

5G-Advanced to Herald a New Era of Digital Innovation and Intelligence in the Middle East

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- *Telecommunication leaders, regulatory authorities, policymakers, industry associations, and leading global technology firms congregated in Dubai at the 5G-Advanced (5G-A) Forum to chart the pathway to the 5G evolution.*
- *TDRA, e& UAE, du and industry partners launch 5G-A country and announce plans for UAE to set sail for 5G-A nationwide.*
- *Industry representatives also announced the “Middle East Glasses-free 3D Industry Initiative” to promote the large-scale commercial use of Glasses-free 3D at the summit.*

May 14, 2024: Global ICT leaders gathered at the 5G-Advanced (5G-A) Leaders’ Forum in Dubai, UAE, to jointly delve into the multifaceted progression from 5G to 5G-Advanced, examining both the technological advancements and the practical implications of this transition. Held at the SAMENA Leaders’ Summit, the 5G-A Leaders’ Forum charted the course for the evolution of 5G technology to the 5G-A era, which will catalyze digital innovation and intelligence across the

Middle East.

The event was attended by high-profile speakers and guests, including regulatory authorities from the Middle East represented by UAE's Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA), industry groups represented by GSMA and WBBA, ICT solution providers, enterprises, analysts, ecosystem partners, and media members. Eng. Saif Bin Ghelaita, Executive Director, Technology Development Affairs, TDRA, delivered the opening speech at the 5G-A Leaders' Forum. Other notable speakers at the forum included Jawad J. Abbassi, Head of MENA, GSMA; Martin Creaner, DG, WBBA; Khalid Murshed, CTIO, e& UAE; Karim Benkirane, CCO, du; Cao Ming, President of Wireless Solution, Huawei; Liu Zhiyong, Deputy Chief Engineer of China Telecom; and Dr. Philip Song, CMO, Huawei Carrier Business.

Eng. Saif Bin Ghelaita, Executive Director, Technology Development Affairs, TDRA, said: "The commercialization of 5G-Advanced is imminent due to the readiness of both standards and the ecosystem. The TDRA intends to develop a national plan for the 5G-Advanced network and is committed to promoting the planning and allocation of abundant spectrum to further advance mobile network development. In the symphony of 5G-Advanced, collaboration harmonizes progress. Let our collective efforts resonate across borders. We are not merely architects of networks; we are stewards of progress."

During the summit, the UAE launched 5G-A country and announced plans for the UAE to set sail for 5G-A nationwide. The announcement was made in the presence of senior representatives from TDRA, e& du, SAMENA Council, GSMA, WBBA, MEIG, and SHOWMAC.

In line with its economic vision, the UAE places great importance on ICT infrastructure construction and technology development. The country was an early adopter of 5G technology, and its deployment has already reaped numerous benefits. The UAE has plans underway for the successful deployment of 5G-Advanced.

In addition, several industry representatives announced the “Middle East Glasses-free 3D Industry Initiative” to promote the large-scale commercial use of glasses-free 3D business. After years of development, the core technology of glasses-free 3D has matured, and users can easily and freely enjoy a natural and comfortable 3D experience through various terminal devices. The high speed and low latency of 5G and 5G-A networks, the powerful processing capability of the computing network, and the power of AI capabilities will further bolster the real immersion and interaction convenience of glasses-free 3D, bringing users a new visual experience upgrade.

With over 300 commercial 5G networks already deployed globally and advancements continuing, the transition from 5G to 5G-Advanced is poised to revolutionize network capabilities and user experiences. While 5G laid the groundwork for faster speeds and more reliable connections, 5G-

Advanced is set to push these boundaries further, offering significant enhancements in terms of network efficiency, coverage, and performance.

This next phase in mobile network evolution is not just an incremental upgrade; it embodies a leap forward in integrating artificial intelligence, improving network flexibility, and enabling more complex and varied use cases. From smart cities to advanced industrial applications, 5G-

Advanced is expected to be a catalyst for innovative digital solutions across sectors, sparking a revolution in the way we connect and communicate.

The 5G-A Leaders' Forum spotlighted scenarios for a sustainable, technology-driven future encompassing 5G-A, and F5G-A deployment. In addition, dedicated sessions on 5G-A during the Summit explored advancements in standards, network planning and deployment, application scenarios, and showcasing successful case implementations and studies.

5G-A represents the next generation of 5G network upgrades and evolution. 3GPP Release 18 will be the first standard version for 5G-A, which will be frozen in June this year. Operators, equipment suppliers, chip and terminal manufacturers, and application vendors gathered together to discuss the commercial process of 5G-A and generally recognized that 2024 is the first year of commercial use of 5G-A.

The upcoming commercial use of 5G-A in 2024 was discussed during a panel session titled “Ecosystem and Business Development in 5G-A Era”. Some of the high-profile speakers who attended the session included Dr Sherif Ragaei Sherif, Sr. Strategist, Technology Strategy, Omantel; Dangqi Cheng, Sales VP of MEIG; Wei Bo, CEO of Laipic; and Mr. Danial Mausooof, Vice President, Head of Technology and Solutions, Nokia.

The Forum took place at the annual SAMENA Leaders’ Summit, held at the Atlantis Hotel in Dubai. Under the theme “Evolving toward Integration, Intelligence & Sustainability in Infrastructure”, the event brought together over 20 telecom regulators, more than 30 regional telecom operators and carriers, and more than 300 industry leaders, policymakers, industry associations, and leading global technology firms. The event hosted critical discussions on topics like leading the 5G-A era, digital transformation, and new spectrum opportunities, highlighting the region’s strategic drive to move towards a more prosperous intelligent world.