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*The latest in Telecom, ICT and SatCom sectors of the Middle East, Asia and Africa*

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## Editor's Note



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest issue of Teletimes International!

This edition comes at an exciting time for the technology and telecom sectors as we gear up for some of the year's most impactful events. From the expansive GITEX GLOBAL 2024 to the specialized Expand North Star event, we're seeing a convergence of innovation and investment that is poised to reshape industries and foster global collaboration.

In this issue, we delve deep into the key themes that are shaping the future of technology. With over 200,000 tech executives and 6,500 exhibitors expected at GITEX this year, the event serves as a testament to the transformative power of technology. From AI's role in sustainability to the future of data centers and cybersecurity, GITEX will offer insights into the advancements that are driving change across industries.

One standout focus for this issue is the evolution of the AI economy. As AI continues to disrupt traditional business models, the role of telecommunications in enabling a robust AI ecosystem cannot be overstated. Our coverage includes thought leadership from industry experts, case studies, and interviews that highlight how telecom companies are leveraging AI to improve service delivery, optimize operations, and contribute to a more sustainable future.

We also explore the rapid advancements in the satellite industry, featuring an exclusive interview with Eng. Alhamed Alanezi, CEO of Arabsat, who discusses the company's strategic vision for the future and its role in developing local markets. This conversation is particularly relevant as the industry adapts to new technologies and the growing demand for connectivity in underserved regions.

Additionally, we shine a spotlight on cybersecurity—a topic that is becoming increasingly critical as digital transformation accelerates. Our interview with Zeeshan Qamar, CEO of Secureism, provides valuable insights into the cybersecurity landscape in the Middle East and how organizations can strengthen their defenses against evolving threats.

As always, we encourage you to join us at the upcoming events, engage with the thought leaders featured in this edition, and share your insights and feedback.

Thank you for being part of our community. We hope you enjoy this issue!

**Khalid Athar**  
Chief Editor



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## GITEX GLOBAL 2024

# Global Collaboration to Forge a Future AI Economy

GITEX Global 2024 is set to take place from October 14 to 18, 2024, at the Dubai World Trade Centre. As the largest technology event globally, GITEX is expected to attract over 200,000 tech executives and feature 6,500 exhibitors from more than 180 countries. This year's theme revolves around cutting-edge technologies and their implications for businesses and society.

### 5 Days 5 Themes

Each day of the event will focus on a specific

theme, designed to explore different aspects of technology and its impact on various sectors:

**MON, 14 OCT - Tech Investment Day:** This day will delve into the latest investment trends reshaping global wealth. Attendees will explore how innovations in quantum computing, large language models (LLMs), and the metaverse are unlocking unprecedented value for businesses. The discussions will highlight the importance of staying ahead in a rapidly evolving

tech landscape to capitalize on these innovations.

**TUE, 15 OCT - Super AI Tuesday:** Focused on use cases of AI, this theme will cover how generative AI and intelligent automation are revolutionizing industries. The sessions will showcase real-world applications and strategies that organizations can implement to harness AI's potential for growth and efficiency.

**WED, 16 OCT - Cybersecurity Day:** This

day will address the critical importance of cybersecurity in the digital age. Discussions will explore emerging threats such as deepfakes, ransomware, and phishing, and provide insights into innovative cybersecurity strategies and tools that organizations can use to protect themselves from these risks.

**THU, 17 OCT - Data Centers Universe:** Attendees will discover the future of data management and infrastructure. This theme will highlight innovations in data center technology and sustainable energy solutions, focusing on the essential role data centers play in supporting the exponential growth of digital services.

**FRI, 18 OCT - Futuristic Friday:** This day will showcase groundbreaking technologies such as quantum computing, advanced robotics, and space tech. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with visionaries and innovators, exploring how these technologies are set to redefine what is possible in various fields.

### Biggest AI Show

The Biggest AI Show at GITEX Global 2024 is set to be a pivotal segment of the event, focusing on the transformative role of artificial intelligence across various industries. This show will explore multiple critical themes related to AI, including:

**AI in Sustainability Tech:** This segment will discuss how AI technologies can drive sustainable practices, from optimizing energy use to improving resource management. By leveraging AI, companies can enhance their sustainability efforts, reduce waste, and contribute to climate change mitigation.

**AI in Future Health:** Attendees will learn about innovative applications of AI in the healthcare sector, such as predictive analytics for patient outcomes, AI-driven diagnostics, and personalized medicine. This showcases how AI can enhance healthcare delivery and improve patient care.







**AI in EdTech:** The focus here will be on how AI is transforming educational technologies. This includes personalized learning experiences, automated grading systems, and AI tutors that can provide real-time feedback to students. The goal is to enhance educational outcomes and accessibility.

**AI in Digital Finance:** This theme will explore the significant impact of AI on the finance industry, including fraud detection, algorithmic trading, and customer service automation through chatbots. The integration of AI in financial services is reshaping how businesses operate and interact with customers.

**Tackling 2024's Toughest Tech Challenges**

GITEX Global 2024 will also address some of the most pressing challenges and controversies facing the tech industry. The following topics will be key focal points:

**AI & Quantum Computing:** Discussions will revolve around how the convergence of AI and quantum computing can lead to breakthroughs in various fields, including drug discovery and complex problem-solving. The potential for quantum



computing to enhance AI algorithms represents a significant frontier in technology.

**Telco 5G and Data Centers:** The evolution of telecommunications with 5G technology is critical for supporting increased data traffic and connectivity. Attendees will explore how advanced data centers can handle the demands of a 5G-enabled world, including faster data processing and improved service delivery.

**Future Mobility in Global Smart Cities:** This topic will focus on the integration of technology in urban mobility solutions, examining how innovations in transport can lead to smarter, more efficient cities. This includes discussions on autonomous vehicles, smart public transport systems, and the role of data in urban planning.

**Cybersecurity:** As digital threats become more sophisticated, discussions will focus on emerging cybersecurity challenges,



including strategies for protecting organizations against ransomware, phishing, and other cyber threats. This is crucial as businesses increasingly rely on digital infrastructure.

**Industry 4.0 and Intelligent Automation:** The event will explore the advancements in smart manufacturing and the implementation of automation technologies. Discussions will highlight how Industry 4.0 principles are transforming production processes and operational efficiency.

**Sustainability and Climate Tech:** This theme will focus on how technology can address climate challenges and promote sustainability through innovative solutions. Topics may include renewable energy technologies, carbon capture, and sustainable supply chains.

**Consumer Tech and Intelligent Home Systems:** Attendees will explore how AI and IoT are changing consumer behavior and enhancing the functionality of smart home devices. This includes discussions on privacy concerns, interoperability, and user

experience.

**Fintech, Retail Tech, and EdTech:** GITEX will delve into the intersections of technology with finance, retail, and education sectors, examining innovations that enhance customer experiences, improve operational efficiencies, and democratize access to services.

**Cloud Computing and IoT:** The event will address how cloud computing and IoT technologies are transforming data management and enabling smarter devices. Key discussions will include security implications, data privacy, and the future of connected technologies.

**Workshops and Training Programs**

The GITEX Global Workshops and Training Programs provide a hands-on learning experience for professionals and enthusiasts looking to deepen their expertise in emerging technologies. These workshops are designed to offer practical insights and skill development across a range of sectors that are key to the future of technology.

GITEX offers a dynamic lineup of workshops and training sessions led by industry experts, where participants can gain valuable knowledge and certification in critical areas like AI, cybersecurity,





blockchain, and data analytics. These workshops are designed to meet the growing demand for skills in various tech-driven industries.

Participation in the GITEX Global Workshops and Training programs offers numerous benefits that can significantly enhance the skillset and expertise of attendees. These

workshops provide hands-on training, ensuring participants gain practical knowledge and experience in cutting-edge technologies. The sessions are led by industry experts, providing deep insights into real-world applications and the latest trends, which help professionals stay competitive in their fields. In addition, certifications are offered for many

workshops, adding value to participants' credentials and boosting career prospects. Attendees also benefit from networking opportunities, connecting with peers, experts, and potential business partners, fostering collaboration and idea exchange. By participating in these workshops, attendees can stay ahead of the curve in the rapidly evolving digital landscape and drive innovation within their organizations.

**Networking and Collaboration**

GITEX Global provides extensive networking opportunities for startups and investors, facilitating connections and collaborations. The event includes special initiatives like dedicated investor meetings and pitch competitions to help startups engage with potential funding sources.

GITEX Global 2024 promises to be a landmark event, driving discussions around technology, innovation, and collaboration. With a robust lineup of exhibitors, a comprehensive conference agenda focusing on crucial themes, and extensive networking opportunities, GITEX is poised to provide attendees with valuable insights and connections that will shape the future of the tech landscape. **T**

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## Expand North Star 2024: A Convergence of Innovation and Investment at Dubai Harbour

Expand North Star 2024 will take place at Dubai Harbour from October 13-16, a prominent global startup event running alongside GITEX Global. This year's edition is set to break records, featuring 70,000+ attendees, 1,800+ exhibiting startups, 1,200+ investors, and 450 speakers across 17 conference tracks. With a 25% increase in startup participation compared to last year, it marks a significant growth in the event's influence on the global startup ecosystem.

### Key Features and Initiatives:

Notable international startup showcases include:

- o South Korea (100 startups)
- o Brazil (60 startups)
- o Ethiopia (12 startups via JICA)
- o Europe (250 startups), led by major organizations such as GTAI and Berlin Partner (Germany), London and Partners (UK), Enterprise Ireland (Ireland), and Italian Trade Agency (Italy).



**Focus on Advanced Technologies:** The event emphasizes future technologies including AI, blockchain, biotech, quantum computing, and manufacturing. New programs align with key themes in AI, media and creativity, climate tech, energy, fintech, and deeptech.

**Conference Tracks & Stages:** Expand North Star 2024 features 17 conference tracks across 9 stages. Notable tracks focus on AI, blockchain, Web 3, and climate tech, with newly introduced sessions such as GITEX Impact, which spotlights sustainability and ESG innovations.



Finance, European Investment Bank

o Sir Martin Sorell, Founder, S4 Capital

o Neil Patel, Co-Founder, NP Digital



**Supernova Challenge Pitch Competition:** The highly anticipated Supernova Challenge returns, offering a prize of \$200,000. This competition provides a launchpad for startups to gain recognition and funding by presenting their innovations through intense rounds of pitching.

**Corporate Arena & Tech Transfer 3.0:** The Corporate Arena is a new platform facilitating strategic collaborations between enterprises, investors, and startups. It includes notable participants such as Citi Ventures, Santander Ventures, and Salesforce Ventures. The Tech Transfer 3.0 initiative connects research institutions with the tech industry, accelerating innovation from concept to commercialization.

**NS Scaleup Programme & GITEX YouthX Unipreneur:** The NS Scaleup Programme provides a dedicated space for over 100 scaleups, offering tools to accelerate their growth. The GITEX YouthX Unipreneur program, launched in 2021, empowers young entrepreneurs through a focused initiative that celebrates youth innovation.

**New Partnerships and Pitch Competitions:** Expand North Star 2024 features exciting partnerships with Sonar + D, 1BN Summit, and Startup Genome, co-hosting the Startup Ecosystem Leadership Forum. Startups can also participate in additional pitch competitions hosted by leading companies like Bridgestone, 1tank, and DMCC in collaboration with AGCC.



### Key speakers include:

o Sean O'Sullivan, Founder & Managing Partner, SOSV

o Anahita Crawford, Sr. Director, DEI, Arm, USA

o Aldo Romani, Head of Sustainable



**Opportunities for Investors**

**Investor Sunday & Global Investor Summit:**

Investor Sunday on October 13th kicks off discussions on key investment sectors, including AI, blockchain, fintech, gaming, and ESG capital. The Global Investor Summit—exclusive to investors—will bring together some of the world’s largest funds, totaling \$1 trillion in assets under management (AUM). Participants include European Investment Fund, bpifrance, Lightrock, SpeedInvest, and more, offering ample opportunities for matchmaking and networking.



**Events featured alongside Expand North Star**

**GITEX IMPACT**

This event focuses on ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) themes and features startups from various sectors. It aims to bring together investors, government representatives, and sustainability experts to discuss impactful strategies for climate action. Attendees can expect a platform for networking, investment opportunities, and innovative discussions surrounding climate technologies.



**Fintech Surge**

This event highlights the latest trends in the financial technology sector, providing a platform for industry leaders to share insights and showcase innovative solutions. It attracts global investors and startups aiming to revolutionize the financial landscape.



**Future Blockchain Summit**

This summit is dedicated to blockchain technology, covering aspects such as cryptocurrencies, smart contracts, and decentralized finance (DeFi). It aims to connect startups, investors, and experts to explore the future potential of blockchain applications across various industries.

