



Arab States Broadcasting Union
League of Arab States

Mr Sharad SADHU, ABU TECHNICAL Director
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Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished Colleagues,

It is a great pleasure for ASBU to be here in KL to attend the HFCC/ASBU/ABU Joint High Frequency Coordination Conference. I would like to express our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the ABU for hosting this conference and for their warmest welcome and kind assistance.

We believe that the Arab HF broadcasters benefited very much from the joint ASBU/HFCC/ABU Global conferences and I would like here to thank you all for your cooperation and assistance during the HF coordination process and we in ASBU are looking to further consolidate this cooperation with all parties.

The Arab Audiovisual Landscape

The Arab Region Audiovisual landscape has seen a significant progress and a very fast growth rate during the last decade fuelled by strong population growth and socio-economic development.

The Arab region with over 250 million inhabitants and a young population with increasingly evolving TV and Radio preferences has strong demand and consumption for broadcasting with more than 700 satellite TV & Radio channels using multiple satellites mostly Arabsat, Nilesat & Noorsat.

With the convergence of broadband, broadcasting and information technologies, different networks now support all forms of media : voice, video and associated services.

Connectivity and communication devices are increasingly accessible at affordable prices for a large audience; Consequently, control of communication media is shifting away from the domain of traditional media and communication organizations toward the more open Internet communication platform.

Indeed, there is a fundamental shift in human communication from a one way push model (radio broadcast) towards a more interactive, participative and sharing Internet Protocol (IP) based model.

The media landscape as we knew it, where large official organizations had the monopole and were controlling the communication channels, is loosing ground to the widespread of social media phenomenon. The increased data connectivity speeds at cheaper costs, has led to the rapid growth of Internet users in the Arab world and their becoming eager social media users where they can communicate collaboratively sharing news, video and photos. Activists heavily relied on social media to call and organize demonstrations and to freely and irrepressibly disseminate news from the heart of the events as has been witnessed during the Arab Spring.

Still Radio and Television remain the dominant communication medium in the Arab world expected to fulfil the public needs and expectations through high quality news and programming targeting the whole society without any exclusion.

Surviving in this digital age with the abundance of digital content requires promoting more Arab Internet presence and deploying more efforts to develop Arabic content to guarantee Arab Culture inclusion in the new world order.

Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT)

Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and analog switch off deadline was set to 2015. KSA, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia have already launched DTT with more than 80% population coverage while the remaining countries will start transition 2012-2013. Limited financial resources, lack of regulatory framework, high competition from Free to Air satellite TV channels and the lack of attractive TV content are the main challenges encountered by DDT transition.

FM Radio is the most common media in the Arab Region with the objective to move to digital radio in the medium term.

DRM Radio is attracting the attention of the Arab Broadcasters as it provides a wide coverage with low cost and easily manageable network but is still dependent on the cost of digital radio transmitters and in particular the cost of digital receivers in comparison with the analogue ones.

The Arab Global and Web TV Bouquets

The “Arab Global Bouquet” is one of the outstanding services ASBU provides to Arab satellite channels. The “Bouquet with 19 TV channels & 36 radio channels” is one of the major successes of the joint Arab action in the field of radio and television, due to its significant practical, technical and economic benefits for the participating channels, as well as for Arab worldwide viewers and listeners in the different regions covered by the “Bouquet” on a global scale, using the most popular satellites among Arab and Muslim communities in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America, South America and Australia.

Complementing the Arab Global Bouquet, ASBU has launched in collaboration with an international company a web TV service with participation of many ASBU Broadcasters. The stats for the number of viewers is so for encouraging.

Once again allow me to express my sincerest thanks to ABU, with our best wishes for you all for a successful conference and agreeable stay in KL.

Thank you for your kind attention.