiber in the access, backbone network, and data centers is really important. The other key trend is around sustainability. There's also a lot of discussion around economic fairness and closing the digital divide. So those would maybe be three trends, along with the shift from hundred megabit broadband

to one gigabit broadband to ten gigabit broadband, depending on what part of the world you're talking about.

**Khalid:** *How are emerging technologies like 5G and fiber optics transforming the broadband landscape?*

**Martin:** I think people know a lot about 5G and the opportunities around fixed wireless access. Fiber is obviously the premium technology for broadband, providing ultra-high bandwidth opportunities. It's got the best sustainability credentials, uses the lowest energy, has the fewest faults, requires the fewest truck rolls, and will last for a long, long time in the ground. So the capabilities of fiber optics make it the technology of choice. In the past, we've used DSL technologies and cable, and there's obviously some opportunities around satellite. But the reality is that most of the world is focusing on fiber optics as the technology of choice for broadband.

**Khalid:** *What steps is the World Broadband Association taking to address the digital divide, particularly in underdeveloped regions?*

**Martin:** The World Broadband Association recognizes the importance of closing the digital divide and has incorporated this topic into many of our collaboration activities. We have one dedicated topic, the broadband investment guidebook, which looks at different strategies that countries can use worldwide to incentivize national broadband investment. It looks at supply-side and demand-side incentives, direct and indirect incentives. So our broadband investment guidebook is one of the key strategies, as well as our dedicated task forces on regions like Africa, where we look at the opportunities for knocking down the barriers to broadband investment and in doing so, closing the digital divide.

**Khalid:** *What are the biggest regulatory challenges facing the broadband industry today? And how is the association addressing them?*

**Martin:** Oddly, the biggest regulatory

challenges tend to be very basic challenges, such as the right of way across land to lay fiber and obtaining wayleave permissions in different regions of the world. These regulatory issues, of course, delay the launch of broadband services. Overcoming those basic planning challenges is crucial. There are also major challenges around regulations related to sustainability and energy efficiency, and spectrum regulation, which, of course, comes into play. So there's a range of regulatory challenges, but I would emphasize that every regulator we meet is very keen to remove any barriers to broadband investment and to accelerate



*The World Broadband Association recognizes the importance of closing the digital divide and has incorporated this topic into many of our collaboration activities*



the rollout of fixed fiber broadband across the world.

**Khalid:** *Could you please discuss the sustainability practices within the broadband industry? How is the association encouraging green initiatives?*

**Martin:** Sustainability is a very hot topic within the whole communications industry. The WBBA has just released a sustainability guidebook, which looks at how to reduce energy consumption across any mobile operator. It covers areas like technology swaps, with swapping towards fiber offering great sustainability credentials and capabilities. There are sustainability challenges in the customer premises equipment, focusing on reducing energy wastage within buildings and back offices. There are many different approaches to improving the sustainability of a network, and we've detailed them in our most recent white paper on the topic of energy

efficiency within broadband networks.

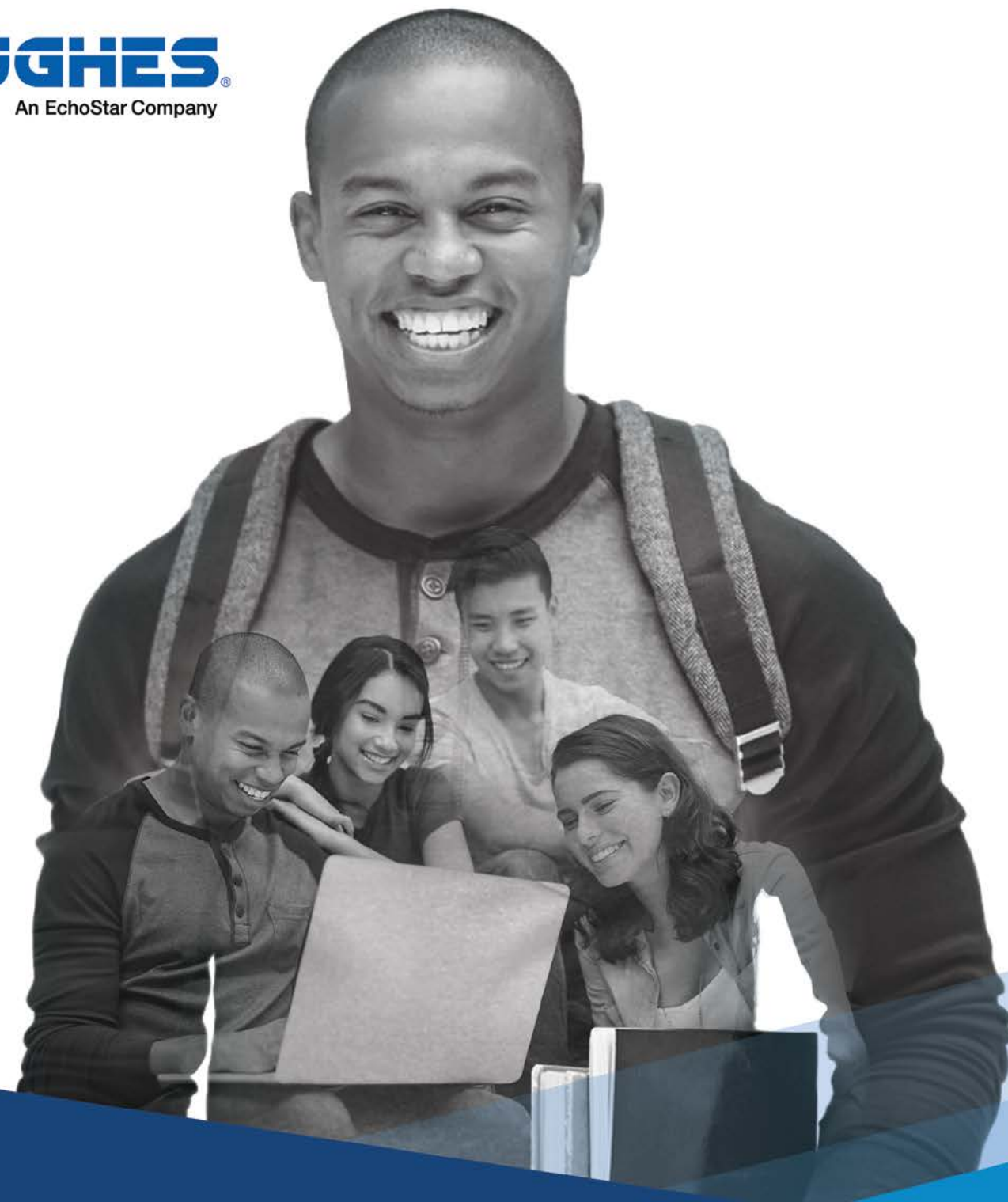
**Khalid:** *What new technologies do you see on the horizon that could further revolutionize broadband?*

**Martin:** Revolutionizing broadband will likely involve technologies related to speed, such as 10 GPON or 50 GPON, and more advanced networks. But there are also many technologies on what we call the demand side of the industry. These include 4K video, 8K video, AR, VR, and 3D glassesless TVs. All of these technologies will create a demand for broadband, which will mean

that we will need to roll out 10 GPON and 50 GPON capabilities over the coming decade.

**Khalid:** *What are the strategic goals of the World Broadband Association for the next five years?*

**Martin:** The World Broadband Association was formed only two, two and a half years ago. So it has a lot of growing to do. The success of any industry organization depends on getting a good group of members, so you are representative of the broadband industry, getting excellent members in every part of the world, running really successful collaboration programs that address problems of common interest to members worldwide, and organizing really interesting, large, and engaging events where all of our members can come together and do business. So the goals are really around excellent membership, excellence in collaboration, and excellent events. ■



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## UAE Space Agency successfully concludes its participation at 'Make it in the Emirates' Forum

With a large turnout, the UAE Space Agency concluded its participation in the third edition of the 'Make it in the Emirates' Forum. Organized by the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology in cooperation with ADNOC and the Department of Economic Development in Abu Dhabi, the forum took place on May 27 and 28 at the Abu Dhabi Energy Centre.

His Excellency Salem Butti Al Qubaisi, Director-General of UAE Space Agency, said: "Our participation in the forum, which is a vital platform for exchanging ideas and experiences between industry leaders, investors, and decision-makers, comes in line with our commitment to supporting the national economy. It also supports our vision to foster innovation and technology in the space sector, and highlight the role of this pioneering sector in creating new investment opportunities. This supports the UAE leadership's aspirations to achieve a comprehensive development renaissance and promote the UAE as a global hub for industrial innovation.

"At the UAE Space Agency, we believe that these pioneering events immensely contribute to supporting the national economy as they offer an attractive environment for startups and SMEs to share experiences and expand strategic partnerships with participants from across the globe.

"We are committed to launching sustainable programs and initiatives, like the Space Economic Zones Program, which supports achieving a qualitative economic shift in all sectors, including the space sector, over the next fifty years," Al Qubaisi concluded.

During its participation, the Agency reviewed its key projects and initiatives in the national space sector and the satellite industry. The agency shed light on the Space Economic Zones Program and its role in attracting companies specialized in space fields and industries for manufacturing in the UAE, the National Space Academy, the execution phase of the "Sirb" project to enhance the satellite manufacturing and operation systems, the Space Data Centre, the Global Navigation Satellite Systems – Augmentation System (GNSSaS), the Emirates Mars Mission (Hope Probe), and the Emirates Mission to the Asteroid Belt (EMA), as well as recent updates on the 813 satellite project.

The UAE Space Agency's platform at the forum witnessed a large turnout from representatives of government organizations, as well as local and international companies and visitors. It showcased the latest innovations and industrial technologies that enhance local manufacturing capabilities, and provided an opportunity for discussion about the best practices in industry and technology.



On the sidelines of the forum, Al Qubaisi participated in a discussion session entitled "Exploring the Final Frontier: The UAE's space ambitions as a new investment magnet for future growth". During the session, Al Qubaisi shed light on the UAE's potential to nurture global progress in the space industry, and the importance of private sector participation in the success of the national space sector. The session also addressed potential investment opportunities and partnerships in space and other related fields, such as satellite communications and space travel, and the economic impact of such opportunities.

Additionally, the Agency strives to support the strategy of the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology (MoIAT), which aims to establish the UAE as a global hub for future industries. As a major pillar of this strategy, space industries contribute to sharing experiences and discussing ways to expand strategic partnerships with the forum's participants locally and internationally.

The UAE Space Agency focuses on a few main strategies to achieve its ambitious goals in space exploration and space technology, and bolster the advancement of the national space sector. This includes investing in advanced space infrastructure by developing and launching satellites, enhancing cooperation with leading global institutions in space by signing partnership agreements and joint projects for knowledge and technology exchange, and developing the skills of Emirati cadres through specialized programs and workshops at the National Space Academy, one of the initiatives of the National Space Fund.

The Agency's participation supports its vision and commitment to promote the sustainability of the national space sector, exchange experiences in this vital sector, highlight advanced solutions, and interact with industry leaders to explore new cooperation opportunities. ■

## UAE Space Agency and EDCC sign MoU to foster collaboration in aerospace and defense industry

UAE Space Agency and the Emirates Defense Companies Council (EDCC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on identifying and fostering business opportunities within the aerospace and defense sectors.

The MoU was signed on the margins of the 'Make it in the Emirates' Forum, currently underway in Abu Dhabi. It was signed by His Excellency Salem Butti Al Qubaisi, Director General of the UAE Space Agency and Mona Ahmed Al Jaber, Chairwoman of EDCC.

His Excellency Salem Butti Al Qubaisi, Director General of the UAE Space Agency, said: "This MoU reflects our commitment to developing advanced industries in the UAE, by cooperating in enhancing our ability to innovate and compete globally. This enables us to support the national economy, and create new job opportunities and sustainable investments in these two leading sectors, to achieve excellence and provide advanced solutions that contribute to promoting the UAE as a leading hub for technology and innovation."

Al Qubaisi added: "Through this MoU, we look forward to mutual achievements that exceed expectations and push the boundaries of innovation to new levels. This supports the vision and aspirations of the UAE's leadership in achieving a comprehensive development renaissance over the next fifty years in all sectors, including aerospace and defense Industry."

Commenting on the MoU, Mona Ahmed Al Jaber, Chairwoman of EDCC, said: "This MoU represents a significant step forward in fostering collaboration between the aerospace and defense sectors in the UAE."

"By collaborating with the UAE Space Agency, we can leverage the expertise and capabilities of both industries to create new



business opportunities, drive innovation, and support the UAE's overall economic development," she added.

This MoU aims to leverage the strengths of both organizations to drive economic growth and diversification in the UAE by exploring potential synergies in the aerospace and defense industries.

Under the MoU, the UAE Space Agency will work with the EDCC to identify industrial and business opportunities within the space sector that align with the capabilities and interests of EDCC members. This collaboration also seeks to enhance economic growth and diversification by tapping space-related opportunities for defense and adjacent industries.

The two parties will work together to promote education and skill development in defense and space-related technologies among local talents. This will promote innovation and enhance local capabilities in these critical sectors.