This event focuses on marketing strategies in the tech sector, addressing the latest trends and innovations that drive customer engagement and brand growth. It features industry experts who share their experiences and insights into effective marketing practices in the digital age

a global tech and investment event, attracting stakeholders from over 100 countries and focusing on advanced, future technologies. With a record-breaking attendance, a wide range of conference tracks, and unparalleled networking opportunities, it is an essential platform for startups, investors, and corporations looking to shape the future of technology and business. **IT**

Expand North Star 2024 stands out as

**Marketing Mania**



**Eng. Alhamed Alanezi - CEO, Arabsat**

*Exclusive Interview: Gulraiz Khalid*

# Arabsat's Strategic Vision and the Industry's Future

connectivity, managed services and data solutions serving multi orbits. This diversification is crucial as satellite operators contend with the evolving needs of their customers across different regions and sectors.

Global satellite operators are adapting to a new environment that demands more sophisticated services, including Software-Defined Satellites (SDS) and new partnerships to enhance service capabilities. Arabsat’s CEO pointed out the importance of staying ahead of these changes, emphasizing their proactive approach to integrating new technologies and fostering strategic partnerships.

The satellite industry is witnessing a transformative phase, with new technologies, changing customer needs, and increasing competition shaping the market dynamics. In an exclusive interview with the CEO of Arabsat, Eng. Alhamed Alanezi, we explored the company’s strategic approach, challenges, and the evolving satellite market, as well as the significance of global industry events like IBC for fostering innovation and collaboration.

broadcast services, data connectivity, and the rapidly growing Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite segment. Arabsat is one of the key players in this market, with a broad focus that includes broadcast,

**The Current Landscape of the Satellite Market**

The satellite industry is increasingly diverse, encompassing traditional

***“We believe that sustainable services should go hand-in-hand with sustainable demand. We’re committed to developing local markets and empowering nations with the necessary infrastructure for growth,” stated the CEO.***





services and solutions to its regional market.

**Arabsat's Current Strategy and Focus Areas**

In late 2022 and early 2023, Arabsat launched a new five-year strategic plan focusing on three core pillars:

**1. Broadcast Services:** Arabsat is launching a comprehensive suite of video solutions that covers the entire value chain from live content production, to channel creation, contribution and distribution. Maintaining and enhancing their portfolio to better serve customers with advanced broadcast solutions remains a top priority. Arabsat's strategy involves adding value through managed services like cloud playout, content cross-promotion, and cultural exchange initiatives that leverage their expansive network of over 600 channels.

**2. Data Solutions and Managed Services:** Arabsat is expanding its footprint in the data solutions market. The focus is on delivering more robust data services to meet the increasing connectivity needs for multi-industries customers in the Middle East and Africa.

**3. LEO Services and Partnerships:** Arabsat is venturing into the LEO satellite segment by partnering with companies like BlackSky for Earth observation and others for IoT services. This strategic expansion aims to position Arabsat as a key player in the LEO space, enhancing

its capability to offer advanced services like IoT and Earth observation.

Additionally, Arabsat is integrating Software-Defined Satellites (SDS) into its fleet to offer more flexible and sustainable services. Their next-generation satellites and the newly developed BADR-9, are set to redefine Arabsat's service capabilities to ensure sustainability and adaptability for future demands.

**Key Challenges and Overcoming Them**

The satellite industry is fraught with challenges, from high operational costs to the complex task of balancing diverse customer needs. Arabsat faces these challenges by focusing on knowledge dissemination and customer engagement through initiatives like the "Arabsat Advisors" program. This service aims to help clients navigate industry complexities and adopt new services effectively.

A significant part of Arabsat's mission is supporting regional development through enhanced connectivity and services that cater to a wide range of needs—from educational initiatives in remote areas to disaster response support. The company is also actively involved in regulatory discussions, emphasizing the importance of balanced frequency allocations and advocating for the inclusion of space services in national development strategies.

**Future Outlook and Arabsat's Role in Developing Markets**

Looking ahead, Arabsat aims to play a pivotal role in developing local markets, particularly in Africa. The CEO highlighted the need for a balanced approach that goes beyond commercial interests, advocating for partnerships that prioritize national development. Arabsat is already engaged with several African nations, working on projects that enhance the local satellite and communication infrastructure.

This approach underscores Arabsat's



*"IBC has become a landmark for the broadcast services, and it is the best among all other activities when it comes to video and broadcast activities across the globe. Our presence at IBC helps us introduce new services, meet with clients, and bring a lot of innovations to the market," said Eng. Alhamedi Alanezi.*

**The Importance of Events Like IBC for Arabsat and the Industry**

Events like the International Broadcasting Convention (IBC) serve as pivotal platforms for companies like Arabsat to showcase their latest innovations and network with key industry players. According to Arabsat's CEO, IBC has become a landmark for broadcast services, providing a venue to connect with clients, partners, and industry stakeholders. The event allows Arabsat to share new services, technologies, and strategies tailored to its diverse coverage region, which includes the Middle East, Africa, and parts of Europe.

For Arabsat, participation in these

international exhibitions is more than just showcasing products; it's about engaging with global trends and establishing the company as a leader in bringing the latest

*"Regulators should play a more active role in promoting space services and recognize them as a national need, not just a commercial one. This will ensure sustainable growth and development in emerging markets like Africa," Eng. Alhamedi Alanezi.*

*"Space industry is a very risky and costly industry, and not many have the appetite to go deep into this. With Arabsat Advisors, we're helping our customers understand and overcome these challenges," shared the CEO.*

commitment to building long-term relationships with its partners and customers, supporting not just the commercial viability of satellite services, but also the socioeconomic development of the regions it serves.

**The Role of Regulators and Arabsat's Message**

Alhamedi Alanezi recognizes the crucial role that regulatory authorities play in shaping the future of the satellite and space industry. He emphasized that regulators need to strike a balance between supporting national development and maximizing commercial benefits, particularly in regions like Africa, where connectivity needs are high, and infrastructure is still evolving.

Arabsat's CEO urged regulators to consider space services as an integral part of national development strategies rather than relying solely on local commercial operators. He cited successful examples like Mauritania, where regulatory support has enabled robust growth in spite of financial limitations. Arabsat's CEO also called for more proactive involvement from regulators in promoting space services and making informed decisions on spectrum allocations, especially for 5G and C-band frequencies.

His message is clear: the satellite industry's success depends on collaboration between regulators, operators, and governments to create an environment conducive to innovation. ■





# Telecoms in the Middle East: A Quick Glance at the Past 60 Days

## Gulraiz Khalid

The Middle East telecom industry has witnessed rapid advancements and notable developments over the past two months, with a focus on 5G rollouts, strategic partnerships, and emerging technology adoption. Key markets such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt have made significant strides, with several telecom operators embracing cutting-edge technologies to enhance connectivity and support digital

transformation across various sectors.

### 5G Developments and Technological Advancements

The region continues to lead in 5G deployments, with operators like du and Etisalat (e&) implementing advanced 5G features. In a recent achievement, du, in collaboration with Huawei, became the first operator in the Middle East to deploy Huawei's 5G LampSite X 'Digital Indoor Solution' using three carrier aggregation

technology, which supports peak data rates of 5.1 Gbps. This deployment further strengthens du's leadership in the 5G market, offering enhanced user experiences in high-density areas such as malls, hotels, and airports.

In Egypt, Nokia partnered with Telecom Egypt to launch the country's first 5G services in cities like Cairo, Alexandria, and Luxor. This deployment is set to transform the digital landscape in Egypt, enhancing the speed and capacity of mobile networks and paving the way for innovative services like smart city applications and advanced enterprise solutions.

### Strategic Partnerships and Expansions

Saudi Arabia has made substantial progress in building international telecom infrastructure. Saudi Arabia's

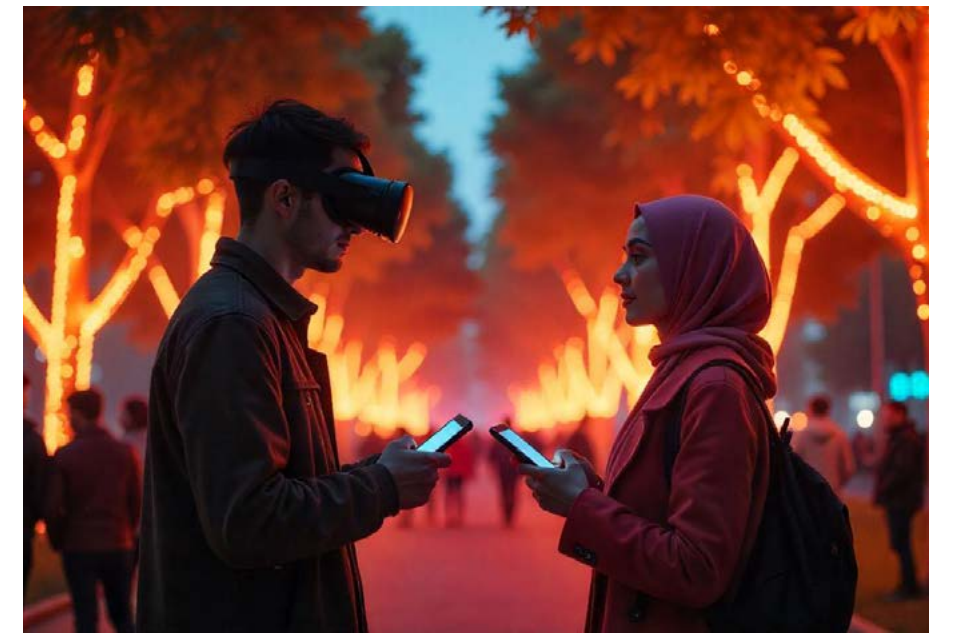
Dawiyat Integrated signed an MoU with Greece's Grid Telecom to develop a high-capacity subsea cable system connecting Saudi Arabia with Europe through the island of Crete. This project aims to improve regional connectivity and create a gateway between Europe and the Arabian Peninsula.

Additionally, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) has partnered with Etisalat (e&) to construct the energy sector's largest private 5G network. This expansive network, covering 11,000 square kilometers, will support IoT connectivity for more than 12,000 wells and pipelines, enabling real-time data collection and automation.

### Innovation and Market Growth

The UAE is emerging as a leader in digital transformation, driven by initiatives like the implementation of 5G-Advanced (5G-A) technology. 5G-A, offering unprecedented speeds and ultra-low latency, is expected to transform enterprise operations across various sectors, including healthcare, education, and logistics. This technology enables real-time applications such as telemedicine, augmented reality in education, and smart city solutions..

Moreover, Oman recently launched its National AI and Advanced Digital Technologies Program, which aims to accelerate the adoption of AI and digital technologies across different sectors. This initiative underscores the region's



## Saudi Arabia's Dawiyat Integrated signed an MoU with Greece's Grid Telecom to develop a high-capacity subsea cable system connecting Saudi Arabia with Europe through the island of Crete

commitment to leveraging advanced technology for economic growth and societal development.

### Market Trends and Challenges

The Middle East telecom market is

projected to grow significantly, with a forecasted increase of USD 20.57 billion between 2021 and 2026, driven by the rising demand for connectivity, smart city projects, and the expansion of mobile data services. However, the market faces challenges such as data privacy concerns, cybersecurity threats, and the digital divide in under-connected areas of North Africa and the Levant..

In conclusion, the telecom industry in the Middle East is on an upward trajectory, with countries and companies investing heavily in 5G technology, AI integration, and international infrastructure projects. These developments position the region as a key player in global telecommunications, supporting both economic growth and digital innovation. ■

## The Middle East telecom market is projected to grow significantly by 2026, with a forecasted increase of USD 20.57 billion starting 2021, driven by the rising demand for connectivity, smart city projects, and the expansion of mobile data services



## stc Group signs strategic partnership with New Murabba to provide innovative technologies and digital solutions

stc Group has signed a strategic partnership agreement with New Murabba – a PIF Company, to enhance and facilitate the implementation of advanced communications and information technology at New Murabba. The partnership will leverage a wide range of innovative digital solutions provided by stc Group in the future.

Through agreements such as this one, stc Group aims to drive digital and technical transformation across major projects in the Kingdom more widely, enhancing infrastructure and digital services within its real estate sector, by leveraging the most advanced solutions.

Eng. Olayan Alwetaid, CEO of stc Group, said: "This strategic partnership reflects stc Group's excellent digital ecosystem and its ongoing commitment to driving digital transformation and being a key enabler of national development. New Murabba represents a major national initiative, and we are deeply committed to supporting it by providing the latest digital technologies."

Michael Dyke, CEO of New Murabba, said: "Our strategic partnership with stc Group will position New Murabba as a pioneering urban development that enhances quality of life and serves as a global example of innovation and sustainability. This collaboration will further establish New Murabba as one of the world's most transformative, modern downtowns".

The partnership between stc Group and New Murabba will boost innovation and improve the quality of life, in alignment with the Kingdom's objectives. It will also enable New Murabba to benefit from the most advanced technological solutions, enabling it to offer a truly unique



experience for residents, workers, and visitors alike.

This strategic alliance covers the potential implementation of all projects related to communications and information technology infrastructure. It also includes the utilization of stc Group's diverse and innovative digital solutions, supported by their expertise in smart city development. These solutions will encompass key elements such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence, cloud services, and cybersecurity.

