

16th Arab HDTV & Beyond Group Meeting Dubai 2023
BROADCASTPRO Middle East - May 30, 2023



The 16th annual meeting of the Arab HDTV and Beyond Group took place at the Novotel World Trade Centre, Dubai on May 17, 2023, under the patronage of Eng. Abdelrahim Suleiman, Director General of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU).

The meeting was presided by Dr Fares Lubbadah, Chairman of the Arab HDTV and Beyond Group, with the group's Honorary Chairman Dr Riyadh Najm and Vice-Chairs Eng. Samir Asiri and Eng. Dhaker Baccouch as well as Eng. Bassil Zoubi. The meeting was attended by professionals representing Arab state and private broadcasters, regional and international manufacturers, service providers & systems integrators.

Suleiman welcomed the meeting attendees and explained the current activities of ASBU including the cloud services. He invited the attendees to ASBU's 23rd session of the Arab Radio and Television Festival, which will take place in Tunisia from June 12 to 15, 2023.

Fares Lubbadah provided his first presentation on "Ultra HD Services" where he mentioned that in 2023, 248 Ultra HD Services exist globally, of which 81% are linear, 59% utilise HDR and 29% present immersive audio. He advised that the 8K TV forecast is disappointing as broadcasters are struggling with the business case for 4k and there is no convincing market demand for future 8K service development.

He provided a comparison between 5G, 6G & 7G showing the advantages and use cases provided, in his second presentation on “6G Evolution”.

In his presentation on “ASBU Progress Issues”, Bassil Zoubi, Director of Technology and Development, ASBU, discussed the issues of ASBU Cloud Roll out /Remote Production, Exchange Network MENOS+, IP Live Production and ASBU challenges including establishing pan-Arab OTT service for public broadcasters, the sports rights in the Arab region, the level of archive preservation and the possible use of AI as a major support for archiving.

Mohit Goyal, Senior Business Development Professional at Evertz, in his first presentation “Using the Cloud for Production, the Benefits and Challenges” provided an overview of cloud-based production and the advantages it offers, such as the ability to access production resources from anywhere, on-demand resource scaling, and reduced hardware costs. The presentation then looked into the connectivity challenges that arise when using cloud-based production. These include network latency, bandwidth limitations, and connectivity disruptions, which can impact the quality of live broadcasts.

In his second presentation on “The Transition to IP: Pros and Cons”, Goyal, examined the pros and cons of transitioning to IP (using SMPTE ST 2110) in the broadcast industry. The use of IP technology in broadcasting has gained momentum in recent years due to its potential to streamline workflows, reduce costs, and improve efficiency. However, the shift to IP is not without its challenges and limitations.

Dr Naser Refat, CTO, Rotana, provided a presentation on “Enhancing Television Experience and using HbbTV as a TV measuring tool” where he explained that the HbbTV, or Hybrid Broadcast Broadband TV, is a standard that combines traditional broadcast TV with internet content and services. HbbTV can be used as a TV measuring tool by providing broadcasters and advertisers with detailed information on audience viewing habits.

Tim Devrees, Director Product Manager, Video Network Solution of Synamedia, briefed the group about “How To Deliver an Immersive Sports Fan Experiences”, and explained that sports fans are looking for more immersive experience during a game: for example, watching the action from different camera angles, such as behind the goal or behind the scenes in racing or golf. Fans also want to be fully informed with real-time information and player stats, and they want to relive key moments, by quickly switching back in time from any camera angle. The combination of many new video technologies is now making this possible. This includes the emergence of ultra-low latency streaming, scalability, geo-fencing and content security. These immersive experiences can be delivered on 5G mobile devices at sporting events in the stadium or at the track, but also while on the go and in the home as a companion to the main TV screen.