The MoU establishes a framework for the exchange of information and best practices between the defense and space sectors to enhance the competitiveness and efficiency of both industries in areas such as procurement and technology development.

The parties will collaborate to support each other's participation in defense events, forums, and sponsorships. This will provide opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing, and showcasing the capabilities of local defense and space industry players. ■

# “The next five years will be pivotal for our Members and Signatories”



Interview: Gulraiz Khalid

**Andrey Kirillovich**, Director of Strategy, Marketing, and Business Development at Intersputnik, talks to Teletimes about the evolving satellite industry and the role of Intersputnik (as an intergovernmental organization) in a market where different technologies and offerings are continuously converging

**Gulraiz Khalid:** Could you share with us your career journey and what led you to your current role at Intersputnik?

**Andrey Kirillovich:** As part of the generation born at the end of the 70s, I witnessed huge developments in space exploration globally, mostly as part of the space race. This advanced space science and development far ahead, so much so that these achievements set in the 70s and 80s still have an impact and are used by many players in the industry. On the other hand, the 90s were a crazy time, boosting telecom development, starting the decade with a wired copper dial phone, and ending with a cellular phone owned by

almost everyone. The early 2000s were also marked by the first attempts to connect the unconnected by satellite. With this in mind, and taking into account that I graduated from a telecom university in the year 2000, there was no other path for me but to join a satellite operator as my first official employment. With this, I have remained in the satcom industry for almost 24 years. So, I started at a GEO operator, which was managing a fleet of 10+ GEO satellites in C/Ku and Ka bands, selling transponders and international circuits, starting from narrowband links of 512/64 Kbps, and finally moving to tens and hundreds of Mbps. I had a good experience working in various positions: Contracts, Key Accounts, Sales,

and then Business Development, obtaining good experience in the space segment. Then I also spent almost 5 years with a VSAT vendor, the ground segment provider, which gave me a good understanding of satellite networking and traffic routing in satellite networks. This means I have obtained experience throughout the entire value chain for satcom connectivity services. And through all these years, I have been excited by the unique opportunity that satellite communications provide globally - connecting communities, countries, and continents. Since I was engaged in various projects involving multiple locations, countries, vendors, teleports, and service providers, this was a good example of

international cooperation that helped reduce the costs of connecting via satellite and provided digital inclusion and bridged the digital divide in the most isolated and underdeveloped regions in the world. So when Intersputnik approached me, I was glad to join an international organization where international cooperation in space is in its DNA.

**GK:** As the Director of Strategy, what are your main strategic goals for Intersputnik in the next five years?

**AK:** The Intersputnik International Organization of Space Communications is an intergovernmental organization established in 1971. Governments of twenty-five sovereign states are members of Intersputnik. The members appoint signatories from among national telecommunications entities. The main goals of our organization are to contribute to the strengthening and development of economic, scientific, technical, cultural, and other relations through communications, radio, and television broadcasting via satellites, as well as to ensure cooperation and coordination of efforts in the design, establishment, operation, and development of the Intersputnik international system of communications via satellites (Intersputnik system). Unlike the vast majority of intergovernmental organizations, Intersputnik is tasked with the commercial operation of its satellite system. A unique status of Intersputnik allows it to scale up its commercial activities through international cooperation. The organization has access to the bandwidth of most satellite operators across the world. Intersputnik provides customers from all continents with the bandwidth of satellites in geostationary and non-geostationary orbits, as well as a full range of advanced satellite communications and broadcasting services. The next five years will be pivotal for our members and signatories, as the satellite industry is evolving, transforming to a new level where the borders between multiple service offerings of various industries are shrinking. 5G and terrestrial technologies are merging with satellite communications, so the right investment and development decisions



**5G and terrestrial technologies are merging with satellite communications, so the right investment and development decisions need to be done by stakeholders**



need to be made by stakeholders. Our organization enjoys a unique combination of space and ground-based assets, as well as 50+ years of expertise on the satcom market. A consolidated orbital fleet of 25+ GEO satellites located from 14 West to 183 East, in combination with a widely distributed teleport infrastructure of partners, members, and signatories, provides flexibility in delivering a dedicated, tailored connectivity solution for every customer. So in general, the main strategic goal is to transform the organization into a satellite communications and broadcasting marketplace, where a commercial company

or national telecom authority can pick up the required assets and build a service according to its specific needs and requests.

**GK:** What do you see as the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the satellite communications industry today?

**AK:** Intersputnik, as an international organization, operates for the benefit of its 25 member countries. Nineteen of them are developing countries, eight are landlocked countries (LLDCs in the UN classification), four are least developed countries (LDCs), and we have also



developed satellite projects with another two LDCs. Eight of these countries have national satellites, which they use heavily to provide connectivity to remote and rural regions. So I assume the biggest challenge from our perspective as an international satellite organization is to ensure that all new technologies and innovations are available for developing nations, and moreover, that they can navigate through them and implement them in their national satellite communications and broadcasting strategies. In this connection, we provide guidance to our member states and signatories, using our expertise to promote the use of satellite connectivity to bridge the digital divide in these countries.

**GK: Can you discuss some of the marketing strategies that have been most effective for Intersputnik?**

**AK:** Since Intersputnik is an international

expertise with an audience consisting predominantly of developing countries. I would like to use this opportunity to invite everyone to join us at natsattel.com.

**GK: How important are partnerships and collaborations in your business model, and could you highlight a few successful examples?**

**AK:** Since one of the main goals for Intersputnik is advancing international cooperation in space, our organization has established long-term cooperation and partnerships with major international organizations in the space, satellite, and telecom industries. Intersputnik actively cooperates with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, intergovernmental satellite communications organizations, and other organizations promoting the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. For instance, Intersputnik holds

associations like the Global Satellite Operators' Association, and many others. Intersputnik has also established direct relations with other international satellite communications organizations like the International Telecommunication Satellite Organization (ITSO), International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), European Telecommunications Satellite Organization (EUTELSAT), and the Regional African Satellite Communications Organization (RASCOM).

**GK: What recent innovations in satellite technology are you most excited about, and how is Intersputnik involved?**

**AK:** The recent few years have brought a lot of new improvements, innovations in technologies, and cost reductions to the space industry, both in space and on the ground. Now, for a developing country, there is a true dilemma – how to embed satellite connectivity into their national digital development or broadband connectivity plans and projects. Should they launch their first national GEO satellite (or develop further with a replacement one), use Non-GEO broadband constellation services for fast satellite broadband deployment right here, right now, or rely on service providers? Many options are available, each with its pros and cons. I think the most important improvements and innovations happened on the national GEO satellite procurement side, leading to a considerable cost reduction of the projects. The latest small GEO satellite concept, where new players offer a dedicated small satellite capable of providing dedicated coverage and throughput to the national domestic market, is very promising. But the most important is the fully digital software-defined payload, where footprints, throughput, and power can be adjusted onboard, adding flexibility. This allows planning a cooperative satellite model, where several nations can combine several footprints dedicated to their domestic projects, using, for example, their Appendix 30B planned band allocated frequencies, and thus share the costs of the satellite. This also helps avoid multiple satellites in orbit – overcrowding the GEO arc. One satellite



instead of many, which is good for space sustainability.

**GK: How is Intersputnik addressing sustainability in its operations and technology advancements?**

**AK:** Since we use satellites to provide services and many of our members and signatories operate GEO satellites, Intersputnik pays great attention to space sustainability, supporting various initiatives on different global platforms. For example, in 2021, Intersputnik was one of the 17 space industry players that signed the Space Industry Debris Statement released

by the World Economic Forum. We have also contributed to the analytic report "The Role of Space in Driving Sustainability, Security, and Development on Earth" issued in 2022 by McKinsey. Most importantly, we participated in the elaboration of the Report on the Implementation of the LTS Guidelines issued by UNOOSA, a helpful document addressing space sustainability right now.

**GK: What future technologies do you believe will significantly impact the satellite communications sector?**

**AK:** I assume one of the main reasons

why satellite connectivity remains a niche product is the relatively expensive cost of the Customer Premises Equipment (CPE). Each vendor produces proprietary terminals with no interoperability. The use of one chipset for all satellite terminals will help save on the economy of scale and finally open new huge market niches, dropping the price of the CPE from USD 300 to USD 100 and below. There have been many innovations and cost reductions in space recently, so the ground must also keep pace.

**“ The latest small GEO satellite concept where new players offer a dedicated small satellite capable of providing dedicated coverage and throughput to the national domestic market is very promising ”**

**“ Intersputnik actively cooperates with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, intergovernmental satellite communications organizations and other organizations promoting peaceful exploration and uses of outer space ”**

organization and operates in the global satcom and space markets, we normally exhibit at and participate in the main regional and global industry events like CabSat, CommunicAsia, IBC, and AfricaCom, and the International Astronautical Congress, supporting and speaking at various conferences, workshops, and roundtables. Besides that, we also arrange our own annual online event – Natsattel conference, which in 2024 will take place on June 11. This is an event where leaders and the most innovative companies from the industry share their

permanent observer status with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), contributing also to the activities of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA). We are also a member of the International Astronautical Federation, whose annual event – the International Astronautical Congress – gathers all players in the global space industry. Besides that, Intersputnik is also a member of the Radiocommunication Sector and the Telecommunications Development Sector of the International Telecommunication Union, various regional

**GK: Where do you see yourself and Intersputnik in the next decade?**

**AK:** I see Intersputnik uniting more countries, assisting them in operating their national fleets of GEO/Non-GEO satellites and proprietary satellite networks, sharing the resources both in space and on the ground with other members and signatories for turnkey service provision. My role here is to ensure that the organization offers its members, signatories, and customers worldwide the most advanced solutions available on the market. ■

## Connect IT with Huawei eKit, building future for distribution business together



The recently held Huawei eKit Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) Network Product Launch Event introduced a new Huawei sub-brand dedicated to the distribution business in the UAE.

Kinven Zou, Director of Enterprise Distribution Sales Business, Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, shared Huawei's latest partner policies. "Huawei is willing to work with distribution partners in the Middle East & Central Asia region to create a distribution ecosystem, strengthen the development of the distribution industry, develop integrated marketing and service, and improve partners' sales capabilities," Kinven said.

"Huawei provides a comprehensive support system for partners and customers. This service support system includes dedicated partner policy, scenario-based solutions, and digital tools," Kinven added.

Leaf Hu, Director of Distribution Business, Huawei UAE Enterprise Business, launched

new products of SME Network. In terms of WLAN, Huawei has released the cost-effective Access Point AP361, the industry's first entry-level distributed Wi-Fi 7 AP371, and the quasi-industrial standard outdoor AP AP761. Meanwhile, Huawei has also introduced 8-port managed switches, 24-port fiber switch S310-24ST4X and 2.5GE ports switch S310-24PN4X.

In terms of platforms and capabilities, Huawei has introduced the Cloud Web Management Platform SNC. Till now, Huawei eKit SME Network includes 46 products on sale, to continually support partners Growing.

Abdullah Xi, Director of Delivery & Service Dept, Huawei UAE Enterprise Business, shared the distribution business service strategy. With a spirit of "6 Easy", Huawei eKit integrated marketing, solution, tools, service, enablement and partner operations into one platform. Abdullah said that Huawei would like to build e-commerce

form transaction capabilities and digital operation capabilities for partners and build a bridge to connect digital requirements and ICT products for end users.

In 2023, Huawei eKit evolved marketable products and scenario-based portfolios for SMEs operating in the Middle East and Central Asia, entering six countries in the region. Till date, more than 100 subcontractors have already chosen these products.

In 2024, Huawei is committed to providing products, digital platforms, and services that are easy to buy, sell, install, maintain, learn, and use. Huawei has set ambitious targets and hopes to work with more than 2,000 additional subcontractors by the end of the year.

Huawei eKit's diverse Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions cover 30 scenarios, including Small Office Home Office (SOHO), hospitality, catering, education, and retail. ■

## Huawei Network Summit 2024: Huawei launches Xinghe Intelligent Network to accelerate digital-intelligent development in the Middle East and Central Asia

Huawei held the Middle East and Central Asia leg of its Network Summit 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The event brought together more than 1,000 thought leaders, industry experts, and ecosystem partners to explore the development trends and best practices of intelligent networks in the new era.

At the summit, Huawei unveiled its Xinghe Intelligent Network products and solutions, and delved into trending topics, including campus networks, wide area networks (WANs), data center networks (DCNs), and network security, as well as commercial and distribution business. These purpose-built offerings and insights empower customers to seize new opportunities for intelligent development and maximize digital-intelligent productivity.

The global digital economy is in its golden era, with numerous industries actively exploring and advancing intelligent transformation while ramping up digital transformation. The AI penetration rate in core business scenarios across diverse industries is expected to reach 30% by 2026, while AI is projected to contribute US\$13 trillion to global GDP by 2030.

Several countries in the Middle East and Central Asia, such as the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kazakhstan, have announced their intelligence strategies and released a series of AI-related industry policies to propel the prosperity of intelligence across industries.

### Embrace Opportunities for Intelligent Transformation and Build the Foundation for an Intelligent World Together

Intelligent transformation across industries requires leading and solid technical support. As one of the most important ICT infrastructures, networks play a very important role in the intelligent era.