New Murabba is shaping new standards for urban development in the Kingdom, and championing Riyadh's transformation into a global, modern metropolis. The destination will seamlessly integrate technology with

nature and sustainability, driving the capital's evolution and improving living standards. At the heart of New Murabba is the Mukaab, an architectural icon measuring 400 meters in height, width, and length, making it one of the largest urban structures in the world.

This partnership underscores stc Group's commitment to advancing the real estate and tourism sectors in the Kingdom by providing cutting-edge communications and information technologies to beneficiaries and visitors. It aims to elevate smart technology services in new urban developments, fostering the growth and expansion of the national economy. Ultimately, this partnership aligns with the Kingdom's sustainable development goals, and will play a key role in enhancing the well-being of Saudi society. ■

## Huawei Connect 2024: Paving the Way for All Intelligence

*Huawei Research found that each US \$1 investment in ICT results in a US \$8.3 return in a country's digital economy*

Huawei Connect 2024 kicked off its 3-day agenda in Shanghai on September 19. Themed 'Amplify Intelligence', the global event will explore how different industries can make the most of digital and AI technologies, with a focus on strategy, industry development, and ecosystems.

In the event's opening keynote speech titled "Paving the Way for All Intelligence", Huawei Deputy Chairman and Rotating Chairman Eric Xu spotlighted various vital topics related to industries and enterprises' intelligent transformation. He also shared Huawei observations, thoughts, strategies, and experiences on AI becoming the most impactful technology for industries, envisioning the future of enterprises in the age of AI, Advancing Huawei's All Intelligence Strategy, and much more.



*David Wang, Huawei's Executive Director of the Board and Chairman of the ICT Infrastructure Managing Board*

- Xu also expanded on how Huawei is advancing the All Intelligence Strategy through efforts in seven areas:
- Creating a new computing architecture and providing sustainable computing solutions
- Upgrading Huawei Cloud's entire stack for AI to power industries with AI
- Building up Harmony Intelligence to provide an intelligent experience across all scenarios
- Leveraging an Autonomous Driving Network (ADN) to reshape network experience and O&M
- Developing autonomous driving solutions for vehicles that prioritize

safety and experience, and pave the way for a driverless future

- Building ecosystems together with partners, and expanding the unified developer platform to promote shared success
- Advocating and practicing AI for good, to contribute to human, societal, and environmental well-being

Towards the end of his talk, Xu emphasized, "The age of All Intelligence is here. It is unlocking new opportunities and new challenges for everyone and every enterprise. So let's work together to pave the way for All Intelligence, providing every person with an intelligent personal assistant, helping every company become an intelligent enterprise, and powering

every vehicle with autonomous driving."

David Wang, Huawei's Executive Director of the Board and Chairman of the ICT Infrastructure Managing Board, delivered a keynote speech titled "Amplifying Industrial Digitalization and Intelligence". Wang shared Huawei's views on and experience in helping industries go digital and intelligent. He also announced the release of brand-new solutions for industrial intelligence to facilitate the deep integration of AI into industry scenarios.

Wang said, "Digital and intelligent transformation is picking up steam in all industries. And this progress is creating huge opportunities for everyone."

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is



currently being driven by digital and intelligent technologies and is expected to take productivity to new heights. Huawei has identified a four-step path that countries can follow when looking to go digital and intelligent, where each step builds upon the previous.

Wang pointed out that innovation would be key to addressing the challenges and opportunities created by this process and said that technological innovation would be needed to build robust infrastructure, scenario innovation would be required to help more people cross the digital chasm, and ecosystem innovation will be needed to create a bright future for all.

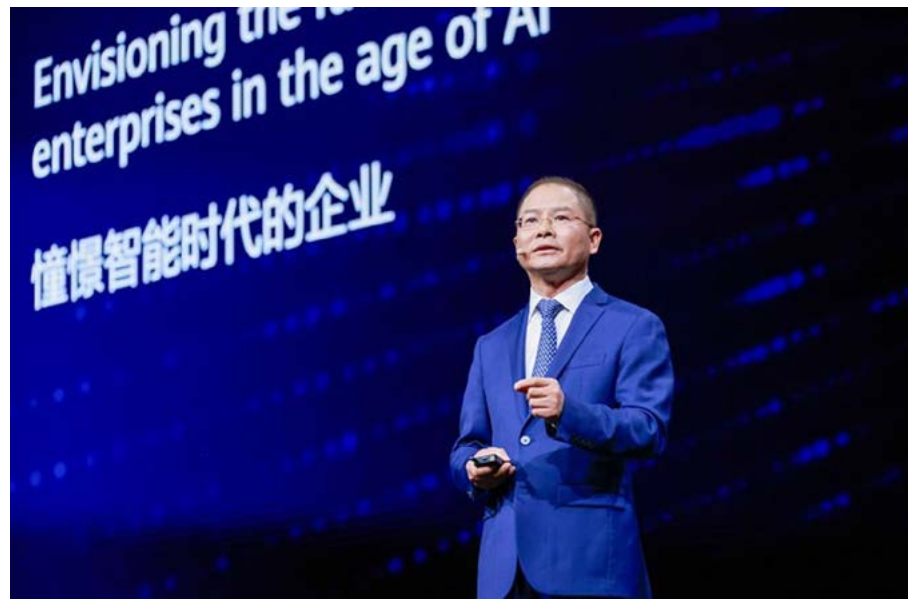
Release of the Global Digitalization Index and plan to cultivate digital and intelligent professionals for a shared digital economy

In 2014, Huawei released its first Global Connectivity Index (GCI) report. The GCI quantifies the value of connectivity and its impact on the digital economy.

Wang however noted that, with digitalization having a greater impact on the digital economy, Huawei and IDC decided to jointly develop a new Global Digitalization Index (GDI), which was also released at the event. Building on the GCI, the GDI factors in new indicators that look at digital infrastructure, including computing, storage, cloud, and green energy. It also quantifies the value of each country's ICT industry and its impact on their national economy.

This research found that each US\$1 investment in ICT results in a US\$8.3 return in a country's digital economy. Wang also said that the company will continue working on the GDI as intelligent applications see wider adoption, which will soon culminate in the Global Digitalization & Intelligence Index (GDII). The GDII will provide a reference for global digital economy development.

Wang also spoke about how Huawei has been working to provide tech-based, practice-oriented enablement training



Eric Xu, Huawei's Deputy Chairman and Rotating Chairman

to various groups of people around the world. Huawei plans to nurture over 10 million digital and intelligent professionals by 2030 to build a fertile space where all digital and intelligent ecosystems can thrive. Wang explained that, through this, Huawei will contribute to industry prosperity and sustainable development.

At the event, Huawei also launched its Amplifying Industrial Digitalization and Intelligence Practice White Paper, which contains 100 case studies from over 20 industries for customers to reference during their digital and intelligent transformation. Huawei also launched ten new digital and intelligent solutions for industries like public services, finance, transportation, manufacturing, electric power, mining, and oil and gas based on the reference architecture for intelligent transformation.

Huawei also held a forum on 'Embracing Intelligence for a Thriving Digital Economy'. At the forum, Huawei released a set of reports on exploring the intelligent world, providing references for the development of the ICT industry. Guests joining the forum discussions included representatives from the United Nations, experts responsible for national digitalization strategies, international

industry associations, and world-renowned analyst firms.

Mohamed Al Walid Al Hinai, Executive Director of National Human Capital Projects, Government of Oman, shared the Oman Vision 2040 and the country's achievements in developing ICT talent and digital and intelligent education infrastructure in collaboration with Huawei. Since 2018, Huawei has cultivated over 3,000 ICT professionals in Oman.

China Southern Power Grid has also been working with Huawei to accelerate the construction of a digital power grid. Niu Wennan, General Manager of Consumer Ecosystem Operation Company of China Southern Power Grid, spoke at the event, detailing how the company is using "AI+" to build an intelligent energy consumption ecosystem and an AI agent for marketing to develop a modern power supply and service system.

Celebrating its partners' success, Huawei held the Global Partner Roundtable and Global Partners' Night, themed Grow Together, Win the Intelligent Era, on September 18, and presented the Huawei Outstanding Partner Awards 2024 to partners who have made outstanding contributions in different industries. ■

## UNDP and e& join forces to promote digital transformation for sustainable development in the Arab States region

*Digital inclusion and universal access, transitioning to a more digital economy and employing AI for climate resilience, among key areas of collaboration*

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and e& have signed a cooperation agreement on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly to leverage digital technologies for sustainable development in the Arab States region. Cooperation will focus on enhancing digital inclusion to bridge digital divides; promoting transition to a digital economy, focusing on enabling solutions for medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs); expanding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for climate resilience, and fostering robust public-private partnerships for digital cooperation—under the rubric of the Digital for Sustainable Development (D4SD) initiative, which UNDP is leading alongside key partners in the region.

"The pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab States region requires urgent action at scale, which requires expanded and effective partnerships, especially with the business sector," said Abdallah Al-Dardari, UN Assistant Secretary General and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States in UNDP. "We value this new partnership with the e& as an eminent provider of digital services across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa—leveraging its market leadership to harness digital solutions to promote sustainable development, particularly in the realms of AI, financial inclusion and digital capacity building."

The new partnership will support the AI for Sustainable Development (AI4SD) platform—one of the lead initiatives of the D4SD partnership—by providing transformative digital solutions, data, and technical support to promote the ethical use of AI for the public good in key areas related to the pursuit of the SDGs. It will also support the development of the Climate & Natural



Disaster Crises (CNDC) Platform, aimed at improving resilience to climate-related challenges like floods, earthquakes, and droughts through AI-powered insights and data visualisation tools.

e& will also work with UNDP on pilots in Egypt through its subsidiary, Erada Microfinance focusing on increasing financial inclusion and women entrepreneurship in Egypt's Upper Region, accelerating SDGs implementation through developing accessible health insurance products, green transformation and financing of risk facilities. The cooperation will also extend the reach of the Arab Knowledge Project, part of UNDP's FutureSkills4All initiative. e& Egypt and UNDP are working to provide free access to FutureSkills4All's online courses.

Hatem Dowidar, Group CEO, e& said: "We are incredibly proud to partner with UNDP

on such vital initiatives. This collaboration represents an integral step towards harnessing advanced technologies to foster economic growth, enhance public services and empower communities, both developed and underserved. By working across these initiatives to promote a digital economy, sustainable development and build digital capacity, we aim to drive meaningful change and unlock new opportunities across the Arab states. Together, we are committed to creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future for all."

The partnership will also boost digital capacity building efforts through initiatives like the Arab Knowledge Project and promote sustainable development goals through active stakeholder engagement and the dissemination of best practices, driving innovation and fostering knowledge exchange through expanding strategic digital public-private collaborative efforts. ■



# stc Group concludes its participation in the Global AI Summit with strategic agreements and launch of AI lab

stc Group concluded its participation in the Global AI Summit by signing a series of strategic agreements with Saudi Railways (SAR), King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), Huawei, the Research, Development, and Innovation Authority, and SambaNova Systems.

stc's participation in the summit highlights its leadership role in driving digital transformation both locally and globally, showcasing its innovative solutions, products, and technologies, and reaffirming its commitment to positioning Saudi Arabia as a leading digital hub in the Middle East.

The agreements aim to accelerate the group's strategic objectives in various fields, including Artificial Intelligence, innovation, and digital transformation. Among these partnerships is an agreement with Saudi Railways to enhance customer services through AI-based technological solutions that improve operations at all levels.

Additionally, stc signed a strategic cooperation agreement with King Abdullah University of Science and Technology to establish a research center specializing in generative AI within the group. This center is the first of its kind in the region for R&D and innovation in generative AI technology, leveraging the shared expertise of stc and the university in data and AI fields.

stc also signed a cooperation agreement with Huawei in data, analytics, and AI fields to enhance stc's digital capabilities, develop network infrastructure, support data-driven decision-making, and improve corporate operations.

The partnerships also included an agreement with the Research,



Development, and Innovation Authority to develop mechanisms for supporting and enabling entrepreneurial projects, enhancing research opportunities, and providing empowerment for innovative ideas within future economy priorities.

A strategic partnership agreement with SambaNova Systems was signed to deploy and expand the GenAI Sovereign Cloud within stc's data centers, enhancing AI capabilities for cloud infrastructure and supporting advanced AI applications in the Kingdom.

During the summit, stc participated in several panel discussions to spread knowledge, including a session titled "Decoding AI Strategies," focusing on enabling companies to responsibly

engage with AI applications by balancing competitive advantage, resource efficiency, and ethical considerations. Another session titled "The Role of AI in Skills Enhancement and Innovation" discussed AI's role in empowering employees and improving their skills according to labor market requirements, as well as continuous learning through AI-driven innovation.

In the closing ceremony, stc Group received three awards, including recognition for its technical support and sponsorship of the summit as a digital enabler, an award for adopting AI ethics from the early stages, and a prize for solutions by stc, specializing in IoT products, under the innovation sponsorship category. ■

# Atlas Innovations and Relacom to redefine a new technological era

Italy and Pakistan are reshaping the global technological landscape with a new collaboration that promises to revolutionize the world of cybersecurity and software development. Atlas Innovations emerges as a unique fusion of innovation, technological expertise, and international vision, with the goal of addressing the most pressing challenges of global digitalization.

