

# 2021-2025 MEAC Strategy Working Group

Minutes of Meeting – Call 19 | Monday 18 January 2021

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The 2021-2025 MEAC-SWG had their nineteenth (19) teleconference call on Monday 18 January 2021 at 10.00 UTC.

On the call, we had *Rafik Dammak*, *Hadia Elminiawi*, *Abdullah Çemil Akçam*, *Hanan Alkhatib*, *Nabil Alkhamery*, and *Shehab Kamran*. And from ICANN staff, the call had *Baher Esmat*, *Seher Sagiroglu*, *Magali Jean*, and *Fahd Batayneh*.

The purpose of the call was to update the SWG on 4 things:

1. Middle East DNS Forum Survey report;
2. Technical Needs Assessment report;
3. FY21 Action Plan H1 review and assessment; and
4. Middle East Space and way forward

## Middle East DNS Forum report

The **Middle East DNS Forum report** was covered by Baher E.

Baher started by defining the purpose of the survey and what it intends. He mentioned that the survey was shared with a group of 45 stakeholders who have been part of the forum in one form or another (PC member, regular attendee, speaker). However, only 26 responded to the survey. Respondents hailed from 16 different countries 10 of which are from the Middle East. He then went on to show the impact of the forum as found in the survey results. The impact assessment covered 3 different aspects: 1) Providing a space for engagement, 2) Raising awareness of ICANN and the DNS, and 3) Advancing regional domain name industry. Results overall demonstrated strong impact. Baher then moved on to cover what worked and what did not work. Finally, there were suggestions for the future of the forum, and all respondents were in agreement that the forum must continue.

There were some discussions on the impact of the forum, as well as how the forum has helped develop the regional DNS industry over the years.

One question raised was about plans for a forum this year. It was mentioned that ICANN is working with CITC in Saudi Arabia (localhost of the postponed 2020 forum) on organizing a virtual forum sometime in March/April 2021. The format will be different, and we are in the process of starting work with the ME DNS Forum PC.

## Technical Needs Assessment report

Next was Seher S who covered the **Technical Needs Assessment report**. She shared the 3 questions that were asked in the questionnaire, and the entities that the questionnaire was shared with. The questions covered 1-on-1 assistance, short-term needs (until 30 June 2021), and long-term needs (until 30 June 2022). While the questionnaire was shared with 40 entities, only 20 responded. However, ICANN org GSE Middle East team will continue to leave the opportunity open for those who did not answer the 3

questions to share their answers. Questions 1 and 2 in the questionnaire have already been actioned, and there are currently webinars and workshops lined up for different entities.

There was a question around topics such as ITHI and DAAR, and the nature of technical engagement around them. Seher explained that we do organize webinars around these topics, and can also share relevant material available on icann.org. If 1-on-1 follow-up is required/needed, we can do that as well.

### **FY21 Action Plan H1 review and assessment**

Fahd B went through the FY21 Action Plan H1 review and assessment excel sheet. He drove briefly through some of the key achievements during the 6 months spanning between 1 July 2020 and 31 December 2020. Of note were technical engagement with different DNS industry players, the ME DNS Forum 2021, the potential MEAC-SIG 2021, Middle East Space, ICANN Meetings readout Sessions, and different Webinars.

### **Middle East Space**

Fahd B shared that since the inception of the ME Space in November 2017, 9 different editions were held. During December 2020, the latest Space edition was organized on the Way Forward. The co-chairs of the Space Nadira A and Tijani BJ stepped down, leaving space for fresh blood to step-in. Despite the open call for nominations, low interest was shown, and so Nadira and Tijani decided to send the ME Space back to the MEAC-SWG for next steps.

It was suggested that we reach out to Nadira and Tijani to encourage them to re-instill themselves as co-chairs of the Middle East Space for another term.

The call was adjourned.