Leon Wang, President of Huawei's Data Communication Product Line, delivering a speech



Huawei Xinghe AI Network Launch Ceremony

In his keynote speech, Yang Chaobin, Director, President of ICT Products & Solutions, Huawei, said in the keynote speech, "Huawei is committed to network technology innovation and collaboration with customers and partners to build Net5.5G-based network infrastructure that can power all industries with intelligence. Together, let's work hand-in-hand to advance intelligence and move faster towards the intelligent world."

### Xinghe Intelligent Network, Accelerating Industrial Intelligence

Keeping in mind network requirements in

the intelligent era, Huawei continues to develop more best-in-class products and solutions.

Leon Wang, President of Huawei's Data Communication Product Line, further elaborated on the company's vision during his speech.

"All industries are accelerating intelligent transformation, and networks are evolving to all intelligence. As such, we fully upgrade our data communication solutions from Intelligent Cloud-Network to Xinghe Intelligent Network based on Net5.5G, thereby building a network foundation for



Huawei and Ankabut jointly released cloud data center showcase



Huawei announced Xinghe Intelligent SASE Experience Program

Wi-Fi 7" program, inviting tech enthusiasts to imagine innovative Wi-Fi 7 application scenarios via short-form videos. At this event, Huawei presented the Imagine Wi-Fi 7 Contest awards to excellent contributors. Until now, the program has ignited a wave of adopting Wi-Fi 7 in various industries

In the AI model era, data center networks face unprecedented technical and application challenges. At the summit, Huawei and Ankabut jointly released the cloud data center showcase to global audiences, deepening their cooperation in High-Performance Computing (HPC) networks and cloud computing data centers to promote the digital transformation of the education industry in the United Arab Emirates.

Enterprises in the Middle East and Central Asia have the urgent need for intelligent upgrades of network security. That's why Huawei announced the Xinghe Intelligent SASE experience program, which covers five modules, including network deployment. Participants can demonstrate, test, learn, and communicate with each other through DemoCloud anytime and anywhere to gain hands-on experience with the benefits of the Xinghe Intelligent SASE solution.

Huawei also announced all-new upgrades to its IP Club member program, offering more rights and interests to members in the Middle East and Central Asia. Members can gain fresh insights into the latest cutting-edge technological innovations, connect with top industry experts and opinion leaders, and participate in an elite member brand plan. The event also recognized IP Club Diamond members with awards.

The world stands at a critical juncture in advancing from digital transformation to intelligent transformation. Huawei remains committed to constantly upgrading its Xinghe Intelligent Network offerings. By building leading network infrastructures, the company aims to help all industries accelerate their pace into the intelligent era and unlock the full potential of digital-intelligent development. ■

## Zain and Huawei two-day Forum focuses on Innovative Technologies

Zain Group, in partnership with Huawei, successfully held a two-day Mobile Tech Forum on May 26 at the Four Seasons Hotel, Kuwait accompanied by an exhibition of innovative technologies at Zain's Innovation Campus (ZINC) on May 27. As a leading telecom operator in the Middle East and Africa, Zain continues to pioneer in deploying 5G technology and beyond, demonstrating its commitment to technological excellence.

The forum brought together multi-disciplinary teams from Zain Group, Zain Kuwait and Huawei, to explore cutting-edge technologies and strategic directions. The event provided a platform for Zain employees to engage with innovative technologies, fostering talent development and maintaining Zain's leadership in the 5G-Advanced era. Key topics covered include 5G-Advanced, digital transformation, transmission, and green network solutions. Innovative services showcased during the forum included glasses-free 3D, cloud gaming, RedCap CPE, etc.

In collaboration with Huawei, Zain released the Zain Group 5G-Advanced Blueprint during MWC 2024, and completed the first 10Gbps verification in Kuwait, and first new calling trial in Kuwait which is the first trial outside China. These achievements mark a significant milestone towards the commercial use of 5G-Advanced technology. Consequently, plans are underway for the commercial deployment of new calling services and applications in home and industrial scenarios.

Zain is also accelerating its digital transformation initiatives, focusing on network performance, service quality, user experience, and new service monetization. Zain is working with Huawei to leverage latest technologies to enable internal digital transformation and support enterprise



digital transformations. Future network will require a lossless and intelligent infrastructure and both companies are exploring intelligent use cases such as energy-saving features, user experience assurance features, operation efficiency improvement features, etc.

Mohammad Al Murshed, Acting CTO of Zain Group, said: "We are committed to provide our customers with a superior network experience and services. Our dedication to leading technologies will drive Zain's business success and deliver the best service experience to our customers. In the 5G-Advanced era, we aim to maintain

our leading position in the region while building green networks in support of our corporate sustainability 2050 net-zero agenda."

Richard Liu, President of Huawei Global ICT Marketing & Solution Sales, said: "Our partnership with Zain exemplifies our joint commitment to innovation and sustainability. Huawei is committed to bring the most advanced technologies to continuously enable Zain's technological leadership and business success in Kuwait and beyond in the 5G-Advanced era. We look forward to continuing our collaboration to achieve these ambitious goals." ■

## Huawei Cloud TechWave Summit 2024: Innovative cloud solutions and programs launched to accelerate intelligence across Middle East and Central Asia

With the theme of "Accelerate Intelligence with Everything as a Service", Huawei Cloud TechWave Summit 2024 was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on May 15. At the event, a series of new launches, innovative cloud services, and programs were introduced by Huawei Cloud, such as Huawei Cloud AI Video Service Technical White Paper and the new release of Data-AI Convergence Ecosystem Alliance to accelerate the intelligent upgrade across governments and industries for Middle East and Central Asia.

Alan Qi, President of Huawei Cloud Middle East & Central Asia, delivered the opening speech at the event, reiterating Huawei Cloud's commitment to accelerate digital transformation across the regions. He said, "Cloud is the key to the digital and intelligent era, and Huawei Cloud stands out with systematic innovation, vast industry-specific expertise, and a thriving digital ecosystem to accelerate your leap to intelligence and boost your business success."

### Huawei Cloud Stack – The Preferred Cloud for Intelligent Upgrade

Hu Yuhai, Vice President of Huawei Hybrid Cloud, shared that Huawei Cloud is now serving 30 regions with 88 availability zones (AZ), achieving a remarkable growth of 21.9%. In his keynote speech, Hu Yuhai announced the release of Huawei Cloud Stack 8.3 in the Middle East and Central Asia market. He said: "Huawei Cloud Stack provides trusted cloud infrastructure, innovative cloud capabilities, and rich industry know-how to help governments and enterprises dive into cloud, leap to intelligence, and unleash digital."

Hu Yuhai also launched a white paper on the Vision of Diving into Cloud, showcasing how cloud services are changing the world. Concluding his keynote, he announced the Leap2Cloud initiative, which calls for government and enterprise customers and



Alan Qi, President of Huawei Cloud Middle East & Central Asia, giving the opening speech



Hu Yuhai, Vice President of Huawei Hybrid Cloud, announcing the release of Huawei Cloud Stack 8.3 in Asia Pacific

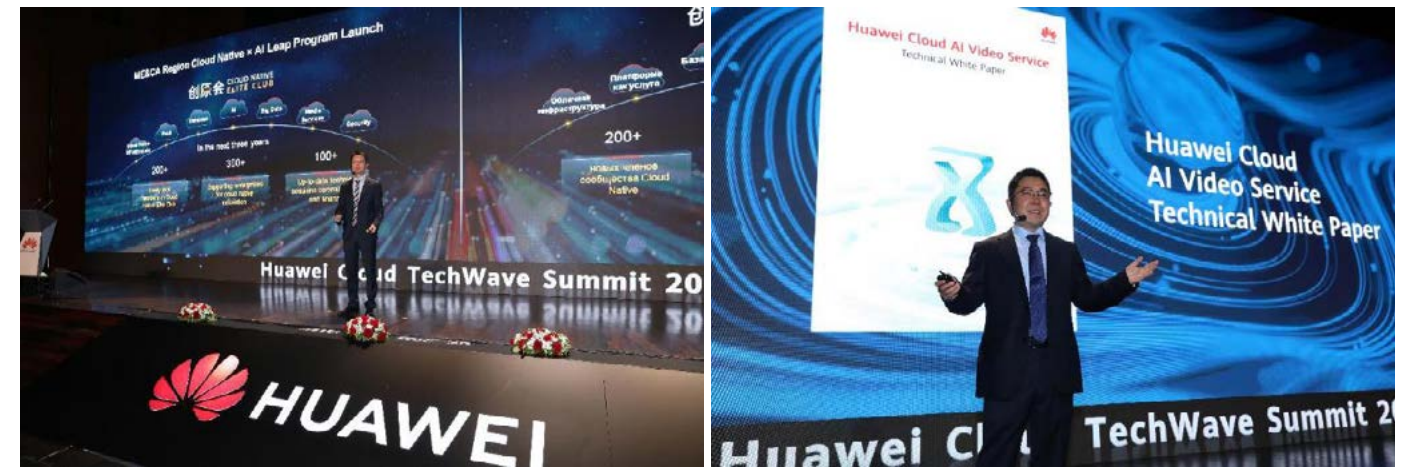
partners to bid farewell to legacy virtualization and embrace cloud-native, AI, and big data. Huawei Cloud is determined to fuel business growth with accelerated innovation and unleash more power from the cloud.

### Building the Cloud Foundation for an Intelligent World

The world is entering a new era of

intelligence, propelled by foundational models and AI-generated content (AIGC). Projections indicate that by 2026, over 80% of businesses will adopt AIGC in their operations, reshaping 70% of design and development processes. To accelerate intelligence, systematic innovation is required.

Tim Chen, Vice President of Product



Tim Chen, Vice President of Product Management for Huawei Public Cloud, giving a speech

Li Wei, Vice President of EI Services at Huawei Cloud, giving a speech



Huawei Cloud together with partners launching the Data-AI Convergence Ecosystem Alliance

Management for Huawei Public Cloud, shared insights on building an AI-native cloud foundation with continuous innovations through 'Cloud for AI' and 'AI for Industries'. Under the 'Cloud for AI' strategy, Huawei Cloud has built products and solutions such as the distributed QingTian architecture, AI-native storage, GaussDB database, and the digital intelligence integration platform. These support deployment and use across clouds, networks, edges, and terminals and help customers in various industries build intelligent cloud infrastructure through systematic innovation.

'AI for Industries' aims to help bridge the gap between AI and industry needs through

different industry models with Huawei Cloud's Pangu Model—an open, decoupled three-layer architecture offering a powerful foundation for a vast range of models and applications.

Chen said, "Huawei Cloud adheres to the principles of 'Cloud for AI, AI for Industries', and builds intelligent cloud bases through systematic innovation, helping enterprises lead in the large model era."

At the summit, Li Wei, Deputy Director of EI Services at Huawei Cloud, launched the Huawei Cloud AI Video Service Technical White Paper detailing the trend of AI meets Video and how Huawei's AI video service and solutions can help governments and

enterprises improve efficiency through intelligent video applications.

"The more you use Pangu large pre-trained models, the better it gets. AI video service powered by Pangu enables cameras to speak," Li Wei said.

At the Huawei Cloud TechWave Summit 2024, Huawei Cloud, together with partners - Percent, Iflytek, Dyna.ai, Neuxnet, 51WORLD, HCL, 863soft, and many others - launched the Data-AI Convergence Ecosystem Alliance, to foster a dynamic ecosystem that leverages the power of cloud computing and AI technologies to address complex challenges and unlock new opportunities across industries.■



## Our plan is to combine reliable push-to-talk voice communication with high-speed data to meet evolving customer needs

**Stanley Song**, Deputy General Manager, Oversea Sales Department at Hytera talks to Teletimes International about the evolving customer needs in the mission-critical and business-critical communication markets

**Interview:** Khalid Athar

*Khalid Athar: How has Hytera strategically expanded its presence in the Middle East market, considering factors such as partnerships, investments, and market penetration strategies?*

**Stanley Song:** As a leading professional two-way radio solution provider, Hytera entered the Middle East market in 2005. Now, in 2024, we've been in this market for almost 20 years. We started in UAE in the early 2010s. However, when entering a new market, it's extremely difficult to penetrate sectors like the public safety, for example, Ministry of Interior. We began with vertical markets like hospitality, such as hotels and restaurants. As more users became familiar with Hytera products, we expanded into other vertical markets like oil and gas. Today, we are proud to be the number one supplier for the oil and gas industry in the Middle East.

In this region, ADNOC in the UAE, as well as Saudi Aramco, SABIC, KIPIC, KNPC, and PDO, are among our biggest customers. We supply equipment to ensure safe production, efficiency, and manufacturing. After our success in vertical markets, we entered the public safety sector. Now, after 20 years, we are at the top in this field. For instance, the Abu Dhabi Police, UAE Ministry of Interior, Saudi Ministry

of Interior, and Qatar Ministry of Interior all use Hytera devices to secure cities and protect citizens.

Regarding partnerships, 99% of Hytera's business relies on local partners. As an international company, we cannot do everything by ourselves, especially given the cultural differences. We work with local partners, providing support and engaging with customers to secure business. Looking to the future, we aim to align with initiatives like Saudi Vision 2030 and similar UAE visions, involving local manufacturing and investments. We are actively engaging with authorities to potentially establish Hytera-certified manufacturing in the region.