Behind this extraordinary project stand two visionary leaders, each with vast experience in their respective fields. On one side, we have Waris Hussain Nawaz, CEO of Atlas Innovations Italy, who has built his career on protecting critical infrastructures and enhancing cybersecurity. Based in Reggio Emilia Italy, Atlas Innovations has established itself as one of the most innovative players in the fight against cybercrime, safeguarding not only companies but also governments and citizens from increasingly sophisticated digital threats.

On the other side is Abbas Ali Mirza, CEO of Relacom Pakistan, a Telecom and Enterprise Integrator headquartered in Karachi. Founded in 2004, Relacom Pakistan has completed over 200 projects across various sectors, including telecommunications, energy, education and public sector. With its expertise in IT solutions, telecommunications, and human resource management, Relacom stands as a strategic partner capable of bringing essential skills to support the growth of Atlas Innovations Pakistan.

Together, these two leaders have laid the foundation for a synergy that not only combines their respective strengths but also creates a new model of technological collaboration that transcends national borders. The combination of Atlas'



Abbas Ali Mirza  
CEO of Relacom



Waris Hussain Nawaz  
CEO of Atlas Innovations

cybersecurity expertise with Relacom's technological and infrastructural resources has given rise to a truly unique entity, ready to take on the global market.

### A common Vision for Efficiency and Progress

At the heart of this ambitious project lies a clear mission: to provide cutting-edge technological solutions that ensure the security of critical infrastructures, protect sensitive data for companies and governments, and promote the development of customized software tailored to the specific needs of each client. What truly sets Atlas Innovations Pakistan apart, however, is its ability to leverage highly qualified human resources through its Body Resource Deployment Program (BRDP).

The BRDP is an innovative program that allows companies to tap into a vast pool of specialized IT talent. With over 350 professionals, including developers, cybersecurity experts,

and OSINT analysts, Atlas Innovations Pakistan offers resources capable of working flexibly and at scale, meeting the needs of companies operating in an increasingly interconnected and complex world. Moreover, the Body Resource Deployment Program is set to become a benchmark for companies seeking specialized talent without incurring the costs of internal management. This innovative approach allows rapid access to the best IT skills available, reducing implementation times and enhancing operational efficiency.

The alliance between Relacom Pakistan and Atlas Innovations marks the beginning of a new technological era for both countries. The combination of Italian expertise in cybersecurity and Relacom's advanced technological infrastructure has extraordinary potential to transform the global tech landscape. The goal is not only to protect critical infrastructures but also to develop cutting-edge software and promote the exchange of technological knowledge between Italy and Pakistan. ■





## GCF 2024 concludes with calls to strengthen global collaboration, close the cybersecurity talent gap, and protect children in Cyberspace

The global community must deepen collaboration around shared opportunities in Cyberspace to empower and protect people worldwide. Policymakers and experts at the Global Cybersecurity Forum (GCF) Annual Meeting, held in Riyadh, emphasized the need for educational systems to focus more on cybersecurity and for the cyber workforce to become more inclusive, addressing a global talent gap of 2.8 million cyber professionals.

"Cyberspace is closely linked to the growth of economies, the prosperity of societies, the security of individuals and the stability of nations," His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, said in a statement welcoming participants to the 4th edition of the GCF Annual Meeting.

The meeting, which took place from



October 2-3, prioritized ensuring Cyberspace is safe for all, particularly

vulnerable groups, such as children, and building resilience against rising threats.



"We have to work among likeminded nations – countries who agree with things like protecting children, protecting our economic prosperity and growth, protecting our national security," said former U.S. Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark Esper, who spoke during the opening plenary on the first day of the event.

GCF focuses on the geostrategic, economic, social and behavioral dimensions of cybersecurity, and works to catalyze collective action to ensure that Cyberspace continues to be an enabler of prosperity and wellbeing for communities and people globally.

"The workforce is not nearly inclusive enough and society and our education systems are not putting enough focus on cybersecurity. There are plenty of opportunities through the lens of resilience for nations and communities to work together," said Sir Jeremy Fleming, former Director of the UK's GCHQ, who spoke alongside Esper at the opening plenary.

Over 70 high-profile speakers, including leaders from government, the private sector, and academia, gathered for two days of dialogue. Despite challenges posed by a rapidly evolving Cyberspace, the atmosphere was optimistic, with a shared belief in the power of multistakeholder collaboration to maximize Cyberspace opportunities.



José Manuel Barroso, former president of the European Commission and former prime minister of Portugal, during the opening plenary called for the global community to collaborate on public goods

that benefit all societies.

"I don't see any reason why governments, in spite of geopolitical interests and differences, should not consider child





protection a global public good," Barroso said. "Competition is unavoidable between states. Cooperation is indispensable."

H.E. Adel Al-Jubeir, Saudi Arabia's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Envoy for Climate Affairs, speaking at the day two opening plenary, said the two global initiatives instated by the Crown Prince – the Child Protection in Cyberspace (CPC) initiative and the Women Empowerment in Cybersecurity (WEC) initiative – have universal resonance and serve as important catalysts for international collaboration.

"There are areas that can be used to build confidence, and that confidence helps us to work better with each other," Al-Jubeir said.

This year's event was complemented by another platform for collective action: the Child Protection in Cyberspace Global Summit, held in conjunction with the GCF Annual Meeting and in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the DQ Institute, and WeProtect Global Alliance. The Summit brought together key stakeholders from around the world to identify pathways for collaboration and collective action towards safeguarding children in Cyberspace.

Established as an independent, non-profit organization in 2023, GCF announced numerous projects and partnerships at this year's Annual Meeting.

"A range of new projects will be launched under GCF's umbrella, addressing some



of the key issues and opportunities in Cyberspace, from cyber economics, to closing the cybersecurity workforce and skills gap, and ensuring that Cyberspace is safe and secure for children," said H.E. Majed bin Mohammed Al-Mazyed, Governor of Saudi Arabia's National Cybersecurity Authority, speaking on behalf of the GCF Board of Trustees.

**Announcements included:**

- The publication of the "2024 Global Cybersecurity Workforce Report" in partnership with Boston Consulting Group (BCG), which found that the current global workforce of cybersecurity professionals is short of 2.8 million qualified workers to meet current needs, and that only 24% of the current cybersecurity workforce is female.
- The launch of GCF's "Center for Cyber Economics (CCE)", in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to enhance knowledge on the economic dimensions of

cybersecurity.

- A global program with UNICEF to create a safer Cyberspace for children in 30 countries, aligned with the CPC initiative.
- The development of a "CPC Index" with the DQ Institute, aimed at improving child protection strategies by collecting data from over 100 countries.
- The GCF Cyber Leadership Launchpad to bridge the talent gap by facilitating mentorship for women leaders in cybersecurity.
- The activation of GCF's Operational Technology Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (OTC CoE), founded by Aramco, will advance knowledge sharing and informed decision making, bringing together key players within the OT cybersecurity value chain as it drives research and development, standardization, and regulations. **■**

## The Digital opportunity: A Roadmap for Arab Nations

The 21st century is defined by the relentless march of digital technology. From artificial intelligence to the Internet of Things, these innovations are reshaping industries, societies, and economies at an unprecedented pace. The allure of a thriving digital economy is undeniable, promising increased productivity, job creation, and economic growth. However, the path to digital transformation is not uniform. Each nation, with its unique strengths and challenges, must chart its own course.

### The Digital Landscape: A Multifaceted Tapestry

The digital economy is a complex ecosystem, encompassing everything from core ICT sectors like hardware and software to digitalized industries like e-commerce and smart manufacturing. While some countries dominate specific segments of the global digital value chain, opportunities for value creation and capture exist for all nations. The foundation of any digital economy is robust digital infrastructure, including connectivity, storage, services, and devices. The transition to a digital economy can yield significant benefits, boosting industry growth, improving societal well-being, and empowering consumers.

### Navigating the Digital Transformation: A Tailored Approach

The journey towards a digital economy is not

one-size-fits-all. Recognizing this, the concept of "digital economy archetypes" emerges as a guiding framework. These archetypes, ranging from "Innovation Hubs" leading in cutting-edge technology to "ICT Novices" taking their first steps in the digital realm, offer a strategic lens for nations to understand their current position and chart their future trajectory. Each archetype has distinct policy priorities and areas of focus. For instance, Innovation Hubs prioritize research and development, while Service Powerhouses focus on building a skilled ICT workforce. The archetype framework empowers policymakers to make informed decisions, aligning their strategies with their nation's unique characteristics and aspirations.

### The Promise of Digital Transformation: A Global Imperative

The imperative for digital transformation is clear. The potential rewards, from economic growth to an improved quality of life, are immense. However, realizing these benefits requires a strategic and tailored approach. Nations must identify their archetype, understand its policy implications, and develop a roadmap that leverages their strengths and addresses their challenges. The journey towards a digital economy is ongoing, demanding continuous adaptation and innovation. But with a clear vision and a well-defined strategy, nations can navigate the



**Eng. Belal Al-Hafnawi**, Commissioner and Board Member of TRC-Jordan

complexities of the digital age and unlock its transformative potential.

### Spotlight on Arab Countries: Seizing the Digital Opportunity

For Arab countries, the digital economy presents a unique opportunity for growth and development. The region's young and dynamic population, coupled with its strategic location, offers fertile ground for digital innovation. By embracing the archetype framework, Arab countries can identify their comparative advantages and tailor their digital strategies accordingly. Some may aspire to become Service Powerhouses, capitalizing on their human capital to develop a thriving ICT services sector. Others may focus on becoming Efficient Prosumers, leveraging technology to enhance the competitiveness of their key industries, such as oil and gas or tourism. The key is to identify a path that aligns with the nation's unique strengths and aspirations.



Investing in digital infrastructure, developing human capital, and fostering a culture of innovation are crucial steps for Arab countries to thrive in the digital age. Collaboration within the region and with international partners can further accelerate progress. The digital economy offers a path to a more prosperous and inclusive future for Arab countries. By embracing the opportunities and navigating the challenges with a strategic and tailored approach, these nations can unlock their full potential and become leaders in the global digital landscape. **■**



# The cybersecurity landscape in the Middle East is diverse and complex

Cybersecurity expert and Secureism CEO, **Zeeshan Qamar**, speaks with Teletimes International about the changing cybersecurity dynamics in the region and Secureism's offerings to support public and private entities



**Teletimes:** Can you provide an overview of the cybersecurity landscape in the Middle East?

**Zeeshan Qamar:** The Middle East region is experiencing a rapid digital transformation, which has increased its exposure to cyber threats. Countries like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar are heavily investing in smart city technologies, digital banking, and industrial automation, making them prime targets for cybercriminals. The threat landscape is diverse, with hacktivism, and financial cybercrime being predominant. Moreover, geopolitical tensions add a layer of complexity, as cyber capabilities are increasingly becoming a part of national security strategies.

**TT:** Can you give us an overview of Secureism and what sets it apart from other cybersecurity providers in the Middle East?

**ZQ:** At Secureism, we don't just deliver cybersecurity services—we build lasting partnerships. Our mission is to align our clients' security needs with their business goals by providing hands-on expertise and support, whether they're looking to strengthen their security posture or respond to an active incident. We are backed by a strong technological group, a global leader in technological innovation. This partnership allows us to leverage cutting-edge advancements and set a high standard for cybersecurity excellence. What truly sets us apart is our pragmatic, client-focused approach, along with our presence

and operations across multiple countries in the GCC region, including the UAE and Bahrain. This ensures that we are not only accessible but also deeply engaged with the local cybersecurity landscape.

**TT:** What are the primary cybersecurity challenges faced by organizations in the Middle East?

**ZQ:** One of the main challenges is the shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals. Despite the growing awareness, there's a talent gap that organizations are struggling to fill. Secondly, legacy systems and outdated software are prevalent in some sectors, making them vulnerable to exploitation. There is also a lack of a unified regulatory

*The threat landscape is diverse, with hacktivism, and financial cybercrime being predominant. Moreover, geopolitical tensions add a layer of complexity, as cyber capabilities are increasingly becoming a part of national security strategies*

framework across the region, leading to inconsistent security postures and practices among different countries. Lastly, the sophisticated nature of attacks, especially those targeting critical infrastructure like energy and finance, poses a significant risk.

**TT:** How are governments in the region addressing cybersecurity threats?

**ZQ:** Governments in the Middle East are increasingly prioritizing cybersecurity. For example, Saudi Arabia has established the National Cybersecurity Authority, and the UAE has the Dubai Electronic Security Center and the National Cyber Security Strategy, similarly Bahrain has The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). These bodies are responsible for developing national cybersecurity strategies, protecting critical infrastructure, and responding to incidents. Additionally, several countries have implemented stricter cybersecurity regulations, like Saudi Arabia's ECC (Essential Cybersecurity Controls)



Zeeshan Qamar is the CEO & CO-FOUNDER of Secureism, with over 24 years of experience in cybersecurity, IT governance, and digital transformation. His career has spanned multiple industries, where he has spearheaded initiatives in program and project management, risk assessment, and cybersecurity strategy. As a leader, he's dedicated to building secure, resilient digital infrastructures tailored to organizational needs, with an emphasis on practical, results-driven approaches.

