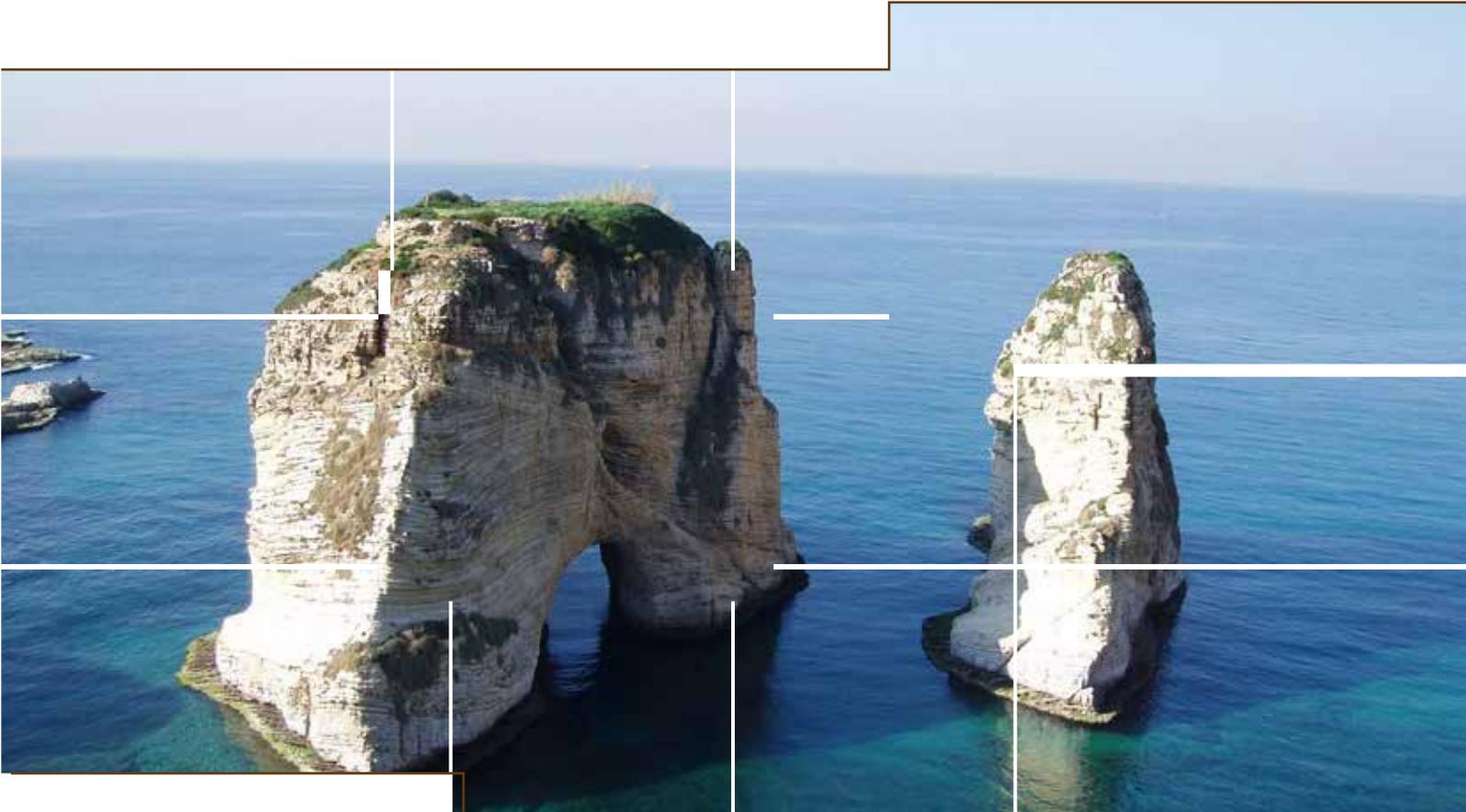


# AROQA

The Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in EDUCATION



## **Eighth Annual Conference of Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education**

### **Declaration and Outcomes**

@ American University of Beirut - Lebanon  
Beirut December 1 - 2, 2016

[aroqa.org](http://aroqa.org)

## **Beirut, December 2, 2016**

Under the patronage of his Excellency Mr. Botrus Harb, Minister of Telecommunications in Lebanon and Chaired by His Excellency Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of Quality in Education: AROQA 2016 in conjunction with

- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Platform on Integrating Arab e-infrastructures: e-AGE 2016.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference on Open Source Software Communities: OSSCOM 2016.

concluded with a wide range of high level participation and delegates from over 42 countries.

## **Recognition**

- AROQA's leading role in developing quality assurance in education and relevant pan Arab accreditation.
- AROQA's university and school members in taking a proactive role to support quality implementation and pursue accreditation.
- Association of Arab e-Universities to coordinate a new era of digital teaching and learning.
- Arab Journal of Quality in Education as a platform to disseminate research and case study practices in quality systems and accreditation.