*Khalid: Reflecting on Hytera's ten-year anniversary in Dubai, how significant is this milestone in the company's journey within the Middle East, and what impact has it had on its presence and reputation in the region?*

**Song:** As I mentioned, we started our business in 2005 in the region, but we established our subsidiary in UAE by late 2013, completing everything by early 2014. Now, in 2024, we are celebrating our 10-year anniversary. Initially, we operated with a Chinese team on travel basis. We now have a local office with local employees and engage with local partners to serve local customers. This milestone signifies our integration into the region, and our plan for the next ten years includes further localization, potentially including local manufacturing.

*Khalid: What factors contribute to Hytera's leadership position in the telecommunications and critical communications sector within the Middle East region?*

**Song:** We mainly serve three categories of customers: public safety, utilities, and transportation. In public safety, we have numerous references from Ministries of Interior across the Gulf countries. We also serve utilities, including oil and gas, electricity, and transportation sectors such



“ Looking to the future, we aim to align with initiatives like Saudi Vision 2030 and similar UAE visions, involving local manufacturing and investments ”

as metro, airport, and seaport. We began with commercial markets like hospitality, where our radios are even used here inside the World Trade Centre. We believe we are the largest supplier in this field in the Middle East.

The number one factor is that we deliver more value to users by constantly realizing innovation in our products and the feature sets, no matter it's digital two-way radios, dual-mode LTE radios, body camera, or control room solutions.

*Khalid: In what ways do emerging technologies, such as AI and IoT, impact the future of critical communication systems and their capabilities?*

**Song:** Hytera started with two-way radios in 1993, dedicating the first 25 years to narrowband, push-to-talk voice communication. In 2017, we began investing in broadband and emerging technologies, including LTE, body cams, and smart 5G and 4G devices. The Middle East is leading in digital transformation, and Hytera is



**Traditional PMR is perfect for reliable voice communication, but today's generation requires data as well. Since 2017, we've integrated LTE technologies, providing push-to-talk for video, messaging, location data, and more**



actively supporting this transition. We now offer dual-mode radios combining 4G, 5G, and PMR in one device. For instance, the Abu Dhabi Police use around 5,000 of these devices for daily operations, integrating traditional PMR for voice communication and advanced features for data collection and applications. We also help deploying body cams for frontline officers in the UAE and other GCC countries.

**Khalid: Can you provide examples of real-world scenarios where effective critical communication systems have played a significant role in mitigating risks and saving lives?**

**Song:** Yes, we have many examples. In our field, especially for public safety, mission-critical communication is paramount. Safety and reliability is the number one priority. Recently, during a major flood in the UAE and Oman, the public networks were temporarily unavailable in some heavily hit places. The police's dedicated systems were the only means of communication for police and emergency responders, enabling them to coordinate rescue efforts and save lives during the two-day emergency.

**Khalid: What strategies can organizations employ to continuously improve their critical communication systems and adapt to evolving challenges and requirements?**

**Song:** "Innovate for a Safer World" is the theme our latest branding campaign. That's what we believe in and what we have been doing. Our customers fall into three categories: mission-critical, business-

critical (like oil and gas), and commercial markets. Safety of the team and operation is the bottom line. Our technologies facilitate government authorities and business owners alike for their effort of protect their staff. On top of that, we leverage LTE and other technologies to boost the customers' operation efficiency. To address evolving challenges, we believe convergence is the way. Traditional PMR is perfect for reliable voice communication, but today's operation requires data as well. Since 2017, we've integrated LTE technologies, providing push-to-x for video, messaging, location data, and more. What we are doing and our customers are adopting is to combine reliable PMR voice communication with high-speed data to meet evolving needs.

**Khalid: We do see some telecom operators are venturing into the sector such as public safety. Are they a strong competition for you?**

**Song:** With the ongoing expansion of broadband services in the Middle East, LTE and 5G NR mobile networks are gaining recognition as alternative platforms for providing push-to-talk and multimedia services. Mobile network operators like STC in Saudi Arabia, Vodafone and Ooredoo in Qatar, and Omantel in Oman have been playing an increasingly important role in the market by introducing broadband PTT services for public safety and industrial users in recent years.

These operators leverage their extensive network coverage to provide

comprehensive broadband PTT solutions that integrate devices, services, and traffic into a single package. This approach offers several benefits, including reducing network maintenance and construction costs for their customers. We do believe operators are in a good position of creating value for professional users. At the same time, operators do need to work with vendors such as Hytera to actually serve the customers well. While operators have the coverage, they do need the right user devices such as portable and mobile radios, and mission-critical applications. That's why we are having more operators becoming our partners, also customers, in the region.

With the completion of 3GPP Release 15 and Release 16, the Mission Critical Services, usually we call MCX, has become mature. Leading vendors such as Hytera have created a multi-layered convergence solution that seamlessly integrates TETRA and LTE for unified and enhanced PTT. Hytera's open-standard and award-winning solution of MCX have been adopted by many operators to serve their customers of public safety, as well as sectors such transportation and utility.

To answer your question, yes, there is competition, but not detrimental to Hytera's business. Instead, we are proud of having been working with operators in the region and it is generating an increasingly important business for us.

**Khalid: What is Hytera's vision for the future of its operations in the Middle East, and how does it plan to continue its growth and development in the region?**

**Song:** Celebrating our first 10-year anniversary in the UAE is just the beginning. We will continue to serve mission-critical, business-critical, and commercial markets. We are actively working with government authorities to support localization initiatives. This includes not only hardware but also joint R&D centers with customers to develop local applications and features, enhancing our ability to serve their missions effectively. ■

## GITEX accelerates Nigerian Tech Ecosystem with most awaited GITEX NIGERIA launch

*GITEX NIGERIA to debut in September 2025 connecting start-up innovators, AI experts, and young talents in Africa's largest emerging digital economy*

**Introducing AI Everything Nigeria, North Star Nigeria, GITEX HealthTech 5.0 and GITEX Future Finance 5.0**

Following the two record-breaking and most verified editions of GITEX AFRICA Morocco, the continent's largest tech and start-up show will expand to forge new opportunities specifically for the Nigerian ecosystem. The showcase and conference powerhouse is the most awaited event launch fueled by the mission to accelerate Nigeria's national tech and start-up landscape in the most populous nation in Africa.

GITEX NIGERIA was announced on May 30, during GITEX AFRICA Morocco the continent's largest tech and start-up show, at a signing ceremony between KAOUN International, the overseas affiliated company of the Dubai World Trade Centre and organiser of GITEX, the world largest tech event brand, and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), the technology arm of the Ministry of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy of Nigeria.

The MoU was signed by Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, Director General of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) of Nigeria and Trixie LohMirmand, CEO of KAOUN International, organiser of GITEX globally, in the presence of Dr. Tunji Alausa, Hon. Minister of State for Health & Social Reform, Nigeria.

GITEX NIGERIA shall be the largest in-market access event of the decade to discover Nigeria's vast tech ecosystem. It ushers the global tech community to fully explore the biggest and most valuable opportunities in this most populous African country, with the world's most talented generation of tech and digital youths. Taking place in September 2025 in both Lagos and Abuja, the most strategic and business influential cities in Nigeria.

Addressing the media during the official announcement, the Director-General and CEO of NITDA, Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, said: "You can't trade in isolation therefore we need to create a platform to accelerate trade in Nigeria. Presidential priorities include the acceleration of diversification through digitisation, industrialisation, manufacturing and innovation; to reform the economy to deliver sustained economic growth. The present mandate of our Ministry to accelerate the economy diversification by enhancing productivity in critical sectors, such as healthcare, education, and agriculture



through technology and innovation. Bringing GITEX to Nigeria gives us the opportunity to export Nigerian technology to the world."

CEO of KAOUN International, Trixie LohMirmand, organiser of GITEX NIGERIA, said: "The format of GITEX NIGERIA will be unique. It will enable the exploration of vast potential during a time when Nigeria is experiencing exponential growth impact in sectors such as AI, Health, Finance and Startups. We hope to co-create and multiply global partnerships to forge new opportunities for Nigeria across industries with the biggest societal betterment potential".

GITEX in Nigeria shall spotlight the country's exponential growth sectors in AI, Future Finance, Digital Health, Start-ups and Scale-ups. It will integrate the Nigerian tech ecosystem firmly into GITEX AFRICA Morocco and extend its reach into GITEX GLOBAL in Dubai and GITEX EUROPE in Berlin.

Reflecting core critical sectors aligned to the national digital strategy, GITEX's most popular co-located shows will be introduced with the inaugural edition, including AI Everything Nigeria, North Star Nigeria for Startups, and the GITEX Health Tech 5.0 and GITEX Future Finance 5.0. The eagerly expected tech event will amplify in-market potential in the region's fastest emerging country, with economic performance to grow 11.2% in 2024 according to the African Development Bank. ■

## e& UAE adopts TM Forum and Camara-based Open APIs, launches Developer Portal to drive innovation

e& UAE has announced its adoption of the TM Forum and Camara-based Open APIs, reinforcing its commitment to fostering an environment of innovation and collaboration in the telecommunications industry. The move will enable third-party developers and startups to access and take advantage of API solutions, driving the creation of scalable and innovative products.

With this strategic move, e& UAE launched a state-of-the-art Developer Portal, that will provide free access to a suite of well-defined, standardized, and interoperable APIs. The portal serves as a central hub for digital innovators to discover, explore, and utilize an extensive range of APIs in service management, customer management, product catalogue, billing, and network exposure.

"Our adoption of TM Forum and CAMARA Open APIs is a transformative step forward in our journey of innovation and customer-centricity," said Amr Khalifa, Senior Vice President, Customer Interaction and Product Development, e& UAE. "By embracing these industry standards, we are enhancing our operational capabilities while also setting a new benchmark for the telecommunications industry in the UAE. This strategic move allows us to deliver superior digital experiences to our customers. It fosters an ecosystem where developers and startups can thrive, creating cutting-edge solutions that drive the future of connectivity."

"Open APIs are essential for fostering innovation, reducing complexity, and enabling seamless integration across the telco and tech ecosystems," says George Glass, CTO, TM Forum.

"By certifying TM Forum and CAMARA APIs, e& UAE is leading the way in enhancing operational efficiency while setting new benchmarks for customer-centric services. This announcement underscores the



collaborative efforts of TM Forum members working to deliver a seamless, agile, and interoperable digital ecosystem that will simplify network operations while creating new opportunities for monetization," Glass added.

The move will also see e& UAE offer many services in a standardized way and make them accessible as APIs to external partners and customers. e& UAE has also become an active and collaborating member of the TM Forum and CAMARA community to innovate digital services and simplify network complexity with Open APIs across the telecom industry. Recently, e& has implemented and certified two CAMARA APIs in addition to evolving its Open API journey through implementing and certifying 17 TM Forum APIs.

As a member of the TM Forum and GSMA, e& UAE joins a global industry association that drives digital transformation through collaboration, helping businesses in the telecommunications industry operate more effectively. By integrating Camara Open APIs, e& further demonstrates its dedication to leveraging open digital standards that encourage a seamless and agile operational framework.

By adopting an API architecture, the

e& UAE seeks to gain a significant competitive advantage and monetize services effectively. The objectives for a successful transition to an Open API-driven environment include empowering third-party developers to leverage APIs for digital product creation, enhancing product efficiency and overall customer experience, and promoting innovation by enabling the development community to create new applications and services that seamlessly integrate with external services and driving the API economy by creating new revenue streams.

The Developer Portal offers comprehensive documentation, sandbox environments, and support resources to ensure developers can easily integrate e& UAE services into their applications, accelerating the product development cycle and reducing time-to-market.

e& UAE recognizes the potential of a vibrant developer community and is committed to empowering startups and developers by lowering entry barriers. The Developer Portal provides the tools and resources to create cutting-edge solutions that can scale from local to global markets, cultivating a robust ecosystem where innovation thrives, and new opportunities are continuously unlocked. ■

## CABSAT 2024 successfully concludes with several new announcements, partnerships, and MoUs in media, entertainment, and satellite sectors

The 30th edition of CABSAT successfully concluded on May 23, 2024, with record-breaking turnout. The third day of the conference, which welcomed over 18,000 visitors, featured announcements of collaborations and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between exhibiting organizations, in addition to highlighting emerging trends and technologies, and encouraging insightful discussions.

Almanasa, Iraq's OTT streaming platform, announced a strategic partnership with Roya Media Group, a provider of premium digital content. This collaboration aims to deliver a streaming experience to audiences across Iraq by combining the strengths of both platforms to offer a diverse and extensive library of entertainment options. The partnership was announced at the CABSAT Co-Production Salon, a dedicated meeting lounge for business opportunities and investment in Arabic content.

As well as the Co-Production Salon, CABSAT 2024 showcased several exclusive conference events, like the Content Congress and the SATExpo Summit, to global industry leaders, regional government officials, and other business stakeholders for three days of networking and knowledge sharing opportunities.

"Enabling and accelerating local talent is crucial to consistently secure the incredible expansion of the regional content creation economy, and Dubai Studio City is proud to have been a platform for more than 358,000 minutes of such unique stories to come to life in 2023," said Majed Al Suwaidi, Senior Vice President of Dubai Media City, Dubai Studio City, and Dubai Production City at TECOM Group PJSC.

