ME DNS Forum PC F2F Meeting | March 11, 2015 | Amman, Jordan

Date: 11 March 2015
Time: 7.00 – 10.00 UTC
Attendance: Ahmed Bakhat Masood, Bashar Al-Abdulhadi, Mahmoud Lattouf, Rafid Fatani, Tom Barrett, and Fahd Batayneh
Apologizes: Wael Nasr

Fahd welcomed the attendees to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to debrief what took place during the second edition of the ME DNS Forum in Amman, Jordan on March 9-10, 2015.

The PC appreciated the work done by *Baher Esmat*, *Fahd Batayneh*, *Mahmoud Lattouf*, and TAG in a short period of time.

Fahd explained the amount of outreach efforts both ICANN and TAG-Org (local host of the second forum) did two weeks prior to the start of the forum. The PC suggested initiating such outreach at least one month prior to the start of future forums.

As the forum was not attended as expected; mainly from the local community, the PC suggested promoting the event using "broader more engaging topics" that would engage young tech entrepreneurs, tech startups, legal folks, e-government folks, e-money folks etc. and relating these issues with the DNS industry and how it affects them, their business, and their interest. The PC will work with both ICANN and the local host to come out with such statements. It was also suggested that the forum attract visionaries and key figures that would encourage local community members to attend. Another suggestion was to market the event as an event with an attendance fee to give a view to folks that this is a high-level event. Of course, no costs will be incurred for attending, but just give the forum a higher value than stakeholders currently view it. It was also suggested to send out to registered attendees update emails on regular basis with latest developments related to the forum such as Agenda Publishing, List of Speakers Confirmed, Keynote Speakers, reminders, and others.

The PC also suggested replacing the 90 minute "Opening Ceremony" with a quick opening remark by the local host, followed by some lightening talks of 5 minutes long maximum for key industry players, and then open the floor for attendees to introduce themselves and their business in no more than 30-60

seconds. It was also suggested that one PC member brief the audience of the previous forum, and set-the-scene for the next 2 days.

Since some speakers could not make it due to visa issues, it was suggested to receive support from the local government to work around such obstacles. While the local host did not save any effort to assist, it seems that in some situations the direct support of governments is much needed. It was also suggested to avoid using remote speakers to dial-in as the transmission quality was often poor or unreliable.

As the registration system for the second forum was behind an account with credentials needed to access it, it was suggested to make the registration process easier for future events. KuwaitNet; in their capacity as host and webmasters of the ME DNS Forum website, volunteered to develop a registration system on the ME DNS Forum website and provide Fahd with access to the registration DB.

The PC also suggested that for future forums, we can have 1 full breakout session on each day of the forum so that folks can have more time to discuss topics of relevance and join as many groups as possible (Business, Policy, and Technical). It was also suggested to have "Table Topics" during lunch where each table will cover a topic of interest. Topics can be decided earlier that day, and each table would have a sign mentioning what this table group will be discussing.

It was also suggested that for future forums, we can have a session where we break attendees into groups and give them a quiz/exam to solve, and then share their outcomes with the rest of the audience. The successful group or the group that submits the right answer first gets a small award. This would add more "hands-on" experience to the forum.

Another suggestion was to receive feedback from attendees on every session during the forum. While there is a feedback form online at http://mednsf.org/en/feedback/, it was suggested to provide each registered attendee with a feedback form at the start of the forum, and the form shall be submitted once the forum concludes.

The PC asked Fahd to provide a geographical breakdown of the MENA region, and to suggest where the next 5 forums will take place in terms of sub-regional geography. The PC is looking to partner up, or schedule the events closer to larger more established events in the region such as MENOG, ArabNet, etc. Nevertheless, the forum needs to be relevant and focus on business issues, and the PC needs to articulate how the Forum is different from other fora.

Some PC members also voiced concern of having the next forum in Marrakech around the ICANN meeting. The PC also suggested to create a tentative 5 year plan of venues, and publish this on the website and report it.

The PC suggested that we ask the local host to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) to host the forum listing their responsibility as the host.

The PC suggested having a monthly call to discuss next steps. It was suggested to take place during mid every month. Fahd will circulate a Doodle Poll to nail down a time for these calls.

The PC suggested editing the governance document to include a rotational additional seat - this seat would be a local host liaison seat (honorary PCM).

The PC wanted to bring the planning schedule back to start one month post the completion of the ME DNS Forum, to start looking at the broader topics, and select speakers. This would enable the PC more chances of having more industry leaders involved in giving talks.

The PC also suggested investigating the possibility of moving the ME DNS Forum to Q2 of every year. Fahd mentioned that while Q2 is packed with regional events, we can investigate this possibility.

During the forum, we received feedback from two attendees as follows:

1. Dedicate a session covering the legal aspects of the DNS industry.
2. Have more breakout sessions

The PC will consider this feedback when planning for the next ME DNS Forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.00 UTC.

Action Items

1. KuwaitNet to develop a registration system for future ME DNS Forum and integrate it within the ME DNS Forum website.

2. Fahd to share with the PC the regional breakdown and where the next 5 meetings may take place at. After agreeing on it with the PC, it shall be reported and published online at http://mednsf.org/.
3. Fahd to circulate a Doodle Poll for the PC monthly calls.
4. Fahd to edit the governance document to include an honorary PC member from the host entity of the next ME DNS Forum.