## **Opening Session highlights**

The opening session was addressed by H.E. the Minister of Telecommunications, the Provost of the American University of Beirut, Minister plenipotentiary of the League of Arab States, the International officer of the European Commission (EC), and further the president of the Lebanese University on December 3, 2016.

In his opening speech, H.E. Mr. Harb expressed his strong interest in advancing the Lebanese network infrastructure to support not only research and education communities, but also the citizens of Lebanon as motivated in the telecom vision 2020. He noted that Lebanon is acknowledged among the first three most dynamic countries in terms of the ICT development and the second biggest mover in the year 2015 on the Network Readiness Index. These developments will of course strengthen innovation and entrepreneurship movement in the Lebanese mobile Internet ecosystem supported by high-speed networks and open source technologies. He declared his support for the Lebanese Education and Research Network (LERN) for which highly discounted connectivity prices will be provided.

H.E. Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh expressed the utmost appreciation to all who contributed to the success of the conferences under this important and timely patronage. As AUB Alumni, he expressed his gratitude to the American University of Beirut for hosting the conferences, to the League of Arab States for their continuing support, to the European Commission for their generosity and great contributions, to the sponsors of the events, and to all delegations, speakers, and authors from all over the world. He also expressed his appreciation to the

president of the Lebanese University for the host of open source software activities in the OSSCOM project framework supported by the EC Tempus.

H.E. Mr. Yaser Abdelmonem noted that technology, culture, and literacy are identified as priorities for development to support youth across the Arab region. The efforts of the League of Arab States in the enhancement of education have been emphasized. He presented the League's vision that is both unconventional and inclusive to enhance educational approaches to meet millennium development and sustainable goals for development and prosperity across the region.

Provost Dr. Mohamad Harajli emphasized the importance of these events to the development of communities, and AUB is proud to host the activities of technology, infrastructure, and quality of education. He acknowledges the contribution of ASREN and EUMEDCONNECT3 project funded by the EC to establish 300 Megabits per second (Mbps) link to the GEANT research and education networks via ASREN's PoP in London.

### **Session highlights**

AROQA has developed quite well to ensure quality in education among its priorities as well as the development of accreditation in coordination with the national quality and accreditation agencies in the Arab countries. It is important that cooperation is enhanced with international quality assurance and accreditation organizations.

#### **In their keynote speeches,**

- Hana El-Ghali of the American University of Beirut and the World Bank presented how good governance of tertiary education can lead to competitiveness and employability in a wider scale.
- Ziad Al-Saad of Yarmouk University outlined the importance of quality assurance in teaching and learning with emphasis on the experiences at Yarmouk University.
- Karim Nasir from the University of Balamand presented the perspectives on the notion of quality, its management, and its assurance and the wider implementation at the institutional level.

**The technical sessions of AROQA 2016 have been designed with twenty one research paper contributions from universities in Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan, Oman, Iraq, Germany, and Switzerland on topics related to:**

- Quality standards and systems in universities and educational institutions.
- Accreditation, governance, practices, and case studies of quality.
- Quality tools and methods in education.

### **Specialized technical workshops have contributed to capacity building and training from across the Arab region outlined as follows:**

- Karim Nasr from University of Balamand and Mwaffaq Otoom from Yarmouk University provided detailed training on quality processes and procedures for ABET accreditation including hands on steps for quality management, continuous improvement, and assessing program outcomes.
- Rebecca Lauther from Aachen University presented sessions for benchmarking of accreditation processes in higher education institutions with emphasis on challenges, criteria and approach.

### **AROQA's Annual Assembly meeting was attended by members from across the Arab region and was concluded with the following recommendations:**

- HE Dr. Talal Abu Ghazaleh is re-elected as The Chairman of Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education.
- To continue to support the development of AROQA as an independent and non-profit organization for quality and accreditation.
- There is an urgent need to promote a culture of quality and accreditation to improve the quality of education in the Arab educational institutions.
- A plan of action is needed to spread the culture of quality and awareness of scientific research, quality and work introductory document to raise awareness on the issue of quality in education.
- Organize training courses for administrators in the Arab educational institutions to raise awareness of the culture of quality and to continue dialogue and cooperation between education institutions and accreditation bodies and organizations in the quality of education in order to consolidate the concepts of quality at the Arab regional level.
- There is a need for ongoing dialogue and continuous dissemination of best practices related to quality in education.
- Restructure the editorial board of the Arab Journal of Quality in Education.

### **Closing highlights**

Remin Sedehi, the COO of AUB gave the closing remarks with honors and appreciation to the organizers of eAGE, AROQA, and OSSCOM conferences and relevant workshops and meetings. He said that these activities are at the core of AUB mission, essentially empowering our best and brightest to achieve their full potential, be they researchers with burning question or students with the desire to shape the world around them.

The organizers have acknowledged the role of each institution and member who has contributed to the success of the conferences, workshops and meetings. It is a hope that they successfully served as effective medium in attaining a convincing environment towards achieving our goals in developing stronger technology, research, and education communities in the Arab region and beyond.



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