"Committed to unlocking the visions of Dubai Economic Agenda 'D33' and Dubai Creative Economy Strategy, we are proud to serve as a global platform for regional storytellers and were pleased to champion



their vibrancy and creativity as Strategic Partner of CABSAT's milestone 30th edition this year," Al Suwaidi added.

The Content Congress witnessed significant success with major sessions in place, such as 'How to Create a YT Channel with the Help of AI,' led by Arjun Radhakrishna, Lead Senior Producer at Nas Daily Studios

and 'The Making of VFX for a Film that has over 4,500 Visual Effects Shots,' led by Asif Bhushan, from Phantom Digital Effects.

Radhakrishna guided participants through a summary of various artificial intelligence (AI) tools that enhance video production processes. From idea research and scriptwriting to film production and editing,



rule-based compilations within the editing interface. Furthermore, we unveiled the product map of our ground-breaking generative AI graphics platform, which uses code-based design systems and AI to automate data-driven graphics workflows across digital media assets."

Pavel Potužák, CEO, Aveco, commented: "We are delighted to have participated and introduced our new revolutionary product, ASTRA Media Factory, at CABSAT 2024. This innovative product has already won this year's Best of Show 2024 award at NAB in the TV tech category. ASTRA Media Factory is a single platform with three dimensions, with the first dimension referring to the suite of services covering the whole lifecycle of assets and automating studio production, management, playout, and distribution. The second dimension is the environment, which refers to its ability to function in any combination of On-Prem, Remote, and Multi-Cloud. Integration is the third dimension, with a vast library of integrated third-party products available from Aveco. In all three dimensions, ASTRA Media Factory offers a unified user experience and expands unified workflows. It also enables media organisations to leverage on-prem technology investments and seamlessly expand to the cloud. The three-dimensional flexibility allows ASTRA Media Factory to get very close to the dreams of the customers, which further increased its popularity among visitors at this year's CABSAT."

This year's landmark 30th edition also features demonstrations of technology that attendees were able to interact with. A big hit with visitors and exhibitors alike, the GlamBot, a high-speed camera attached to a robotic arm that is designed to snap dynamic images in a mirrored tunnel gave the conference a sense of Hollywood glamour and created covetable moments to share on social media. This year's edition CABSAT also enjoyed its own red carpet experience at the BroadcastProME Manufacturer Awards, which recognized firms for their products that make a difference in the region's broadcast sector, with the team picking up a plaque for their contributions. ■

attendees were taken on a comprehensive journey that ended up offering them key insights into the applications of AI, as well as the creation of a YouTube channel.

Senior Creative Head Bhushan shed light into the role of VFX in creating an exceptional visual experience. The session assessed the film 'Ayalaan,' which required a collaborative and meticulous process of combining creativity and technology to bring the film's vision to life. The movie featured more than 4,500 visual effects shots, which is the most recorded for an Indian film.

Leonid Novoselov, Chief Product Officer, Carrot Broadcast, LLC, said: "We are pleased to have showcased our range of innovations and solutions at CABSAT 2024, the premier conference for the broadcast, satellite, and content sectors. At Carrot Broadcast, we specialise in developing software solutions for handling real-time graphics. CABSAT offered us an ideal platform to demonstrate our wealth of expertise in producing graphic content for TV shows and live broadcasts. We exhibited our advanced hardware and software, designs and technical services, and expertise in implementing lower third,

augmented reality, and virtual studios for television."

In addition, the final day of CABSAT 2024 featured a session titled 'Meet The ing Startups,' presented by the enabling platform for entrepreneurs and startups, and headed by Iqbal Haider, Co-Founder & CEO, iinfinity media and technologies; Mustafa Hazam, Founder and CEO, Grambell; Olga Nayda, Co-Founder and CEO, Glocal; and Naser Jahednia, CEO, Lichi Studios.

Ross Tanner, Senior Vice President-EMEA, Magnifi, said: "CABSAT 2024 served as the ideal stage to unveil the Magnifi platform's most recent enhancements, which showcases our commitment to advancing and transforming the content landscape. These new improvements are slated to maximize efficiency and creativity by providing companies with cutting-edge tools for immersive storytelling and improved audience engagement. During the event, we introduced our Intuitive video editor extension and announced our partnership with Adobe, which streamlines project construction in Premiere Pro by providing instant access to Magnifi-indexed asset libraries, key moment clips, and

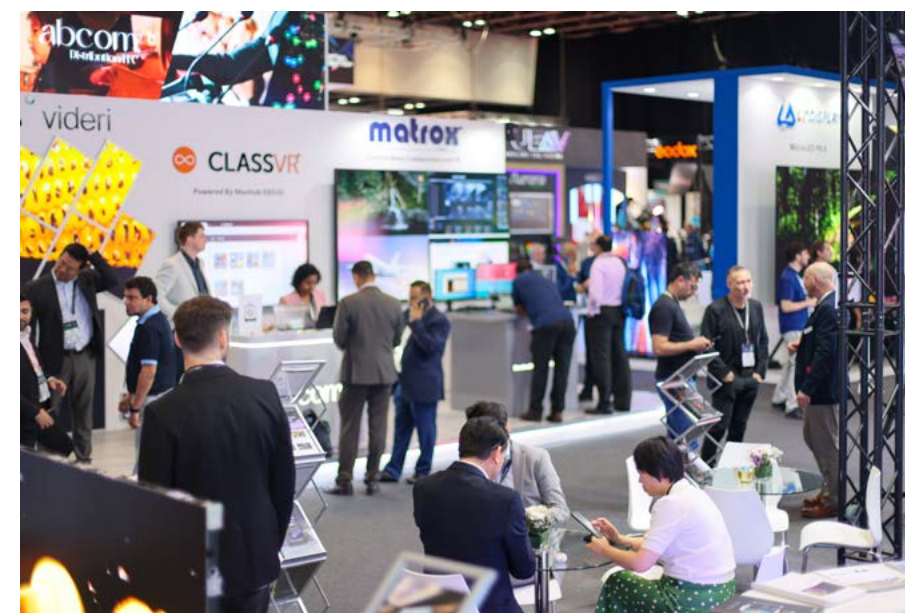
## Second edition of Integrate Middle East concludes after three days of Pro AV innovation with over 10,000 visitors

Integrate Middle East, the flagship event convening technology leaders and integrated solution buyers across diverse industries, successfully concluded after three eventful days marked by groundbreaking innovation and collaboration. Co-located with CABSAT 2024, the event's success underscores the growing prominence of the Pro AV technology industry within the MENA region.

The event hosted over 10,000 visitors from more than 75 nations, as well as 250+ exhibitors who showcased their cutting-edge products and services, making it an ideal platform for networking. The summit boasted an exemplary array of speakers from leading brands such as HL Group UAE, Theatre of Digital Art, JLL Technologies, Epson, Nuevo Design UAE, Oasis Enterprises LLC, Channel Media Europe, FinesseTech IT Solutions, Elevison Media, Shure UAE, MORE UAE, Warner Music MENA, MassiveMusic, and Mubert Inc., among others.

The speakers led pertinent discussions centred around diverse topics such as the future potential of mixed realities, AI in built environment, AI integration in music and virtualisation, the future of workplace design, digital signage, power of Digital Out-of-Home (DOOH), projector mapping, digital installation, and advanced Pro AV innovation. This gave visitors the unique opportunity to learn about relevant trends directly from industry experts.

Paul Hadfield, Sales Director of Area Four Industries Middle East - Provision AVL General Trading LLC, said: "Over the years, the Middle East's Pro AV market has undergone rapid growth, with an increasing demand for premium Pro AV technologies in the broadcast and entertainment sector. In light of the evolving market conditions, we have addressed the audience on 'Safe



Rigging Methods and Installation in the Entertainment Sector', which highlights key safety protocols and practices for rigging structures in our industry. Aligned with our company's vision, we were excited to provide valuable insights on the challenges and transformation of the region's broadcast and entertainment sector, and ultimately helping to create a safer working environment for us all."

Su Piow Ko, Vice President of AET Display Limited said: "Our participation at Integrate ME 2024 allowed us to showcase our state-of-the-art Micro Mavel--NX COB Series, which is of a standard cabinet size and boasts a 16:9 aspect ratio for enhanced clarity. Visitors were also able

to have a practical, hands-on experience of our innovative 138 all-in-one display solution, which is a powerful tool for both broadcasters and audiences. By synergising semiconductor materials, cutting-edge core chips, illuminating light sources, high-density carrier boards, intricate driver IC, and nuanced image processing, we offer services across R&D, production, and sales of Mini and Micro LED technology to our clients."

Integrate Middle East 2024 provided exhibitors an avenue to showcase innovative offerings in digital signage, command and control rooms, and live event solutions. The cutting-edge innovations offered a glimpse into the future of the Pro AV industry, bolstered by advanced technologies that cater to diverse business needs. The event served as a point of convergence for thought-provoking ideas, collaborations and opportunities while underscoring the role of Pro AV technology in facilitating immersive experiences. As the event draws to a close, its ripple effect is poised to pioneer innovation across the industry at large. ■



# NatSatTel-2024 – Key Trends in the Global Satellite Communications Industry

Intersputnik and the Satellite Markets & Research analytical agency hosted the NatSatTel-2024 international conference "Innovative Technologies and Services in the Global Satellite Industry" on June 11, 2024. The conference speakers included representatives of leading players and analysts of the satellite communications market.

A separate conference session with the participation of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) discussed gender equality and the involvement of girls in the processes of technological and digital development of humankind. The online conference NatSatTel-2024 brought together more than 150 people from 38 countries of Africa, the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East, North and South America, Central Asia and Europe.

Ksenia Drozdova, Director General of Intersputnik, addressed the conference participants with a welcoming speech. She emphasized the role of Intersputnik in uniting national, regional and international players in the satellite communications industry with the aim of improving the quality of life and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Virgil Labrador, Editor-in-Chief, Satellite Markets & Research, moderated the conference.

Vivek Prasad, Senior Analyst of Analysys Mason, presented the key trends in the development of the satellite communications industry. First of all, this is the use of High Throughput Satellites (HTS) with flexible payloads, which reduce the cost of traffic transmitted. Industry development will drive the demand from 5G market players as the ecosystem matures. Artificial intelligence (AI) will allow flexible management of satellite network resources, increasing the demand and competitiveness. After



2030, AI will be deployed in most satellite networks for use in the majority of customer scenarios.

Vivek Prasad also noted such a factor as the beginning of mass production of flat antennas. In the coming years, this will reduce their price, which will open up new markets for satellite communications. For non-geostationary systems, the key development factor will be the use of inter-satellite laser communication channels and optimization of networks due to a smaller number of gateways.

At a session on non-geostationary systems (NGSO Constellations: Enabling Key Applications), Jaume Sanpera, CEO at Sateliot, Majdi Atout, Senior Consultant IoT at APPLIOT, and Andrey Kirillovich, Director of Strategy, Marketing and Business Development at Intersputnik, discussed

the opportunities for the market of non-geostationary constellations for satellite broadband communications and satellite Internet of Things.

In his speech, Andrey Kirillovich noted the advantages of Intersputnik, which could integrate any satellite assets, including non-geostationary systems, into its activities. He drew attention to the fact that for many countries it was extremely important to develop their proprietary satellite communications industry, investing in their own economy and hosting of technologies, thereby solving national problems in meeting the needs of connecting people on domestic market.

At the "Game Changing Technologies and Solutions" session representatives of satellite equipment vendors presented new solutions for the satellite market. The

speakers of the session included Hagay Katz, Chief Product and Marketing Officer at Gilat Satellite Networks, Vaibhav Maigow, VP-International Division at Hughes, and Alvaro Sanchez, CEO at Integrasys.

The round table "Girls In ICT. Leadership (Satellite)" was moderated by Natalia Mochu, Head of the ITU Regional Office. She spoke about ITU's policy to inspire and encourage girls to pursue their ICT education and careers with the aim to fully and effectively participate in digitalization and technological development. She believes that one of the most effective methods of such encouragement is role models, success stories told by female leaders who continue a successful ICT career. Especially in such a complex sector as satellite communications.

The round table included the following speakers: Caroline De Vos, COO and Founding Partner at neXat; Revathi Manneppalli, Member of the ITU Radio Regulations Board, Joint Wireless Adviser at the Ministry of Communications of the Republic of India; Sahiba Hasanova, Member of the ITU Radio Regulations Board, Leading Adviser at the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan; Aichurok Maralbek, Chief Officer of the Spectrum Management Department at the Service for Regulation and Supervision in the Communications Industry under the Ministry of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic; Khadra Farah Mohamed, Telecom Engineer at DalKom Somalia.

NatSatTel has once again confirmed its

status as one of the leading industry forums, where experts share their views on the opportunities of the industry and obtain market intel from the leading industry analytical agencies; vendors present the latest technologies that are changing the core of the satellite industry; regional and national players discuss solutions for current challenges in digital inclusion and connecting the unconnected.

