

## Report on the Lebanese Open Forum



Do not miss

### Digital Transformation of the Lebanese Telecommunications Sector

Tuesday December 19, 2017 | 15:00 - 16:00  
Room XII - A United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)

**Speakers**  
**Mr. Antoine Aoun** (OGERO) on Digital transformation/FTTH  
**Ms. Tanya Zaroubi** (OMSAR) on Digital Government  
**Ms. Salam Yamout** (ISOC) on Lebanon IXP  
**Ms. Roula Mikhael** (MAHARAT) on Lebanon IGF  
**Dr. Nicolas Rouhana** (ISOC Lebanon) on Financing Technology and Innovation

 **Come and have a taste of Lebanon  
and especially the Baklava!**

Logos at the top: Telecom OGERO, OMSAR, Internet Society, Lebanon Internet Governance Forum, MAHARAT, Internet Society Lebanon Chapter.

**Session Title:** Digital Transformation of the Lebanese Telecommunications Sector

**Date:** December 19, 2017

**Time:** 15:00-16:00

**Organizer:** Zeina BOU HARB, OGERO Telecom

**Moderator:** Antoine Aoun, OGERO Telecom

**Rapporteurs:** Loyal Bahnam (Maharat) and Zeina Bou Harb (OGERO)

**List of Speakers:**

- Mr Antoine Aoun (Gov-OGERO)
- Ms. Tanya Zaroubi (Gov-OMSAR)
- Ms. Salam Yamout (Civil society)
- Ms. Roula Mikhael (Civil society)

- Mr. Nicolas Rouhana (Business Sector)

### **Description of the session:**

The Open Forum aimed at informing the participants from all over the world about Ogero's plan of action for developing the digital sector in Lebanon and announcing the launch of the Lebanese IGF and the partnership initiatives between the Private technical sector and the Public sector as well as opportunities to encourage Entrepreneurship in the digital sector.

- 1- Digital Transformation/FTTH – 10 min  
The Lebanese Government initiated the process of transforming Lebanon into a digital nation. Huge Projects are implemented by OGERO Telecom, starting with enhancing the transport network, implementing Fiber access to the users, to upgrading existing submarine cables, enabling IoT services, establishing Startup incubator and Data center.
- 2- Digital Government- 10 min
  - a. Digital Government Principles
  - b. Digital Transformation Enablers
  - c. Digital Architecture
  - d. Existing Situation and Future Projects
- 3- IXP - 10 min  
Lebanon Internet Exchange project
- 4- Lebanon IGF initiative- 10 min  
Lebanon engagement in the Internet Governance process, formation of the Lebanese MAG and brief on the 1<sup>st</sup> event held to publicly announce the start of preparations for 2018 LIGF Forum.
- 5- Entrepreneurship -10 min  
How the Central Bank of Lebanon contributed to the recent leapfrog of the Lebanese entrepreneurship eco-system through the proliferation of VC funds, accelerators, bootcamps, etc.

### **Key issues raised:**

**Mr. Antoine Aoun, Assistant Technical Director - OGERO:** presented the national plan for the development of the telecommunication sector in Lebanon at various levels, starting with the infrastructure, to develop the international communication lines and to benefit from its capacity more broadly, in parallel with the modernization of international portals, to extend networks for delivery to new subscribers. The project of building an integrated fiber optic network provides connecting capacities enabling the subscriber to benefit from higher speed and better services.

In addition, the WLL network has been replaced with an advanced LTE network, a Data Center for Lebanon is being established to host data locally, and the provision of cloud services is planned to all interested entities.

**Ms. Tania Zarubi - Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform:** addressed the challenges of adapting the digital services of public institutions to the expectations and needs of users, which requires more work to share data and synergy. She also stressed the need to work to implement the recommendations that emerged from the May 2015 Digital Government Conference, notably the establishment of a portal for government institutions, the promotion of open source technologies, the provision of electronic services and e-payment, and the adoption of legal frameworks that encourage innovation.

**Ms. Salam Yamout - ISOC Middle East Regional Director:** introduced the Lebanon IXP initiative, which will work with the Ministry of Telecommunications and Ogero to secure a local point of access

to the Internet, reducing the cost of communication and encouraging the creation of local data centers. Content providers, universities, media organizations and large companies will be encouraged to use this exchange point because of its impact on securing services at lower cost and greater speed.

**Ms Roula Mikhael - Maharat's Executive Director:** spoke about the initiative of the Lebanese Internet Governance Forum launched by the Ministry of Communications and attracted 25 members to form the multi-stakeholder advisory body, whose first general secretariat is managed by Ogero. She confirmed that the Lebanese Civil society has seen this initiative positively, especially as it seeks to secure a transparent and open dialogue on Internet Governance, This initiative has always been waited for, It is time for all stakeholders from public, private, civil society, academia and academia to share experiences in this field. She also mentioned the activities that the Advisory Group (LMAG) began to organize to raise awareness of the work of the Forum that will held its first meeting in 2018, its objectives and the expansion of participation.

**Mr Nicolas Rouhana - ISOC Lebanon Vice President and the GM of IM Capital:** presented the opportunities available today in Lebanon in the field of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, especially with the presence of promotional circulars by the Banque du Liban. These circulars have led banks to increase their investments in startups and have given examples of existing support funds today, including those specifically designed to support women.