He is equally passionate about mentoring the next generation of cybersecurity professionals, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and driving organizational change. Under his leadership, Secureism has developed a reputation for excellence in cybersecurity solutions, particularly in the GCC region. His extensive experience and holistic approach make him a sought-after expert in the fields of cybersecurity and digital transformation.

framework, to enhance the security posture of public and private sectors.

**TT:** What role does your managed security service, CYFEN, play in protecting organizations in the region?

**ZQ:** CYFEN is our SOC-as-a-service offering that combines 24/7 monitoring, advanced AI/ML threat detection, and real-time incident management. It provides organizations with an effective and scalable alternative to building and maintaining their own SOCs, which can be costly and resource-intensive. Powered by our Elastic Security-based platform and enhanced with cutting-edge add-ons like SOAR (Security Orchestration,

Automation, and Response), CTEM (Continuous Threat Exposure Management), and EASM (External Attack Surface Management), CYFEN ensures faster and more accurate identification and mitigation of threats. Our team of SOC specialists work in real-time to detect, analyze, and neutralize incidents, allowing clients to focus on their core business functions while we handle the security monitoring.

**TT:** Can you give us an overview of all the key services Secureism offers, and how do they cater to the specific needs of public and private entities?

**ZQ:** Our service offerings cover a broad



spectrum of cybersecurity needs, from proactive assessments to fully managed security operations. Some of our key services include:

**1. Security Assessment & Testing:** We provide comprehensive assessment and testing services to uncover hidden vulnerabilities before they become active threats. Our services include network, system, web, and mobile application testing, as well as specialized services like ransomware preparedness assessments and threat hunting.

**2. Security Review & Assurance:** We offer a top-down evaluation of existing security frameworks, ensuring long-term resilience. This includes evaluating infrastructure components like firewalls and cloud architecture, identifying gaps, and providing actionable steps for improvement.

**3. Audit & Compliance:** We guide organizations through complex regulatory requirements such as PCI DSS, ISO 27001, and data protection standards. Our in-house developed solution, ClickGRC, automates GRC (Governance, Risk, and Compliance) processes, streamlining risk management and compliance for our clients.

**4. Managed Security Services – CYFEN (SOC as a Service):** Operating a dedicated Security Operations Center (SOC) is resource-intensive. Our managed service, CYFEN, offers 24/7 monitoring with advanced AI/ML-driven threat detection, providing comprehensive coverage and real-time incident management.

**5. PCI DSS Consulting & Audit:** For entities handling payment card information, we provide end-to-end consulting and audit services through strategic partnerships, ensuring secure and compliant operations.

Our offerings are designed to be flexible and tailored, addressing the unique challenges of both public and private sector organizations in the region.

**TT: What are the emerging trends in cybersecurity in the region?**



***What truly sets us apart is our pragmatic, client-focused approach, along with our presence and operations across multiple countries in the GCC region, including the UAE and Bahrain. This ensures that we are not only accessible but also deeply engaged with the local cybersecurity landscape***



**ZQ:** There is a notable increase in the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) for threat detection and response. AI is helping security teams identify anomalous behavior, automate responses, and predict potential threats. Additionally, zero-trust architecture is gaining traction as a model for network security, especially in organizations managing remote workforces. Cloud security is another area of focus as more businesses migrate to cloud-based infrastructures. Finally, there is a rising emphasis on security awareness training and building a cybersecurity culture within organizations.

**TT: What should organizations in the Middle East prioritize to improve their cybersecurity posture?**

**ZQ:** Organizations need to focus on a multi-layered approach. First, adopting a zero-trust security model can mitigate risks associated with internal and external threats. Investing in threat intelligence and real-time monitoring solutions is also crucial. Furthermore, employee training should be prioritized to address the human element of cybersecurity, which remains a significant vulnerability. Lastly, organizations should actively participate in regional and international cybersecurity forums to stay updated on the latest threats

and best practices.

**TT: How do you ensure that Secureism remains at the forefront of cybersecurity innovation?**

**ZQ:** Innovation is at the heart of what we do. We maintain strong partnerships with industry emerging leaders like Elastic Security, Nanitor, DarkInvader, PowerDmarc, Sovereign Secure, which keep us at the cutting edge of cybersecurity technology and practices. Our collaboration with these partners allows us to integrate advanced tools and solutions into our offerings, ensuring that we are always one step ahead of evolving threats. Additionally, our parent group provides us with access to global technological advancements and expertise, further enhancing our capabilities. By continuously investing in research, development, and strategic partnerships, we ensure that our clients receive the most advanced and effective cybersecurity solutions available.

**TT: What role does collaboration play in strengthening cybersecurity in the region?**

**ZQ:** Collaboration is vital. My mantra is "Collaboration is modern day competition". Cyber threats do not recognize borders, and isolated efforts are often less effective. There is a growing trend of regional

cooperation, with platforms like the Arab Regional Cybersecurity Center facilitating information sharing and joint incident response. Public-private partnerships are also being encouraged to share threat intelligence and develop unified response strategies. In the future, I believe we'll see more cross-border initiatives aimed at building a resilient cybersecurity ecosystem across the Middle East.

**TT: Are there any specific sectors in the Middle East that are more vulnerable to cyber threats?**

**ZQ:** Yes, critical infrastructure sectors such as energy, oil and gas, and finance are particularly vulnerable. Given their importance to national security and the economy, they are often targeted by advanced persistent threat (APT) groups and state-sponsored actors. Additionally, the healthcare sector has become more susceptible to ransomware attacks, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The increasing digitization in these sectors, combined with legacy systems and a lack of sufficient investment in cybersecurity, makes them prime targets.

**TT: What is your outlook on the future of cybersecurity in the Middle East?**

**ZQ:** The future of cybersecurity in the Middle East is poised for significant advancement. With substantial investments being made



in technology, infrastructure, and talent development, the region is on its way to becoming more resilient. However, as digital transformation accelerates, so will the complexity and volume of cyber threats. Organizations will need to remain agile, continuously update their security strategies, and foster a culture of cybersecurity to

navigate this evolving landscape.

**TT: What does the future hold for Secureism, and how do you plan to continue supporting your clients in the ever-evolving cybersecurity landscape?**

**ZQ:** The future for Secureism is centered around growth, innovation, and strengthening our partnerships across the GCC. As digital transformation accelerates, the threat landscape will continue to evolve, requiring more sophisticated defense strategies. We are committed to expanding our service offerings, enhancing our managed security solutions, and investing in talent development to stay ahead of these changes. Our goal is to continue being a trusted partner, providing the expertise and support our clients need to navigate the complexities of cybersecurity with confidence. With our deep regional presence and forward-thinking approach, we are well-positioned to help organizations in the Middle East maintain resilience and security in the face of future challenges. ■



***Innovation is at the heart of what we do. We maintain strong partnerships with industry emerging leaders like Elastic Security, Nanitor, DarkInvader, PowerDmarc, Sovereign Secure, which keep us at the cutting edge of cybersecurity technology and practices***





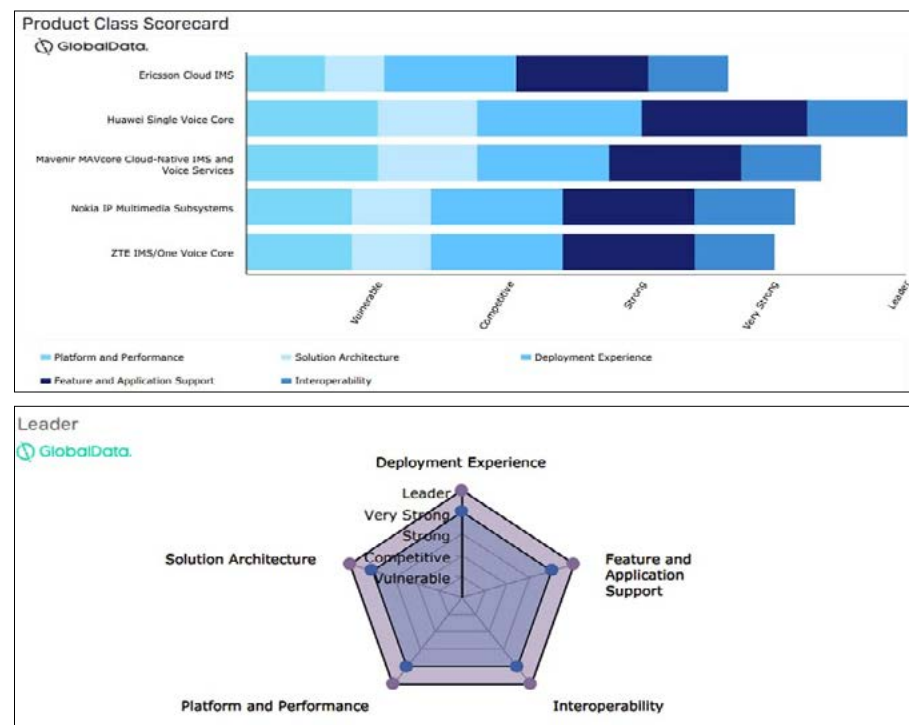
## GlobalData reconfirms Huawei's Single Voice Core as sole leader in competitive landscape assessment

GlobalData, a consulting firm, has released its latest IMS and Voice Core: Competitive Landscape Assessment report. It recognizes Huawei's Single Voice Core (SVC) as the sole leader in the market, achieving a perfect score in all dimensions — a first in the report's history. This achievement highlights the exceptional competitiveness and market performance of the SVC solution. Huawei was also Sole Leader in the previous GlobalData report.

The 2024 version of the report notes that as 5G deployments accelerate and voice services transition from 2G/3G to VoLTE/VoNR, operators are confronting the complexities of managing multi-platform and multi-generation voice networks. This growing complexity demands a convergent voice network that can seamlessly support 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G services. The report acknowledges Huawei SVC's leadership in this respect, commending its outstanding contributions to developing simplified, stable, and high-quality voice and video networks. Notably, the report notes Huawei's pioneering efforts in developing and commercializing New Calling technology. The report ranks Huawei SVC as a leader in all five categories: solution architecture, platform and performance, feature and application support, interoperability, and deployment experience.

When it comes to solution architecture, Huawei SVC stands out as the only convergent voice solution in the industry. It offers comprehensive support for a wide range of services including 2G/3G/4G/5G voice, VoBB, VoIP, and VoWiFi. This unique capability enables operators to simplify their network architecture, reduce operational costs, and enhance overall efficiency.

In the category of platform and performance, Huawei SVC is built on the company's innovative dual-engine container architecture. It guarantees operators' network investments are protected and enables a seamless evolution



of voice networks to 5G/5G-A. Additionally, SVC's high-reliability redundancy architecture provides operators with a robust defense against the threat of network disconnection. In terms of feature and application support, Huawei takes a leadership role in launching the New Calling solution, with flagship services such as visualized voice calling and real-time translation now in large-scale commercial use. This has enabled operators to drive revenue growth and capitalize on the opportunities presented by this innovative technology. New Calling has gained widespread verification in Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, and is rapidly expanding its global presence.

In terms of interoperability, Huawei SVC offers a comprehensive solution that goes beyond standard 3GPP VoLTE roaming. Its innovative Single Voice Roaming (SVR) solution enables quick and seamless VoLTE roaming with no changes to existing 2G/3G roaming settlement

mechanisms. This simplifies VoLTE roaming deployment and accelerates the transition away from 2G/3G networks. In the area of deployment experience, Huawei SVC has been commercially deployed on over 420 networks worldwide, serving a massive 1.7 billion VoLTE users and 200 million 2G/3G users. Additionally, New Calling has gained significant traction in China, attracting more than 10 million users.

As 5G-Advanced and AI continue to mature, operators can leverage their natural advantages to create a new generation of voice services. By harnessing the benefits of app-free, terminal-agnostic, and real-time experiences, operators can transform users' dial pads into intelligent service entries, unlocking new development opportunities and driving growth. Huawei will continue to drive innovation, and help operators to build robust fundamental networks, make the most of business opportunities with 5G-A, and achieve sustained business success. ■

## \$55.5 million growth round fuels Submer's push for greener AI factories and datacenters

Submer has raised an investment of US \$55.5 million, led by M&G. The investment comes from its £5 billion purpose-led Catalyst strategy, with Barclays Bank Ireland PLC acting as the placement agent to Submer. Among existing investors, Planet First Partners and Norrskan VC reinvested alongside M&G, and together with Mundi Ventures, reaffirmed their support as strong backers of Submer's strong financial position and growth potential.