NatSatTel demonstrates the capabilities of satellite technologies to solve global humanitarian problems and reach the SDGs. Intersputnik, being an international organization that fully supports the principles declared by the UN and ITU, is always ready to provide a NatSatTel platform for open and equal communication between the world's leading professionals and experts. ■

## Skyband selects Hughes JUPITER System to power digital transformation for enterprises and governments across Saudi Arabia

Hughes Network Systems, LLC (HUGHES), an EchoStar company, has announced that Luna Space Telecommunications Co. Ltd., a leading Saudi Arabia service provider under the Skyband Holding Company, has purchased a JUPITER™ System Gateway as well as 1,200 Hughes JUPITER Terminals to transform its VSAT network. Leveraging the latest JUPITER technology, Skyband can provide customers with higher speeds and throughput, reach even more of the kingdom's unserved and underserved areas, and introduce a new mobility offering.

"Skyband has been a valued customer of Hughes for over a decade, and we're grateful they have turned to us again to upgrade their VSAT network to serve their customers better," said Vaibhav Magow, Vice President, International Division, Hughes.

"The Hughes JUPITER System is the de facto standard for satellite implementations worldwide. By upgrading to the latest JUPITER System technology, Skyband will



Vaibhav Magow

be able to attract new customers and bring new capabilities to market," Magow added.

Skyband provides the latest satellite network infrastructure through multiple hubs to enable the corporate and government sectors in Saudi Arabia to increase their productivity and help achieve their digital transformation goals. By

migrating its existing network to the more efficient Hughes network, Skyband will expand into new government, financial, and oil and gas markets and offer new features such as software-defined wide area networking (SD-WAN).

"We've always been able to count on Hughes to provide us with leading satellite broadband solutions," said Fouad Nasser the Chief Business Officer, Skyband. "Over that time, Hughes has been a true partner in helping us equip our customers with the connectivity they need to grow and achieve their digital transformation goals." As the leading ground platform across the industry, the Hughes JUPITER System meets operator requirements with bandwidth and cost efficiencies. The latest JUPITER technology incorporates software-defined satellite networking and dynamic in-route reconfiguration for the highest possible efficiency. Additionally, the JUPITER terminal has a new "system on a chip," which supports higher speeds and more services. ■

## Hughes unveils revolutionary commercial aviation LEO ESA at AIX

Hughes Network Systems has unveiled its groundbreaking Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Electronically Steerable Antenna (ESA) for In-Flight Entertainment & Connectivity (IFEC) at the Aircraft Interiors Expo (AIX). This state-of-the-art technology is poised to transform the aviation industry by providing enterprise-grade, low latency, high-speed connectivity for global commercial aviation.

"The introduction of our Hughes In-Flight Connectivity LEO ESA is a game-changer for the aviation industry," said Reza Rasoulia, Senior Vice President of the Aviation Business Unit at Hughes. "It represents a significant leap forward in our ability to provide unparalleled connectivity solutions. Passengers can now enjoy a frictionless high-speed, low-latency internet experience from their seat."

The Hughes In-Flight Connectivity LEO ESA is only a fraction of the size and weight of traditional IFEC SATCOM antennas. It leverages the core technology used in adjacent verticals such as business aviation and enterprise connectivity and is built at the Hughes state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Germantown, Maryland. Optimized for the Eutelsat OneWeb LEO system, the Hughes In-Flight Connectivity LEO ESA will deliver a living room experience to passengers in the skies.

"We are excited about the capabilities of the Hughes In-Flight Connectivity LEO ESA and the benefits it brings to commercial airlines," said Massimiliano Ladovaz, Chief Operations Officer at Eutelsat OneWeb. "Together, we are setting new standards for in-flight connectivity, ensuring that passengers have reliable, low latency, high-speed connectivity wherever they fly both on



commercial and business jets worldwide."

The Hughes In-Flight Connectivity LEO ESA is not only technologically advanced but also compact, lightweight, and energy-efficient, making it an ideal choice for airlines looking to implement or upgrade their in-flight services without compromising on performance or passenger comfort.

Rasoulia added, "With this launch, Hughes reaffirms its position as a pioneer in the satellite communications industry, continually pushing the boundaries of what is possible."

The Hughes In-Flight Connectivity LEO ESA builds on decades of experience with LEO systems and Hughes understanding of the Eutelsat OneWeb system. The first aviation variants are shipping in Q4 2024, with the core technology already in operation. ■

## Hughes signs MoU to join Airbus HBCplus Program

Hughes Network Systems signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Airbus to become a managed service provider (MSP) for the Airbus HBCplus catalogue offering to airlines.

Reza Rasoulia, Senior Vice President of the Aviation Business Unit at Hughes, said: "Reinventing IFEC is not just a goal; it's our mission. Our collaboration with Airbus demonstrates our commitment

to delivering high-speed, reliable, and uninterrupted connectivity to airlines and their passengers across the globe. This partnership is a testament to our ongoing efforts to provide airlines with access to top-tier connectivity, underpinned by the Hughes cutting-edge network management and service provisioning."

With both companies focused on providing airlines the flexibility they require to unlock

the possibilities of In-Flight Connectivity, the agreement between Airbus and Hughes is a fusion of innovation and expertise. This MoU is the first step for Hughes toward integration into the Airbus network of MSPs as a Ka-band provider, extending the Hughes In-Flight Connectivity services to Airbus aircraft. Hughes and Airbus continue to explore opportunities for other connectivity architectures & services (including Ku-band provider). ■

## Exploring robust cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive data solutions by stc sponsors 'Cyber First Kuwait' conference as the official 'Digital Partner'

solutions by stc has sponsored "Cyber First Kuwait" as the official 'Digital Partner' of the conference. Organized by Events First Group (EFG) in collaboration with the National Cyber Security Center and the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT), the conference marks a significant step towards securing Kuwait's digital future in line with Kuwait Vision 2035. solutions by stc's sponsorship of the conference aligns with the Company's ongoing support for the Kuwaiti community, leveraging its expertise and experience to empower platforms that bring together like-minded individuals within the evolving digital world.

Held at the Radisson Blu Hotel, the conference outlined a transformative journey towards a digitally secure and sustainable future for Kuwait. The increased digitization witnessed across various sectors, both government and private, has highlighted the urgent need for robust cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive data. In response to the rising cyber threats, the Kuwaiti government has established the National Cyber Security Strategy, prioritizing and safeguarding the nation's cybersecurity landscape. This strategy, coupled with proactive measures from the private sector, is driving Kuwait's cybersecurity market towards remarkable growth.

The Cyber First Kuwait conference gathered cybersecurity experts, including professionals in Information Security, Risk, Compliance, Forensics, and Cyber Law. The event aimed to foster collaboration across public and private sectors to battle the efforts of malicious attacks and strengthen Kuwait's cybersecurity resilience. Representatives from stc, Eng. Fahad Al Ali, CTO and Acting CEO of e-Portal Holding; Eng. Issa Al-Suwait, GM Cyber Security of stc; Ali Al Yaseen, GM Sales and Business Solutions; and directors from the business sales and products teams,



along with the corporate communications teams, attended the conference. During the conference, solutions by stc showcased its comprehensive cybersecurity solutions, with a team of specialists addressing queries and concerns raised by the attendees visiting the Company's booth.

solutions by stc also participated in a panel discussion titled "Leveraging AI to Address Cyber-Attacks and the Evolving Threat Landscape", where Eng. Issa Al-Suwait, GM of Cyber Security at stc, shed light on the power of AI and its role in mitigating the threats faced by Kuwait's cyber landscape. The discussion covered the role of AI in threat detection through enhanced capabilities, identifying patterns, and swiftly recognizing anomalies in the evolving cyber-threat landscape. The panel also highlighted the effectiveness of AI-driven response strategies through the exploration of their impact on mitigating cyber threats. Additionally, the challenges and benefits of AI-driven behavioral analytics were discussed, along with the importance of adaptive AI models that are significant to continuous learning and adaptation to combat new cyber threats.

solutions by stc highlighted in a statement that it will remain committed to supporting the technological and digital infrastructure in Kuwait by providing cutting-edge solutions that enhance the country's cybersecurity ecosystem. By participating in key conferences and initiatives, solutions by stc will contribute towards building a secure and resilient digital environment in line with Kuwait's Vision 2035. With the rapidly evolving digital world, solutions by stc actively explores the latest technological tools and systems to keep pace with advanced cybersecurity threats and possible malicious attacks.

Moving forward, the Company will continue to introduce the latest cybersecurity solutions to support and provide 360-protection to its B2B customers. solutions by stc has also built and solidified its reputation as one of the key players in the market, offering comprehensive connectivity, ICT, IoT, and enterprise solutions to support network, infrastructure, and application needs. Through its active and progressive approach, it has grown into a powerful one-stop shop for business and wholesale solutions, catering to the needs of government and corporate entities nationwide and across the region. ■



*Empowering Young Generations to shape and lead the future*

## Ooredoo Kuwait sponsors Alnowair's Young Women Leadership Workshop



Committed to championing youth and women empowerment through impactful initiatives as part of its corporate citizenship efforts, telecommunications leader, Ooredoo Kuwait has proudly supported the Young Women Leadership Initiative, organized by Alnowair, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering positive behavioral change in Kuwaiti society.

As part of that support, Ooredoo Kuwait sponsored the final workshop of the Young Women Leadership Initiative for AUK female students. Hosted at the American University of Kuwait for young Kuwaiti women, Alnowair's intensive capacity-building workshop ran for nine days, with a series of daily training sessions that employed drama techniques and concluded with an interactive, purposeful play on day 10.

During the grand ceremony, which was held at AUK's theatre to honor all initiative's participants with certificates of appreciation, Alnowair also honored Ooredoo Kuwait, in recognition of its social contribution to this initiative and role in realizing its objectives, mutually shared between the two organizations.

In line with Ooredoo's principles of fostering innovation and adopting a creative mindset, Alnowair's approach utilizes the transformative power of applied theatre to foster personal and leadership skill development amongst young women in Kuwait. Participants embarked on a transformative journey by attending the workshop sponsored by Ooredoo, under the guidance of experienced mentors and facilitators.

The workshop addressed key social issues that Kuwaiti women still face and provided them with the tools and support needed to develop their personal and leadership skills which helped participants overcome these barriers.

By sponsoring the workshop, Ooredoo Kuwait reaffirms its commitment to fostering gender equality, empowering youth, and promoting social inclusion. Ooredoo fully recognizes the transformative impact of initiatives, such as Alnowair's Young Women Leadership Initiative, on the lives of young women and the broader community.

The workshop activities were carefully

structured to provide a holistic approach to skill enhancement, addressing various aspects of personal growth and leadership qualities. From communication and self-expression to problem-solving, decision-making, and resilience, every session in the workshop was tailored to empower participants with practical tools and insights essential for navigating the complexities of today's world.

Investing in capacity-building workshops highlights Ooredoo's ongoing contribution to creating a more diverse and inclusive society. The company strives to help cultivate a generation of confident and capable future leaders who can drive positive change in their communities.

Ooredoo Kuwait continues to support initiatives that inspire growth among Kuwaiti youth. By leveraging unconventional teaching methods that engage the mind, heart, and body, Ooredoo ventured into sponsoring Alnowair's capacity-building workshop to empower young women to overcome barriers, challenge stereotypes, and embrace their full potential. ■

## e& welcomes Cato Networks to SmartHub, unlocking next-generation connectivity and SASE capabilities



e& has announced a strategic partnership during International Telecoms Week (ITW) in the United States with network security company, Cato Networks, marking a significant milestone that will establish a new Point-of-Presence (PoP) within the global technology group's SmartHub Data Centre.

As one of the UAE's premier carrier-neutral data facilities, e&'s SmartHub will serve as a crucial platform for Cato Networks' business customers enabling them to access enhanced interconnectivity and Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) technology.

Nabil Bacoucche, Group Chief Carrier & Wholesale Officer, e&, said: "We are excited to share our partnership with Cato Networks, which reflects our dedication to building a connected world that nurtures growth for both businesses and individuals. Leveraging our extensive network of strategically located data centers, we

provide access to a significant portion of the global population through top-notch infrastructure. We are enthusiastic about supporting Cato Networks with a competitive advantage by seamlessly linking them to international digital networks."

This collaboration is set to unlock numerous global interconnection opportunities for Cato Networks' customers. Customers will benefit from SmartHub's extensive ecosystem, which offers access to interconnected communities and ensures a broad reach to international markets. The integration into e&'s SmartHub will allow Cato Networks' customers to enjoy the advantages of reduced latency and superior connectivity performance, optimising their global communications and data transfer capabilities.

"Our partnership with e& provides organisations with unparalleled connectivity and a seamless network security stack, setting a new standard in flexibility and

agility. Organisations today require the efficiency and effectiveness of a cloud-native platform, delivering a comprehensive network and security infrastructure within minutes and hours. Cato is dedicated to supporting the Gulf region and recognises the significance of collaborating with global leaders such as e& to deliver secure digital services in an ever-expanding interconnected world," said Kanwar Loyal, VP for Northern Europe & MEA.

