



News Release

TRA Addresses the Issue of High Tariffs for Mobile Roaming within the Arab Region

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain – Monday 20 April 2009

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) today published for consultation, a draft Memorandum of Understanding for Arab Countries, on the Regulation of International Mobile Roaming. The document, which was prepared by the Arab Regulators Network (AREGNET), aims to establish a framework to protect users from high mobile roaming tariffs when travelling among Arab countries.

TRA's General Director Mr. Alan Horne commented: "It is encouraging to see such initiatives as "One Network" that indicates that the mobile industry has started to address the importance of offering better terms for mobile roaming services to their customers. However they are still limited in terms of the number of countries covered. The Initiative of the Arab Regulators, supported by the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council, to protect users of the mobile roaming service from excessive tariffs is an important measure for consumer protection. European users are already enjoying lower rates when they travel within their region. Arab customers deserve the same."

He also added: "we consider it important to obtain the input of stakeholders in Bahrain on the process, in order to ensure that their interests are appropriately represented in our discussions with regulators of other Arab countries."

The draft Memorandum of Understanding is a stepping stone in the process, which started in 2005, when Arab Ministers of Telecommunications and Information asked AREGNET to propose methods to tackle the issue of high roaming tariffs. In 2007 the AREGNET adopted a recommendation in this regard, which was subsequently supported by the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Memorandum of Understanding, prepared by a Working Group led by TRA Bahrain, aims to create the framework to ensure that these recommendations are implemented.

The relevant documents can be found on TRA's website www.tra.org.bh. All interested parties are invited to submit their views to TRA by 4pm on 10 May 2009.

About TRA

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) was established by Legislative Decree No. 48 of 2002 promulgating the Telecommunications Law. TRA is an independent body and its duties and powers include, among other things, protecting the interests of subscribers and users and promoting effective and fair competition among existing and new licensed operators. More information regarding TRA can be viewed at www.tra.org.bh

Media Contact

Dana Chehab

Director of Communications and Consumer Affairs

Tel: +973 17 520000

Mobile: +973 39710033

Fax: +973 17 532125

Email: dchehab@tra.org.bh