In the age of rising chip Thermal Design Power (TDP) with demand being driven by innovative applications such as AI, datacenters are consuming vast amounts of energy and water. The International Energy Agency reports that datacenters consumed 460TWh in 2022 - almost 2% of global electricity consumption - and this figure is projected to possibly double by 2026 [1], surpassing the total electricity consumption of any EU country. Estimates also indicate that the global AI demand may even require 4.2 to 6.6 billion cubic meters of water withdrawal in 2027, which would be 4 to 6 times the total annual withdrawal of Denmark and half of that of the UK [2].

With traditional air-cooling and other liquid cooling methods becoming increasingly inadequate, immersion cooling emerges as the sustainable and scalable solution to help solve these key challenges.

### Fueling Growth and Global Expansion

Now at a pivotal scale-up stage, this new investment ushers Submer into its next phase of growth. It has already outlined plans for global expansion, with an immediate focus on increasing its presence in key markets such as the U.S. and APAC regions.

"We are grateful for the strong interest from investors and are thrilled to partner with the ones who align with our sustainability values. With this strong backing, we are



very well positioned to continue to lead the liquid immersion cooling market and meet the growing demands of hyperscale data centers, enabling us to scale faster with our customers, while remaining focused on driving both growth and meaningful impact in our industry," said Pol Valls, Founder & CFO at Submer

### Investors Committed to Building a Sustainable Future

All 3 investors – M&G Catalyst, Planet First Partners, and Norrskan VC – share Submer's commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility. Their support not only accelerates the company's growth but also aligns with the growing demand for greener solutions in the tech industry. These investors are aligned with Article 9 of the European Union's Sustainability Financial Disclosure Directive (SFDR) and its Green Taxonomy. Article 9 defines which companies have a positive impact, which helps the market and investors funnel their investments towards sustainable options.

M&G's investment was made by Catalyst, the firm's £5 billion purpose-led flexible private assets strategy, which invests in innovative solutions to some of the world's biggest environmental and social challenges on

behalf of the £126 billion Prudential With-Profits Fund and its circa 5 million customers.

Similarly, Article 9 fund Planet First Partners, and Swedish impact investment firm Norrskan VC (the investment arm of the non-profit Norrskan Foundation) and Tim Reynolds, the retired co-founder of Jane Street Capital are impact-focused investors, known for their commitment to backing technologies that promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the areas of financial inclusion and environmental sustainability.

This investment marks the beginning of several key announcements in Submer's pipeline, particularly regarding its expansion in the US and APAC region. As Submer continues to innovate and expand, the company is set to play a crucial role in shaping a more sustainable, energy-efficient future for datacenters worldwide. ■

### References:

[1] <https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/6b2fd954-2017-408e-bf08-952fdd62118a/Electricity2024-Analysisandforecastto2026.pdf>

[2] <https://arxiv.org/abs/2304.03271>



## USF bridging connectivity gap as Digital Pakistan takes shape, connecting 40 million Pakistanis through broadband projects



The Universal Service Fund (USF) is revolutionizing Pakistan's digital landscape by providing broadband services to unserved and underserved areas. At a seminar organized by the Pakistan School on Internet Governance (PKSIG) on "Bridging the Connectivity Gap," USF CEO Chaudhry Mudassar Naveed highlighted the organization's vision to empower these communities through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

"Established based on global infrastructure models, USF is one of the key organizations in Pakistan taking vigorous steps to bridge the digital divide and connectivity gap by providing broadband services to remote and unserved/underserved areas indiscriminately," said Mudassar Naveed.

He further emphasized USF's vision to empower these communities through ICTs, aiming for a digitally inclusive Pakistan. He also noted that the organization's mission is to improve the lives of these communities by making high-speed internet available and affordable for all.

In discussing the organization's key achievements, Mudassar stated, "Since its inception, USF has provided subsidies totaling over 136 billion rupees for 161 projects, delivering broadband services to nearly 40 million residents across more than 23,000 villages."

Since 2018, USF has seen a record acceleration in project launches. From 2019 to the present, through 90 different projects worth over PKR 80 billion, USF

has laid 10,192 kilometers of optical fiber cable (OFC) and installed 2,915 mobile towers equipped with 4G services nationwide.

Despite challenges such as security concerns, difficult terrain, sparse populations, harsh weather conditions, electricity and backhaul issues, poor logistics, and weak business cases, USF remains committed to its mission," he noted.

"USF's efforts aim to eliminate the rural-urban divide, connecting people to modern health, education, and business services. By addressing these obstacles, USF is playing a crucial role in realizing the vision of Digital Pakistan and stabilizing the digital economy," Mudassar Naveed concluded. **T**



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# GSMA MWC Kigali 2024 to explore role of connectivity in driving socio-economic growth across Africa

GSMA MWC Kigali will return to the Kigali Convention Center from 29-31 October 2024

MWC Kigali, Africa's largest and most influential connectivity event, will convene powerful innovators and political leaders from across the entire continent, geared towards driving the digital economy forward and enabling socio-economic growth.

MWC Kigali will deliver a range of keynotes and panel sessions hosted by industry thought leaders and leading enterprises, focussed around the four event themes: Connected Continent, The AI Future, FinTech, and Africa's Digital DNA. Recently confirmed speakers include Airtel Africa's CEO, Sunil Taldar; Amini's Founder & CEO, Kate Kallot; the GSMA's Director General, Mats Granryd; the ITU's Secretary-General, Doreen Bogdan-Martin; Lelapa AI's CEO and Co-founder, Pelonomi Moiloa; MTN Group's FinTech CEO, Serigne Dioum; Republic of Rwanda's Minister of ICT and Innovation, Hon. Paula Ingabire; Take Back the Mic's CEO & Founder, Derrick Ashong and, Wi-Flix's CEO, Louis Manu.

For the first time in Africa, the GSMA Ministerial Programme will be hosted at MWC Kigali, marking a new chapter in the commitment to advancing the digital agenda in Africa. The programme will convene the most influential telecommunications leaders from across the African continent to discuss policy and regulatory topics key to the region.

The Mobile for Development (M4D) team will once again play a central role at the event, driving innovation in digital technology to reduce global inequalities. M4D will host the 'Mobile for Development Theatre', a dedicated space for keynote sessions, panels, and discussions. Themes will range from AI for impact and humanitarian innovation, agriculture and climate, to digital inclusion and gender. Also returning this year is the Mobile Money Leadership Forum, which will explore key trends and innovations in mobile financial services.

The MWC Kigali keynotes will cover some of Africa's most pressing digital connectivity issues. Keynote 1 will discuss how digital technologies are driving socio-economic development in Africa to address the continent's unique challenges. Keynote 2 will focus on the transformative potential of AI, including how it can drive sustainable and inclusive growth across Africa. Keynote 3 will see speakers explore the rapid evolution of Africa's Fintech landscape and the technologies impacting investment opportunities. While Keynote 4 will explore how the evolving content landscape is allowing African content creators to be heard and celebrated globally.

An agenda of GSMA Summits will be hosted during the event, inviting



industry leaders and policymakers to discover the issues affecting enterprises in areas from network security to diversity in tech:

- The **Security Summit** will tackle the most pressing security challenges mobile network operators face today, in the context of a rapidly evolving cyber risk landscape.
- The **Digital Summit** will explore the digital economy's potential in Africa, exploring how digital technologies and policy reform can drive significant socio-economic growth in Africa.
- The **AI Summit** will cover both the vast potential and the associated risks of AI technologies in Africa, as the technology's prevalence grows in the global economy.
- The **5G Summit** will address the barriers preventing the technology's widespread adoption and ways to unlock its potential for both enterprises and consumers.
- The **Diversity for Tech Summit** will focus on the urgent need for greater disability inclusion in Africa's tech sector, ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the tools and opportunities they need to succeed.

MWC Kigali is held alongside the Africa Health Tech Summit and FEWA (Future of Education and Work in Africa), offering an in-depth exploration of connectivity challenges and opportunities in the health and education sectors. We are proud to have the support of our stellar line up of sponsors, exhibitors and event partners, including Africa CDC, Africa Union, Huawei, inABLE, MTN, the Republic of Rwanda, Smart Africa and ZTE. 📱

# SAMENA Council to promote 10 Gigabit digital infrastructure development in the region in collaboration with Huawei

SAMENA (South Asia-Middle East-North Africa) Telecommunications' SAMENA ACCELERATOR on 10 Gigabit digital infrastructure will be held on October 17th at the One & Only Mirage in Dubai, UAE.

In collaboration with its valued member, Huawei Technologies, the Council will organize the 2024 edition of its SAMENA ACCELERATOR to continue the dialogue initialized in the 2023 edition of the 10 Gigabit ACCELERATOR, which established a compelling case for ultra-broadband or "10Giga" network development by utilizing advancements in Fiber and IPv6 innovations. The 2024 edition will delve into deepening consensus on accelerating 10 Giga network development and exploring future-oriented broadband infrastructure upgrades, enhancing user experiences, enabling digitalization of various industries, and, as an ultimate goal, accelerating the development of the digital economy in the Middle East and Central Asia.

SAMENA Council recognizes that, with advancements in fifth-generation fixed



technology-centric discussions during the SAMENA ACCELERATOR will spotlight 10 Gigabit network development (10Giga), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Fixed 5G-Advanced (F5G-A).

"SAMENA Council's partnership with Huawei is a strategic step towards fostering digital innovation in the region,"

## Policy-centric and technology-centric discussions will spotlight 10 Gigabit network development (10Giga), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Fixed 5G-Advanced (F5G-A)

networks, and integration of AI and emerging technologies, Gigabit networks can significantly accelerate digital economic development, fulfil ambitious national ICT visions, and drive industrial and societal transformation, particularly in the GCC markets, where there is a need to enhance broadband speeds and accelerate optical-fiber coverage. Policy-centric and

said Bocar BA, CEO & Board Member of SAMENA Council. "Our aim is to continue the dialogue and experience exchange regarding the "10Giga" concept voiced in 2023. Given new policies on digital development and emergence of technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence, it is imperative to inspire Fiber growth in Central Asia mirroring the

progress made in the GCC. We need to enhance 10Giga transition, while adopting speedier deployment methods and addressing issues in landlocked countries. It is crucial to advance the Digital Economies of our regions."

SAMENA Council observes that the region, particularly, and neighboring regions, generally, need to come at par with more digitally advanced economies. However, to achieve this, drastic steps are necessary to further broadband development and IPv6 transformation. Moving towards "gigabit" infrastructure is an essential element in such steps. Technology advancements and capabilities, such as pre-connection, FTTR, 10G-PON, OTN for digital hub, converged bearer network ranging from 100G to 800G are readily available. Moreover, with rising interest in Artificial Intelligence and its use in analyzing optical-fiber, service quality, performance assessment, bandwidth capacity management, and optimization of network resources, it is important to understand effective utilization and implications of allied technologies on regional broadband development. 📱



## GSMA M360 MENA 2024 opens registration for its first-ever Doha edition

The GSMA has opened registration for M360 MENA 2024, which will take place for the first time in Doha, Qatar. The highly anticipated event will be held from 18-19 November 2024, in partnership with the Ministry of Communication and Technology of Qatar and Host Sponsor Ooredoo.

M360 MENA will bring together C-suite executives, policymakers, and technology leaders for two days of in-depth discussion and debate, focusing on the transformative impact of mobile technology on economies and societies across the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa). This year's agenda emphasises industry-wide collaboration through initiatives such as the GSMA Open Gateway and highlights the role of innovations in AI, 5G, and digital infrastructure in reshaping businesses and driving digital inclusion.

Recently announced speakers include the Qatari Minister of Communications and Information Technology, His Excellency Mohammed bin Ali bin Mohammed Al Mannai; Ooredoo's Group Chief Executive Officer, Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo; and Ooredoo Qatar's Chief Executive Officer, Sheikh Ali Bin Jabor Bin Mohammad Al Thani.

His Excellency Mr. Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology said: "Digital transformation is vital to Qatar's development strategy. With mobile advancements and regional collaboration, we aim to build a resilient digital infrastructure that drives sustainable growth and enhances the quality of life for our citizens. M360 MENA is a crucial platform to exchange insights, form digital partnerships, and accelerate innovative technology adoption."

GSMA's Director General, Mats Granryd, said: "Hosting M360 MENA for the first time in Doha marks a significant milestone for



the region. This event will showcase the transformative power of mobile technology across industries, highlighting innovations in AI, 5G, and digital infrastructure. We invite everyone to engage, explore, and witness firsthand how connectivity is shaping the future for the MENA region."

Ooredoo Qatar's Chief Executive Officer, Sh. Ali Bin Jabor Bin Mohammad Al Thani, said: "We are honoured to host GSMA M360 MENA in Doha for the first time. This event is a powerful testament to the region's role as a global digital hub and aligns perfectly with Ooredoo's commitment to fostering innovation, advancing digital infrastructure, and driving digital inclusion. We look forward to welcoming industry leaders from across the globe and showcasing the transformative potential of AI, 5G, and next-generation technologies."

### Driving digital partnerships – a dynamic agenda for growth

The MENA region has become a global hub for digital innovation, with a digital economy predicted to rise from \$180 billion to \$780 billion by 2030. M360 MENA's packed agenda will begin with a high-profile Opening Ceremony featuring Qatar's Minister of Communications and Information Technology, His Excellency Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai; GSMA's Head of MENA, Jawad Abbassi; and Ooredoo's

Group CEO, Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo.