The robust infrastructure of SmartHub, embedded in submarine landing stations and terrestrial borders, connects the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, and serves as an ICT bridge between continents. Ensuring seamless connectivity and continuity across regions, SmartHub offers a community-based ecosystem encompassing reliable caching servers and edge nodes serving internet users, hyper-scalers, content delivery networks (CDNs), video streaming and gaming platforms, and financial services providers. ■

## GTAA founding parties sign agreement to establish a Joint Venture focused on co-developing and launching a multilingual Telco LLM

SK Telecom, Deutsche Telekom, e&, Singtel and SoftBank Corp., the founding parties of the Global Telco AI Alliance (GTAA), have signed a Joint Venture agreement at TM Forum's DTW24-Ignite. This follows the announcement by the GTAA at MWC Barcelona 2024 to establish a Joint Venture and marks the founding parties' commitment to co-develop and launch multilingual Large Language Models (Telco LLM) specifically tailored to the needs of telecommunications companies through the JV.

As announced earlier this year, the JV will see equal investments from the founding parties to support its initial working capital requirements to develop the Telco LLM that will aim to help telcos improve their customer interactions via digital assistants and other innovative AI solutions. The JV will look at deploying innovative AI applications tailored to the needs of the founding parties in their respective markets, enabling them to reach a global customer base of approximately 1.3 billion across 50 countries. The Telco LLM will be multilingual including; Korean, English, German, Arabic, and Bahasa among other languages. The launch of the JV is subject to customary regulatory approvals.

The second Global Telco AI Roundtable (GTAR) was also held at DTW24, reaffirming the GTAA's dedication to driving innovation and collaboration in the telecoms industry. The GTAR highlighted the key progress achieved by the GTAA, as well as the AI governance systems and AI use cases reshaping the telecom landscape.

GTAR's opening speech was delivered



by SKT's CEO Ryu Young-sang, who emphasized on the transformative potential of AI in the telecom industry. CEO Ryu highlighted that the Global Telco AI Alliance is well positioned to be an active player in the global AI ecosystem as businesses worldwide are keen to reshape their business strategies through AI.

He added that, through the Telco LLM JV new business opportunities will be created, and enhanced levels of customer experiences will be achieved. Ryu stressed that while heading towards this goal, the Alliance needs to proactively address the social and environmental responsibilities associated with AI by establishing an effective AI governance framework.

The opening address was followed by a panel discussion, which featured the participation of Suk-geun Chung, Chief AI Global Officer, SKT; Harrison Lung, Group Chief Strategy Officer, e&; William

Woo, Group Chief Information Officer and Group Chief Digital Officer, Singtel; and Jan Hofmann, Top Program Lead for Artificial Intelligence, Deutsche Telekom. The panelists shared updates on GTAA's progress and outlined plans aimed at using AI in the future to address industry challenges and unlock new opportunities. The panelists also shared their perspective on AI governance and founding parties' individual efforts to ensure Responsible AI practices.

Founding parties showcased potential applications of an LLM for telco, focusing on contact center and infrastructure use cases. They demonstrated how a fine-tuned LLM can enhance contact center operations by generating real-time reference answers for agents during calls and automatically handling post-call tasks. They also illustrated the model's ability to provide answers to infrastructure operators' questions, streamlining their workflows. ■

## Eutelsat Group achieves Platinum Score in Space Sustainability Rating

Eutelsat Group has announced that its first generation of more than 600 satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) has achieved a platinum rating in the Space Sustainability Rating (SSR), marking a significant recognition of the company's commitment to responsible space utilization.

First imagined at the World Economic Forum (WEF), the rating's aim is to reduce the creation of space debris, limit the risk of satellite collisions, and help ensure space operations are managed safely and sustainably.

An international consortium developed the methodology behind the rating including experts from the European Space Agency, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, BryceTech and the University of Texas at Austin. eSpace – EPFL Space Center was chosen to operationalize the SSR and lead its implementation in the hope



of recognizing the space sustainability efforts of different space actors, as well as recognizing compliance and encouraging better-than-required behaviors.

The SSR rating is based on six modules, including: Mission Index, which calculates

the impact of spacecraft on operational risk; Collision Avoidance Capabilities; Data Sharing; Detectability, Identification and Trackability; Application of Design and Operation Standards; as well as the use of future External Services.

By surpassing the 80% threshold, resulting in the highest-level rating, a platinum-level Space Sustainability Rating score, Eutelsat Group's achievement underscores the Group's dedication to prioritizing sustainable design and operations of the constellation. "With our increased presence in both LEO and geostationary orbit (GEO), we remain committed to the sustainable and responsible use of space," said Eva Berneke, CEO of Eutelsat Group. "We are honored to receive SSR's recognition and congratulations to the entire team for their hard work and dedication to sustainable and safe operations." ■

## Yahsat partners with Eutelsat Group to leverage EUTELSAT KONNECT satellite to drive growth across its global footprint

Eutelsat Group YahClick has announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), enabling YahClick to leverage capacity on Eutelsat's geostationary satellite, EUTELSAT KONNECT.

The collaboration between the two leading satellite operators is in line with Yahsat's efforts to elevate its offerings and drive growth across its satellite broadband footprint in Africa to provide enhanced services and expand into new markets in Africa and beyond. As part of the agreement, Yahsat will enjoy exclusive rights to Eutelsat's KONNECT capacity over Ethiopia, one of the fastest-growing African markets.

In service since November 2020, EUTELSAT

KONNECT is a high throughput satellite delivering significant resources for broadband services with 75 Gbps of capacity across a network of 65 spotbeams. Originally covering Europe and Africa, the satellite's entire capacity is being progressively transferred to provide dedicated African coverage.

Commenting on the MOU, Sulaiman Al Ali, Chief Commercial Officer of Yahsat, said: "We are delighted to partner with Eutelsat and have access to state-of-the-art orbital assets, to support our satellite network. This partnership shall enable us to further enhance our portfolio and drive growth of our 'YahClick' broadband services to consumer and enterprise markets. Yahsat supported Eutelsat in the early years of its African Broadband

journey, and we are happy to be collaborating once again to ensure our existing and future customers benefit from the highest level of service and availability."

Ghassan Murat, Eutelsat's RVP of the AMEA region said: "We are honored to further deepen our ties with our long-standing partner, Yahsat. Yahsat's strong presence in Africa and the Middle East through the successful deployment of its YahClick satellite broadband service, together with the uptake we are seeing as we progressively transfer EUTELSAT KONNECT capacity to Africa highlight the buoyant demand for robust broadband services in the market, and the pertinence of satellite in connecting users, even in the most remote locations." ■

## SPOTV partners with MEASAT to bring top-tier global sports to fans across Asia Pacific

MEASAT has signed with SPOTV via its subsidiary SPOTV Media Solutions Sdn Bhd to support SPOTV's Asia Pacific playout operations from the MEASAT Teleport and Broadcast Centre (MTBC) in Cyberjaya.

The scope of the agreement entails the provision of MEASAT's world-class teleport facilities to enable SPOTV's Broadcast Production Suite and Data Centre services. SPOTV had previously selected MEASAT for satellite capacity and uplink services on MEASAT-3d, whereby this new expansion of scope deepens the collaboration between the entities.

SPOTV, one of the leading media platforms in Asia renowned for its extensive sports content, offers content via its two regional live and on-demand channels SPOTV and SPOTV2 through

affiliate partners across the Asia Pacific, as well as on the SPOTV NOW multi-device streaming web platform and app.

Content available on SPOTV includes the upcoming UEFA EURO 2024, MotoGP, BWF World Tour and Major events, World Table Tennis events, the tennis grand slams including Wimbledon and US Open, key golf events including LIV Golf, The Masters and The Open Championship, and much more.

The capabilities of MEASAT's teleport services have long been recognized in the industry, where it is one of only two Southeast Asian teleport operators ranked among the World Teleport Association's Top Teleport Operators. In 2023, MEASAT was ranked #11 among the Global Top Operators and #10 among the Fast Operators. ■

## AsiaSat signs managed distribution service deal with MySat

AsiaSat has signed an agreement with MySat to provide managed distribution services for MySat's Direct-To-Home (DTH) platform that delivers a premium bouquet of Arabic TV channels in Australia.

MySat's Australian DTH service is being launched on AsiaSat 9's Australasia beam from the orbital location of 122 degrees East and will benefit from AsiaSat 9's excellent power and optimal look angles over the Australia landmass.

This DTH bouquet offers a rich blend of premium channels, broadcasting in Arabic, and includes series, dramas, movies, news, top soccer leagues, talk shows, comedies, children's entertainment, news and infotainment catering to the tastes and preferences of the entire family.

"AsiaSat has been providing high quality DTH television service to Australasia

since 2011. We are thrilled to support MySat's launch of this TV bouquet with our managed media service that combines our capability in satellite and fibre connectivity, uplinking and teleport service for program distribution to TV homes in Australia. We look forward to collaborating with MySat to continue to expand this DTH bouquet by introducing our affiliate channels to this new DTH platform on AsiaSat 9 and provide viewers with even more enriched content," said Roger Tong, CEO of AsiaSat.

"MySat is excited to partner with AsiaSat to deliver a premium Arabic channel bouquet to viewers in Australia. This collaboration allows us to leverage AsiaSat's advanced satellite technology and comprehensive service solutions to ensure our customers receive top-quality entertainment with exceptional reliability," said Gregg Creevey, Director of MySat. ■

## Iridium awarded five-year, \$94 million contract by space systems command

Iridium Communications Inc. has been awarded a new five-year contract by the United States Space Force's Space Systems Command's Commercial Space Office (COMSO) for Enhanced Mobile Satellite Services (EMSS) capabilities and security sustainment services (ECS3). In support of the Iridium EMSS program, the ECS3 contract will ensure continued optimal operations of the EMSS Service Center in support of critical U.S. government applications. The value of the contract is approximately \$94 million with a potential total value of \$103 million, based on future surge requirements.

The Iridium EMSS program delivers access to truly global unlimited secure and standard narrowband voice, broadcast, push-to-talk and select additional services to an unlimited number of U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and DoD-approved subscribers. Supporting this program, the EMSS Service Center provides connectivity into the Iridium® network enabling critical communication applications.

"This new contract ensures our critical support to the EMSS Service Center well into the future. We have been working with Department of Defense EMSS Program Office for over 20 years, providing the sustainment and security enhancements necessary for our warfighters to execute their missions. The EMSS mission is a perfect example of the U.S. Space Force's recently released Commercial Space Strategy, leveraging the innovation of Iridium and our valuable partner ecosystem," said Scott Scheimreif, executive vice president, government programs, Iridium. "We are privileged and proud to continue to provide support to our most important customer, and we look forward to working with the U.S. Space Force under the new space strategy." ■

## Help AG's State of the Market Report 2024 reveals an accelerated growth in cyber defense investments in the GCC

Help AG has launched the 2024 edition of its annual State of the Market Report. Distinguished by its singular focus on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the report serves as the definitive guidebook on cybersecurity in the region.

For the fourth consecutive year, Help AG's State of the Market Report delivers unmatched insights into cybersecurity threats, trends, and emerging technologies and practices over the past year, providing a detailed analysis of threat tactics, high-profile breaches, and best practice recommendations from the perspective of Help AG, strategic partners, and leading organizations in the UAE and KSA.

Additionally, the report highlights investment trends and offers focused insights into key markets including the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, making it an essential resource for anyone involved in the regional cybersecurity landscape.

### KEY INVESTMENT TRENDS

The report highlights cybersecurity investment patterns and trends in the GCC, identifying top investment areas and market directions.

Most notably, in 2023, Help AG recorded a continued and accelerated trend in cyber defense investments amid the continuing digital transformation surge. Additionally, there has been a marked acceleration in the consolidation of cybersecurity spending, increasing by over 100% in the past year. This trend is strongly linked to the growth of the services business, as customers are increasingly inclined to consume cybersecurity as a service, demanding clear deliverables, service level agreements (SLAs), key performance indicators (KPIs), and transparent costs.

Investment in managed cyber defense



Stephan Berner, Chief Executive Officer at Help AG



Nicolai Solling, Chief Technology Officer at Help AG

skyrocketed, prompted by the increasing complexity of the digital threat landscape. Associated services, such as network detection and response, endpoint detection and response, threat intelligence, digital risk protection, and incident response services, all witnessed increased investment. This trend suggests that organizations are prioritizing comprehensive threat management and protection measures, highlighting an increased awareness and proactive approach to cybersecurity threats.

Cloud services have become the preferred choice for many organizations, with a clear shift towards "Everything as a Service" (EaaS). This transition, encompassing major digital transformation initiatives and endpoint security, reflects the broader adoption of cloud technologies, which are poised to dominate the cybersecurity landscape.

Similarly, cybersecurity advisory saw a 100+% growth in investments, spurred by growing regulatory compliance requirements, indicating an increasing reliance on expert guidance to navigate these challenges.

Help AG also observed a growth in Secure Services Edge (SSE) and Distributed Denial

of Service (DDoS) protection services, addressing the need for secure connectivity and uninterrupted service availability.

Moreover, Help AG continues to prioritize investment in people, processes, and technology to ensure robust support for clients and guarantee cyber resilience. As part of this strategy, they have launched the largest cyber defense center in the region in the UAE and expanded their existing center in Riyadh.

