

ARABCOM 2004 Recommendations

1. Send a thank you letter to the President of the Republic of Lebanon for his patronage & Support
2. Agreement on the urgent need for the creation of a national plan for the telecommunications sector that would establish the future policies and strategies for the sector.
3. An invitation to speed up the process of creating national telecommunications regulatory authorities in the Arab countries, and to open up the path for each nation's private sector to assume its role and responsibility in telecommunications services operation and provisioning.
4. Agreement to cooperate between Arab telecommunications operators and governments to ensure unrestricted access to knowledge and information.
5. Agreement on the importance of encouraging scientific research through more intensive government efforts, public-private partnerships, and making use of the experiences of global telecommunications research organizations.
6. An invitation to prepare the Arab markets to take advantage of advanced services and broadband networks, particularly voice over IP services (VOIP), which can no longer be ignored by Arab operators and regulators, in order to prevent the unlawful use of this technology, and to gain from the value-added voice services that can be provided over an IP network.
7. Agreement on the urgent need to increase Internet penetration in the Arab region, since Internet penetration in Arab countries is low compared to global averages, and varies from country to country within the region. This goal can be achieved through further expansion of the appropriate infrastructure, increased PC penetration, and encouragement of Arab content on the World Wide Web.
8. Encouraging the reliance on competition in the telecommunications sector, and redoubling efforts to liberalize the telecommunications markets in the Arab countries.
9. An invitation to bring women into the fold in policy and strategy decision-making processes, due to their vital role in preparing future generations for the information age.
10. A demand to encourage use of nationally-produced ICT products and services in the Arab world, to protect intellectual property, and to support and protect national production in the ICT fields in order to facilitate increased employment opportunities for the Arab youth.
11. A demand to speed up the introduction of wireless technologies such as WiFi and WiMAX in the Arab world, and to enable roaming on such networks.
12. An invitation to modernize the telecommunications networks, and to increase the availability of broadband technologies for faster Internet access.
13. Encouraging the private sector and civil society to participate in the upcoming information and telecommunications summit, to be held in Tunisia in 2005.
14. Strive to leverage international aid, in order to facilitate information access for all members of society, in order to avoid a digital divide within society and to create a digital opportunity that would enable equality and sustainable development.
15. An urgent demand to reduce tariffs for users of telecommunications services, as communication is a right that should be enjoyed by all.