Keynote 1 follows, with speeches from H.E. the MCIT Minister Mr. Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai, GSMA Director General Mats Granryd and Ooredoo Qatar CEO Sheikh Ali Bin Jabor Bin Mohammad Al Thani discussing the transformative power of 5G, AI, and the API economy in shaping the region's digital future.

Keynotes and sessions across the two days will spotlight collaborations driving digitisation across industries, featuring speakers including the e&S's Senior Vice President of Sustainability and ESG, Andrew Dunnett; GSMA's Chief Marketing Officer, Lara Dewar; Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's Chief Information Officer, Erol Ozguner; International Holding's Chief Executive Officer, Mikhail Gerchuk; KAUST's Distinguished Professor, Mohamed-Slim Alouini; Tele2 Kazakhstan's Chief Executive Officer, Sergey Nazarenko and, with more speakers to come.

M360 MENA will host a range of exhibitors and sponsors including China Mobile, Comarch, iHorizons and Protei. Presented by the GSMA, M360 is a series of global events that unify the regional mobile ecosystem. The events aim to discover, develop and deliver innovation that serves as the foundation for positive business environments and societal change. **■**

## Ooredoo Group recognized as key player in IoT

### Transforma Insights' report highlights Ooredoo's significant strides in the IoT sector

Ooredoo Group was recognized as a key player in IoT by leading global analyst firm, Tranforma Insights, in their prestigious "Communications Service Provider (CSP) IoT Peer Benchmarking Report 2024". This accolade distinguishes Ooredoo as the sole telecommunications company within its operational footprint to be featured in the report.

Transforma Insights emphasise Ooredoo's significant strides in the IoT sector, highlighting that the company manages 5 million IoT connections across its footprint, with a large base in the GCC and South-East Asia. The report underscores Ooredoo's robust IoT infrastructure, which includes deployments of NB-IoT in Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Tunisia and Indonesia, and LTE-M in Qatar.

Ooredoo's advancements in the IoT landscape present significant growth opportunities and suggest a promising potential for revenue growth and market expansion. This recognition positions the company as a preferred partner for reputed international customers, including manufacturers of connected devices and vehicles, creating opportunities for



**Najib Khan** - Group Chief Business Services Officer, Ooredoo

global Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) seeking reliable partnerships within Ooredoo's footprint.

Najib Khan, Group Chief Business Services Officer, Ooredoo, said: "Our strategic investments in IoT and 5G technologies are creating new business opportunities and reinforcing our position as a key partner for digital transformation in the region. We are honoured to be recognised by Transforma Insights as a leading player in the IoT sector. This acknowledgment is a testament to our

commitment to innovation and excellence in providing top-tier IoT solutions."

According to the Transforma Insights report, Ooredoo's membership in the IoT World Alliance, which began in August 2023, has already led to several significant deals supporting IoT connections within its footprint. This collaboration enhances Ooredoo's capability to provide localised connectivity solutions, a critical advantage given the increasing regulatory limitations on permanent roaming across many countries in the region.

The report also highlights Ooredoo's efforts in developing vertical solutions for various industries. These include a focus on sectors such as oil & gas, ports, and airports, where Ooredoo has proactively positioned its IoT solutions through strategic partnerships with leading technology providers. Additionally, Ooredoo's "IoT Connect SIM" and "IoT Connect Smart Control" offerings provide comprehensive value-added features, such as enhanced security protocols and real-time data analytics, ensuring secure and efficient IoT connectivity for businesses.

For customers, particularly in the B2B sector, Ooredoo's inclusion in the Transforma Insights report reinforces its credibility as a provider of cutting-edge IoT solutions, demonstrating Ooredoo's capability to deliver reliable, scalable, and innovative digital solutions tailored to meet their specific needs.

Najib Khan added: "As Ooredoo continues to enhance its IoT infrastructure and expand its service offerings, it remains dedicated to driving digital transformation across its operations. The company's strategic initiatives and technological advancements are paving the way for a smarter, more connected future." **■**





# Empowering Graduates, Strengthening Companies

Eng. Nidal Bitar, CEO of The ICT Association of Jordan

As the ICT sector in Jordan continues to thrive, a critical challenge remains: ensuring that new graduates are equipped with the skills necessary to seamlessly integrate into the workforce.

Despite the growing number of qualified ICT graduates, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often struggle to absorb this fresh talent due to resource limitations and a lack of structured internship programs.

Bridging this gap between academic training and industry requirements is essential for the sustainable development of the ICT sector. Through more intentional collaboration between educational institutions and companies, Jordan can

create opportunities that benefit both students and the wider tech industry. Structured internship programs that allow graduates to transition smoothly into the professional world are crucial to addressing this challenge.

By equipping SMEs with the tools and knowledge they need to effectively manage interns, these companies can tap into a valuable source of innovation and creativity. Interns, in turn, gain real-world experience, enhancing their technical skills and understanding of how the ICT sector operates. Such structured on the job training programs also help reduce youth unemployment, a persistent issue in Jordan, by providing students with the practical skills needed to succeed in the marketplace.



At the heart of this effort is the desire to build long-term capacity within the ICT industry. Internships are not just a temporary solution but a strategic investment in the future of Jordan's workforce. By providing students with hands-on experience, the sector not only benefits from fresh ideas but also builds a pipeline of qualified professionals who can contribute to its growth over the years.

Moreover, fostering inclusivity within these programs is vital. Ensuring that both male and female students have equal access to opportunities in ICT will help create a more diverse and dynamic workforce. Gender equity, particularly in technology fields, can drive more innovation and ensure a broader range of perspectives in problem-solving.

The collaborative effort between academia and industry represents a forward-thinking approach to overcoming the talent gap. By focusing on structured, impactful internships, Jordan can strengthen its position as a leader in the ICT field while ensuring that its graduates are fully prepared to contribute meaningfully to the country's economic and technological future.

This approach highlights the power of partnerships in creating sustainable growth for Jordan's ICT sector and reinforces the importance of investing in the next generation of professionals. Through such initiatives, Jordan's ICT industry can continue to thrive, shaping a more prosperous and innovative future for all. ■



# Es'hailSat showcases Es'hail-1, Es'hail-2 and Es'hailSat Teleport at IBC 2024



Es'hailSat at IBC 2024 in Amsterdam showcased its satellites, Es'hail-1 and Es'hail-2, along with the cutting-edge 50,000 sqm teleport in Doha. At present, Es'hail-1 and Es'hail-2 are actively transmitting high-quality, premium DTH television content from the 25.5°/26° East hotspot.

Es'hail-2 is a high-performance satellite positioned at 26° East, equipped with advanced anti-jamming features. This satellite significantly enhances the company's capacity to deliver high-quality, premium DTH television content to the Middle East and North Africa through TV broadcasting.

Es'hailSat's 50,000 square meter teleport



Ali Al Kuwari  
President & CEO, Es'hailSat

facility offers customers secure and independent satellite transmission capabilities. The facility provides support for satellite tracking, telemetry, and control

(TT&C), as well as capacity management and a wide array of services including uplink, downlink, multiplexing, encoding, playout, VSAT, and other value-added services. Additionally, this state-of-the-art teleport facility is designed to serve as backup studios for TV channels and as a disaster recovery site for customers.

Ali Al Kuwari, President and CEO of Es'hailSat, said: "We have been expanding upon our gamut of services since the launch of Es'hail-1 & Es'hail-2 to grow beyond our local market, and now with the newly launched Playout and Media services together with our 50,000sqm Teleport, a global event such as IBC gives us the right platform to engage with customers and partners and showcase our capabilities and achievements." ■



## MEASAT partners with NSIL to support its business in India

MEASAT has collaborated with NewSpace India Limited ("NSIL") to support its business in India through at the Bengaluru Space Expo.

Leveraging NSIL's support to strengthen its presence in the Indian market; this partnership enables MEASAT to offer its satellite capacity for broadcasters, DTH operators, and other services in near future. Domestic services will utilise MEASAT-3b Ku-Band, while regional connectivity will be provided through MEASAT-3d Global C-Band, ensuring robust and reliable coverage across the region.

"MEASAT is pleased to strengthen the business relationship and expand the collaboration with NSIL, who has been our partner for more than 5 years. It is exciting to see the Indian Government's commitment to grow the space industry and we are keen to leverage our capabilities and reliable satellites to support the needs of current and future clients in the country. The success of our CONNECTme satellite broadband service in helping to close the connectivity gap in rural Malaysia could be



replicated in India through this partnership. We are also keen to tap on NSIL's launch service capability and other services to support MEASAT's initiatives in the region," said Ganendra Selvaraj, Chief Commercial Officer, MEASAT.

A. Arunachalam, Director, NewSpace India Limited, said: "We are delighted with this expansion of our relationship with

MEASAT. NSIL is committed to meet the demands of users in Indian Market and hence it would continue the successful business activities with international satellite solutions providers like MEASAT in line with India's national goals. Together, we will also drive new capacity offerings for existing customers and new business in India, which in turn, helps them achieve their own growth targets." ■

## VIAVI drives down testing complexity and cost with automation and orchestration platform

VIAVI has introduced the VIAVI Automation Management and Orchestration System (VAMOS), an intelligent automation platform that incorporates AI/ML capabilities to enable wireless and cloud service providers, network equipment manufacturers and their ecosystems to reduce operational expenses and accelerate time-to-market.

The complexity of network architectures continues to increase, as operators and equipment manufacturers investigate the next generation of technology, migrate to the cloud, and leverage AI and ML. Continuous Testing (CT) becomes ever more prevalent to provide a unifying perspective

on real-world performance. Yet labs are confronting the dual challenges of more tests and limited headcount. Automation has become a crucial way for them to manage the complexity, scheduling and manpower demands of CT, allowing technicians to efficiently power through hundreds of test cases, and to focus on higher-order analysis and problem solving.

VIAVI has developed VAMOS as part of its industry-leading NITRO® Wireless portfolio to automate test campaigns and their execution in one centralized cloud-based, Lab-as-a-Service platform. Built-in AI and ML capabilities enable test optimization and faster response times.

VAMOS's customizable workspaces and configurations streamline the testing process across organizations and lab locations. Shared tool testbeds and individual sandboxes accommodate multiple test needs while the platform's robust analytics and reporting help maximize test resource utilization and boost test accuracy.

In addition to providing a standalone solution to schedule and run test campaigns based on VIAVI's NITRO® Wireless portfolio, VAMOS can be integrated with a third-party automation framework, allowing it to interact with a wider range of products and existing test environments. Connection is available via both software and hardware. ■



Vodafone and Intelsat have extended their partnership to offer wider coverage of temporary and on-the-move satellite connectivity services to organizations operating in hard-to-reach areas or disaster zones.

The expanded agreement will complement Vodafone's terrestrial networks by providing enterprises with broadband connectivity in remote and underserved areas. This means businesses, governments and charities can support multiple applications such as tracking valuable cargo, connecting new or temporary sites, providing additional resilience and responding to emergency situations.

Vodafone is adding Intelsat's Flex portfolio to its comprehensive satellite connectivity product range aimed at both private and public sectors globally. Using the Intelsat service based on a network of GEO (Geostationary Earth Orbit) satellites,

Vodafone is providing two types of secure, reliable, and easy-to-use satellite connectivity products – Communications-on-the-Move (COTM) uses a vehicle-mounted antenna, and Communications-on-the-Pause (COTP) connectivity comprises a compact satellite terminal.

Intelsat's service will also be used to support Vodafone's charitable arm, Vodafone Foundation, with its connected health and education initiatives across Europe and Africa. Vodafone Foundation is also on standby to offer help to NGOs, governments and relief agencies in their response to environmental and humanitarian disaster situations.

Marika Auramo, CEO of Vodafone Business, said: "Vodafone's agreement with Intelsat adds depth and breadth to our global network. With these new services, we can provide additional connectivity and resilience to customers

in some of the hardest to reach places, whether they're on the move, or need to quickly establish communications following an environmental or humanitarian disaster."

"The welfare of communities and their citizens is increasingly linked to the ability to access reliable connectivity services," said Jean Philippe Gillet, SVP, Media, Mobility and Networks at Intelsat. "The goal of our Flex services is to make it easier for our customers to leverage the reach and reliability of Intelsat's network to deliver connectivity wherever they may operate, be it charitable initiatives like the Vodafone Foundation or connectivity for global enterprises, industrial operations, or rapid-response organizations."

Vodafone's agreement with Intelsat complements its pioneering work on direct-to-smartphone connectivity using low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite technology. ■



## Huawei and du achieve another milestone with the commercial deployment of first indoor 5G-Advanced network in the Middle East



Huawei and du have enabled a significant milestone in du's journey toward a 5G-Advanced network. du has become the first to successfully deploy Huawei's 5G LampSite X 'Digital Indoor Solution' using Three Carrier Aggregation (3CC) Technology in the Middle East. This achievement further strengthens du's leadership in the 5G user experience market, delivering a peak data rate of 5.1 Gbps.