### TOP CYBER THREATS

#### Top Digital Risks

In an increasingly connected digital landscape, attackers target organizations where it hurts the most: availability, reputation, and customer trust, causing financial losses, operational disruptions, and long-term damage.

When it comes to attacks targeted at availability, the 2024 State of the Market Report features an in-depth analysis of DDoS attacks in the UAE, highlighting the largest attack recorded globally targeting the UAE and the most common attack vectors and

techniques. Help AG recorded a 42% increase in DDoS attacks in the UAE in 2023, with a total of 213,434 incidents. The longest of these attacks lasted for over 5 days, while the largest attack reached a record-breaking bandwidth of 461.5 Gigabits per second (Gbps).

On the other hand, of nearly 30,000 critical digital risk alerts identified by Help AG in 2023, the dominant digital risk categories were found to be credential theft (49%) and brand abuse (39%), while data leakage and phishing represented 10% and 1.5% of use cases respectively.

Additionally, in 2023, the cyber threat landscape was characterized by a growing number of advanced ransomware and double extortion, refined phishing, and application layer attacks.

Major risks that organizations faced were often related to human factors, misconfiguration of default credentials, missing patches, cloud security weaknesses, and domain controller vulnerabilities.

**TECHNOLOGY TRENDS IN 2024 & BEYOND**

Cyber Defense: AI, Automation, Integration, & Human Intelligence

The report highlights that automation and integration are among the top priorities for 2024 and beyond, forming the backbone of an efficient cybersecurity strategy. Help AG has leveraged automation to enable their analysts to manage all customer incident information from a single console, saving over 500 hours of human effort per month, equating to 6,000 hours annually. These time savings allow teams to focus on high-value tasks like threat detection and response. Additionally, the report offers insights into AI-powered cyber defense, where intelligent automation and AI-driven technologies analyze large datasets for anomalies and attacker behaviors.

Help AG emphasizes that automation and AI should augment, not replace, human capabilities, aligning with their 'Intelligence Amplified' concept, which combines AI-driven automation with human expertise for true

cyber resilience.

However, despite increased investment, the cybersecurity industry faces a gap in these human capabilities, with many positions remaining unfilled and putting organizations at risk. Help AG's State of the Market Report 2024 highlights that Generation Z, born between 1997-2012, has the potential to fill this gap. Growing up with technology, Gen Z is tech-savvy and adaptable, making them ideal for cybersecurity roles.

Attracting Gen Z requires meaningful work, flexible options, and skill development through specialized courses, hands-on programs, and mentorship.

Help AG's Managed Security Services (MSS) Graduate Program addresses the skills shortage by providing a 12-week intensive training for young talents from top institutions, aiming to transform them into cybersecurity experts.

**Identity & Data Protection**

The report highlights that as digital transformation rapidly expands, with adversaries increasingly targeting identity and data, adopting Identity Security Immunity principles and a holistic approach to data protection is essential. Identity Fabric Immunity emphasizes proactive defense, adaptive responses, and seamless integration with existing security infrastructure, revolutionizing organizational security and enhancing identity resilience. Additionally, a comprehensive data protection strategy integrates governance, cybersecurity, and data privacy to address complex organizational challenges.

**Application Security**

In the evolving digital landscape, application security (AppSec) is crucial as organizations increasingly rely on a mix of in-house software, commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products, open-source projects, and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions. Securing modern applications requires a proactive and collaborative approach, prioritizing security from the earliest stages of development

through ongoing management.

**OT & IoT Security**

Securing operational technology (OT) and internet-of-things (IoT) environments requires a multifaceted approach tailored to industrial networks and connected devices. Advanced security solutions, combined with robust cybersecurity policies, help organizations mitigate risks, safeguard critical infrastructure, and ensure the resilience and integrity of industrial operations.

**Zero Trust Secure Access Service Edge**

As the cybersecurity landscape continues to evolve, embracing Zero Trust SASE will become imperative for any organization charting its course in the digital realm. It combines SASE's flexibility with zero-trust principles, offering a robust framework for the digital age. Beyond return on investment, SASE provides tangible benefits like cost savings, better security, improved productivity, and adaptability to rapid changes.

Stephan Berner, Chief Executive Officer at Help AG, said: "In an era where the threat landscape is constantly evolving, organizations must harness the power of "Intelligence Amplified" to stay ahead. In Help AG's State of the Market Report, we recognize that while AI-driven technology is crucial, it is the talent and culture within an organization that truly set it apart. By fostering an environment where talent is nurtured and valued, organizations can leverage their unique human capital to create resilient, adaptive defenses against cyber threats."

Nicolai Solling, Chief Technology Officer at Help AG, said: "As part of the Help AG Cybersphere Nexus – our strategic approach to securing AI-driven defense mechanisms, advancing post-quantum cybersecurity, and championing sustainable practices – the State of the Market Report serves as a reference for organizations to address emerging threats while maintaining a focus on innovation, environmental and operational sustainability in cybersecurity practices. █

# Cisco Study reveals 98% of KSA organizations use AI to address cyber threats

The recent study conducted by Cisco highlights a significant surge in the use of AI technologies in cybersecurity strategies among KSA organizations. The study indicates that 98% of companies surveyed are integrating AI in their security defenses, mainly in threat detection, response, and recovery.

The 2024 Cisco Cybersecurity Readiness Index was developed in an era defined by hyper-connectivity and a rapidly evolving threat landscape. Despite continuing to be targeted with a variety of techniques that range from phishing and ransomware to supply chain and social engineering attacks, companies today are actively attempting to fortify their defense. And while they are building defenses against these attacks, the complexity of their security postures, dominated by multiple-point solutions, presents a challenge in effectively thwarting these threats. This year, Cisco steered the Cybersecurity Readiness Index to highlight resilience in response to an evolving threat landscape.

The study shows confidence among Saudi companies in their ability to navigate through cyber threats, with 98% of Saudi companies reporting a moderate to high level of confidence in their cyber defense capabilities. This confidence level highlights a significant awareness and proactive approach among Saudi enterprises regarding cybersecurity risks.

"As Saudi Arabia forges ahead with Vision 2030 of becoming a digital economy with extensive digital infrastructure developments, businesses need to be vigilant towards cyber-attacks," said Salman Abdulghani Faqeeh, Managing Director of Cisco Saudi Arabia. "To this end, both the Saudi government and the private sector are well aware of the risks and have significantly bolstered their cybersecurity strategies to address them. These ongoing



Salman Abdulghani Faqeeh, Managing Director, Cisco, Saudi Arabia

efforts from both sides are vital for maintaining the Kingdom's security and technological advancement, positioning Saudi Arabia as a secure and forward-thinking nation on the global stage."

According to the index, 80% of KSA companies said they expect a cybersecurity incident to disrupt their business in the next 12 to 24 months, while 67% have already experienced a cybersecurity incident. Incidents caused financial losses, ranging from US \$500,000 to \$600,999 over the past 12 months. These losses affect organizational reputation, jeopardize long-term business viability, and underscore the pressing need for comprehensive security measures.

Remarkably, 99% of Saudi companies have seen an increase in their cybersecurity budgets in the last 12–24 months. Moreover, 39% of respondents witnessed an increase of over 30% in their budgets, and 52% of Saudi companies are spending more than 10% of their IT budgets on security, which reflects the growing awareness of the importance of cybersecurity in today's

digital world.

From a cyber talent point of view, there is a gap of 97% across KSA companies that believe that the shortage of cybersecurity talent is a major concern for their businesses. Furthermore, 59% of these companies have more than 10 cybersecurity positions unfilled, which is 10% higher than the global average. This shortage of skilled professionals affects businesses' ability to respond effectively to such threats.

The increase in budgets, the search for skilled professionals, the adoption of AI and other innovative security measures, deploying a security platform approach, and the growing awareness of the importance of cybersecurity indicate that the country is on the right track. Despite this high level of confidence and the proactive steps being taken, there is still room for improvement. Saudi companies acknowledge the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of cyber threats and recognize that staying ahead of potential cybersecurity issues is a continuous process that requires ongoing adjustments and enhancements to their security measures. █

## Ooredoo Group appoints Sunita Bottse as CEO of Mena Digital Hub

Ooredoo Group has appointed Sunita Bottse as the CEO for Mena Digital Hub, effective May 26, 2024.

Mena Digital Hub, Ooredoo's newly established, carrier-neutral data centre company, is set to transform the region's digital infrastructure by providing cutting-edge colocation services to hyperscalers and enterprises.

### A Seasoned Expert at the Helm

Sunita Bottse joins Mena Digital Hub with an extensive background in the data centre industry. Previously serving as the Senior Director of Data Centres Site Acquisition (EMEA) at Microsoft, Sunita brings a wealth of experience and expertise.

She is a Certified Data Centre Professional and Specialist and has held significant roles including Managing Director of Data Centres (APAC) at Lendlease, CEO of SUPERNAP, and VP of Ctex, the first Tier IV certified data centre in the LATAM region.



**Sunita Bottse** - CEO, Mena Digital Hub

Sunita has been recognized with numerous prestigious awards, including the Women in Tech – Global Movement's 2022 Global Leadership Award, and has been listed twice in APAC's 50 most influential Data Centre and Cloud leaders by BroadGroup (DataEconomy).

Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo, Group CEO, Ooredoo, commented: "Sunita's appointment marks an exciting milestone in our journey to transform the digital

infrastructure in the MENA region. Her extensive experience and visionary leadership will be instrumental in driving Mena Digital Hub's growth and reinforcing our commitment to innovation and excellence."

### Expanding Capacity and Strategic Investments

Mena Digital Hub has established itself as a standalone entity, enabling Ooredoo to unlock operational efficiencies, synergies, and growth opportunities with new and existing tenants across the region.

The company plans to expand its capacity to more than 120 megawatts with a USD 1 billion investment in the medium to long term.

Additionally, Ooredoo is in the process of negotiating with key customers to further increase capacity and upgrade capabilities in the rapidly evolving MENA data centre landscape. ■

## Rajesh Chandiramani takes over as Comviva CEO to lead next phase of growth

Comviva has announced that Rajesh Chandiramani has assumed the role of CEO and Whole-time Director, effective June 1, 2024. The timing of this leadership transition coincides with Comviva's significant milestone of completing 25 years in business. As the company marks this achievement, it reaffirms its commitment to advancing as a global leader in Intelligent Software Platforms, embarking on a journey characterized by innovation and excellence.

Rajesh steps into this pivotal role following the retirement of Manoranjan 'Mao' Mohapatra, who concluded his remarkable tenure with the company at the end of May 2024. Following his retirement, Mao will continue to serve on the Comviva Board as a Non-Executive Director.



Rajesh brings to Comviva an impressive track record of over three decades, marked by his leadership in spearheading businesses and initiatives across a spectrum of organizations. Before joining Comviva, Rajesh held senior leadership roles at Tech Mahindra, where he served as the Business Unit Head for strategic markets spanning the UK, Europe, Middle East, Africa,

Asia Pacific, Japan, and India within the Communications, Media & Entertainment (CME) Vertical. His leadership extended to steering the Global Digital Business, where he oversaw transformative initiatives in Cloud, Data and Analytics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cybersecurity, and Blockchain technologies for Tech Mahindra.

Rajesh's strategic acumen also propelled growth as he led the Strategic Business Unit of APAC Enterprise business, driving significant expansion across various verticals. Notably, his five-year tenure as the head of the Europe business for Tech Mahindra played a transformative role in enhancing enterprise and telecom businesses across European countries, solidifying his reputation as a visionary leader. ■

# GLOBAL ICT, TELECOM & SATCOM EVENTS 2024-25

<b>26-28</b> June 2024 <b>MWC</b> Shanghai • 上海 Shanghai, China	<b>14-18</b> October 2024 <b>SuperBridge</b> Dubai, UAE	<b>18-19</b> November 2024 <b>M360</b> Doha, Qatar
<b>13-16</b> September 2024 <b>ib</b> Amsterdam Netherlands	<b>15-17</b> October 2024 <b>capacity EUROPE 2024</b> London, UK	<b>19-20</b> November 2024 <b>TELECOMSWORLD</b> Asia Bangkok, Thailand
<b>01-02</b> October 2024 <b>Mobile360</b> Asia Pacific Seoul, South Korea	<b>16-17</b> October 2024 <b>seamless</b> Johannesburg, SA	<b>03-06</b> December 2024 <b>atf ASIA TV FORUM &amp; MARKET</b> Singapore
<b>08-10</b> October 2024 <b>NETWORK X</b> Paris, France	<b>04-07</b> November 2024 <b>GLOBAL MILSATCOM</b> 2024 London-UK	<b>03-06</b> March 2024 <b>MWC</b> Barcelona, Spain
<b>14-18</b> October 2024 <b>GITEX GLOBAL</b> Dubai, UAE	<b>05-07</b> November 2024 <b>APSCC</b> Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council Bangkok, Thailand	<b>06-08</b> May 2025 <b>GISEC GLOBAL</b> Dubai, UAE
<b>14-18</b> October 2024 <b>GLOBAL DEV SLAM</b> Dubai, UAE	<b>14-18</b> November <b>Africa Com</b> Cape Town South Africa	<b>13-15</b> May 2025 <b>CABSAT</b> Dubai, UAE





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