In 2021, du, in collaboration with Huawei, pioneered the first ubiquitous indoor gigabit-per-second (Gbps) network. This new joint innovation aims to significantly enhance the capabilities of mobile networks, improving connectivity in indoor spaces such as shopping malls, hotels, airports, and residential buildings.

As a leading player in the 5G market, du has seen remarkable results from this achievement. 5G user traffic now accounts for over 60% of total mobile traffic, surpassing the combined traffic of 4G and

3G networks. The widespread adoption of 5G services demonstrates the success of du's network, and the deployment of three TDD large-bandwidth carriers with aggregation promises users an unmatched network experience.

Saleem AlBlooshi, Chief Technology Officer at du, stated: "We are committed to providing a high-quality user experience to our customers. Since the introduction of 5G in 2019, we have launched numerous innovative services. Among these, 5G home wireless services have been widely welcomed, and our market share in this area is far ahead. Introducing 5G Three Carrier Aggregation in our In-Building Solution (IBS) Network is a crucial step in ensuring a leading 5G user experience. It has enabled us to enhance our network's capabilities and quality, greatly improving customer satisfaction."

Eric Bao, President of Huawei's Wireless

Digital Indoor System Product Line, commented: "With the rapid development of 5G networks, the era of innovation represented by smart electric vehicles, humanoid robots, cloud mobile phones, and naked-eye 3D has arrived. It is critical for operators to provide indoor networks with greater capacity, higher performance, and energy-saving efficiency. As an industry-leading indoor solution, LampSite X assists operators in building indoor networks that offer both intelligence and exceptional performance to meet the explosive growth in service demand."

du remains committed to providing the best 5G services to its customers across the UAE by continuously leveraging its network with the latest technological advancements. In line with its long-term commitment to supporting the UAE's connectivity goals, du continues to innovate and implement strategies that enhance network capabilities and deliver cutting-edge solutions. ■



## Excellence in Satellite Communications Awards and Space Business Catalyst Award celebrate groundbreaking achievements at World Space Business Week

Recipients of the Excellence in Satellite Communications Awards were recognized at this year's World Space Business Week. In its 27th edition, the prestigious event hosts more than 1,400 executives and industry leaders each year from over 500 space organizations across the globe.

Novaspace, merger between Euroconsult and SpaceTec Partners, recognized top technical and business innovations in satellite Communications during the Excellence in Satellite Communications Awards at World Space Business Week.

The winners were chosen by a panel of industry experts who evaluated candidates based on strict criteria including innovation, management style, financial performance, and overall business impact. In a ceremony held on September 18th, during World Space Business Week, the winners received their awards before an audience of over 1,400 of their executive peers. This year's winners were recognized

in four distinct categories:

**Yahsat and Bayanat collected the Strategic Transaction Award (M&A)**

Yahsat's merger with Bayanat signals a new trend toward AI-powered space technology. The UAE-based complementary merger between the companies is predicted to lead to a market capitalization of over \$4 billion positioning the company for future profitable growth and innovation. The merger, leading to the creation of Space42, aims to create a vertically integrated AI provider with geospatial and mobility, satellite communications and business capabilities.

"Receiving the WSBW award is a significant recognition of Yahsat and Bayanat's commitment to advancing SpaceTech and AI technologies. Our merger with Bayanat to create Space42, underscores our commitment to seamlessly integrate satellite

communications, geospatial intelligence, and AI capabilities, in line with the UAE's Space Strategy 2030 and AI Strategy 2031. Through our combined world-class capabilities and expertise, we are positioned to meet the rapidly evolving needs of the global SpaceTech sector and deliver greater value to our customers, stakeholders, and the communities we serve. We are proud to lead in this critical sector and remain dedicated to pushing the boundaries of what satellite technology can deliver to transform industries and communities worldwide," said Ali Al Hashemi, GCEO of Yahsat

"Receiving the Strategic Transaction of the Year Award is a powerful affirmation of Bayanat and Yahsat's bold vision in transforming the space sector. Our groundbreaking merger to form Space42 aligns perfectly with the UAE leadership's ambition to position our nation as a global powerhouse in space and AI, fueling a dynamic, knowledge-based economy.



The launch of the UAE's first SAR satellite, Foresight-1, marks a significant leap in our Earth Observation program, showcasing how our united strengths are set to revolutionize global standards. This recognition propels us to push the boundaries of innovation, leaving a lasting impact on global decision-making powered by Space & AI," said Hasan Al Hosani, MD of Bayanat.

**Avanti Communications & IHS Towers secured the Universal Broadband Award**

The partnership between Avanti Communications and IHS Towers paves the way for continued rural connectivity. Together, Avanti Communications and IHS Towers will establish a cost-effective, reliable and sustainable broadband connectivity solution to Nigeria, a region sorely lacking in accessible telecommunications services. This important solution will enhance quality of life to millions of people in that region.

"Thank you for recognising Avanti and IHS as the winners of the Universal Broadband Award. The mission to provide cost-effective, reliable, and sustainable internet solutions is more than a professional endeavor; it is a mission we each carry personally at Avanti. Access to the internet is not a luxury, it is a necessity. It opens doors to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and global connectivity. For too long, the remote and hard-to-reach regions of Africa have been left in the dark, disconnected from the boundless potential connectivity brings. This award marks a significant milestone for both Avanti and IHS, but it is also a reminder of what we still must achieve. It motivates us to continue to push boundaries and challenge limitations, so that every individual, regardless of their location, has the opportunity to be a part of the digital age," said Kyle Whitehill, CEO, Avanti Communications

"We are deeply honored to receive the World Space Business Week Universal Broadband Award, recognizing our commitment to innovation and social

responsibility in expanding global connectivity. As one of the largest independent tower companies globally, IHS Towers is dedicated to helping bridge the digital divide, particularly in Nigeria, where we operate more than 16,000 towers. Our partnership with Avanti Communications has been pivotal in bringing broadband connectivity as well as delivering sustainable, reliable, and cost-effective solutions to rural areas. Together, we are striving to help transform lives by enabling digital inclusion, job creation, and driving socio-economic development across underserved and unserved communities," said Mohamad Darwish: Executive Vice President, IHS Nigeria CEO

**SES won Global Satellite Business of the Year**

Satellite telecommunications giant, SES Satellites, announced major partnerships and collaborations marking pivotal shifts and providing a glimpse into the future of satellite communications. SES's success as a global satellite operator has seen it expand from its European broadcasting origins to providing an impressive portfolio of global services including broadband. Additionally, SES teamed up with SpaceX to link their broadband satellites to Starlink to enhance multi-orbit cruise connectivity.

"On behalf of SES, I am honored to accept this award which acknowledges the integrated multi-orbit innovation we are spearheading and the value we are delivering to our customers. This achievement is only possible thanks to our team's dedication to understanding customer needs and our global partnerships across the industry. Pending approval, we believe the proposed SES-Intelsat acquisition will enable the combined company to become an even more competitive multi-orbit operator with the ability to offer better solutions in high-value markets," said John-Paul Hemingway, Chief Commercial Officer at SES

**Sky Perfect JSAT Group secured the**

**Regional Satellite Operator Award**

Sky Perfect JSAT Group has successfully grown its communications and broadcasting satellite fleet over decades, with its first satellite launched in 1989. Sky Perfect JSAT Group has now become the premiere commercial constellation in Japan, servicing the Asia Pacific market, ensuring its knowledge and expertise of space operations can be shared across the Japanese communications market.

"We are truly honored to receive this award and grateful to Novaspace for always providing an insightful platform such as World Space Business Week. SKY Perfect JSAT has been leading the satcom industry in Asia Pacific for 35 years, and we are now transforming ourselves into more than just a satellite telecommunication and broadcasting provider. With our initiatives and technologies including integrated non-terrestrial network systems, earth observation, active debris removal, and space situational awareness, we will continue to perform at our best to bring "Space for your Smile," as our group mission says, to the lives of people, communities, and countries in the region," said Yutaka Moriai, Executive Officer, Group President, Global Business Group, Space Business Unit.

Space Villages has been honored with the Space Business Catalyst Award, powered by Thales Alenia Space. For the second year, this award is linked to Thales Alenia Space's space accelerator program in Turin, Italy and Toulouse, France. The award is presented to intrapreneurs and startups who are looking to develop responsible solutions for sustainable space and life on Earth. The award supports these initiatives and intends to elevate and implement their strategies.

"We are grateful for this award. The progress we've made is a result of the vision and commitment to build affordable and sustainable space infrastructures. We will continue our mission to enhance space accessibility and innovating in the in-orbit assembly and repair services," said Jose Alonso, Space Villages Founder. ■

**GSMA launches maturity roadmap as telecoms industry leads the way in deployment of responsible AI**

The GSMA has launched the first industry-wide Responsible AI (RAI) Maturity Roadmap to provide telecoms operators with the tools and guidance to test and assess their responsible use of the technology. Recognizing that the overall opportunity derived from the expanded use of AI within the telecoms sector is estimated by McKinsey to be as high as \$680 billion over the next 15-20 years, the GSMA is uniting the industry in using the technology ethically and responsibly – the first time a whole sector has committed to a common approach to AI.

The roadmap, developed based on insights by McKinsey and a group of operators, will allow telecoms organizations to assess where they currently stand in terms of their existing maturity in using AI responsibly against where they want to go, i.e. their ambitions and needs. It then provides clear guidance and measurement tools to help fulfil those ambitions, while ensuring industry-wide best practice in the responsible use of the technology.

Its development follows the well-established commitments of many mobile network operators (MNOs) to ensure the exploration and integration of AI within their work has been and is done in ethical and responsible ways.

Following extensive industry consultation, the GSMA has taken these approaches and combined them with existing global regulations, recommendations and standards from international organizations including the OECD, and the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI to create a roadmap for the whole industry to align on the use of RAI.

This initiative has been championed by Axiata, Deutsche Telekom, Orange, Telefónica and Telstra. Nineteen MNOs have already committed to using the roadmap as a way of tracking, maintaining and improving their responsible use of AI. Full details of all



the MNOs already using it are available in the notes to editors.

**Best-practice principles**

The RAI Maturity Roadmap is underpinned by five core underlying dimensions: the vision, values and strategic goals of an organization; its operating model and how to maintain AI governance across all operations; technical controls aligned with regulatory requirements; collaboration with third-party ecosystems; as well as corporate change management and communication strategies.

For each of these dimensions, the roadmap will guide organizations to take the appropriate steps to use AI responsibly relative to their level of maturity.

It also builds on well-established best-practice principles, including: fairness; human agency and oversight; privacy and security; safety and robustness; transparency; accountability; and environmental impact.

By providing greater clarity and a common approach to the responsible use of AI, the GSMA's industry roadmap will give MNOs the confidence to commit to its adoption in the knowledge they are doing so in established, agreed and ethical ways, and therefore

unlock the technology's full value more quickly.

Mats Granryd, Director General of the GSMA, said: "The transformative potential of AI has long been apparent but its integration in our work and our lives must be done in a responsible and transparent way for it to be truly effective and sustainable. This roadmap will now empower more MNOs to embrace AI in the knowledge they, in line with the whole sector, are doing so responsibly and ethically. Responsible AI is the right way to explore and unlock the many opportunities the technology presents, and the telecoms industry is proud to lead the way as the first sector to commit to this approach – we hope others will follow our example."

José María Álvarez-Pallete López, GSMA Board Chair and Chairman & CEO of Telefónica, said: "The speed with which AI has now become a central part of tech and telecoms operations demonstrates its power and undoubted value, but also the risks we must consider as an industry and the need to include ethics at the heart of AI to prevent its uncontrolled development. It is crucial for us all to ensure responsible guidelines for the use of AI are implemented now, and it is great to see the telecoms industry leading the way on this with the GSMA's new roadmap." ■



# GLOBAL ICT, TELECOM & SATCOM EVENTS 2024-25

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<b>14-18</b> October 2024 <b>GLOBAL DEV SLAM</b> Dubai, UAE	<b>14-18</b> November 2024 <b>AFRICA TECH FESTIVAL</b> Cape Town South Africa	<b>03-06</b> March 2025 <b>MWC GSMA</b> Barcelona, Spain
<b>15-16</b> October 2024 <b>SuperBridge</b> Dubai, UAE	<b>18-19</b> November 2024 <b>M360 GSMA</b> Doha, Qatar	<b>04-06</b> February 2025 <b>capacity MIDDLE EAST 2025</b> Dubai, UAE
<b>15-17</b> October 2024 <b>capacity EUROPE 2024</b> London, UK	<b>19-20</b> November 2024 <b>CONNECTED WORLD</b> Riyadh, KSA	<b>06-08</b> May 2025 <b>GISEC GLOBAL</b> Dubai, UAE
<b>18-19</b> October 2024 <b>MWC GSMA</b> Kigali, Rwanda	<b>19-20</b> November 2024 <b>TELECOMSWORLD Asia</b> Bangkok, Thailand	<b>13-15</b> May 2025 <b>CABSAT</b> Dubai, UAE



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