

The EMEA Satellite Operators Association welcomes the new Chair Khalid Balkheyour, President and Chief Executive Officer of Arabsat

ESOA elects Khalid Balkheyour, President and CEO of Arabsat as new Chair of the Association; Stephen Spengler, CEO of Intelsat as first Vice-Chair and Kyle Whitehill, CEO of Avanti Communications as second Vice-Chair.

Brussels, 18th June - Khalid Balkheyour, President and CEO of the Arab Satellite Communications Organization (ARABSAT) has been elected as Chair of the EMEA Satellite Operators Association (ESOA) and will lead the association for the next two years.

Khalid graduated with a Masters degree in Electrical Engineering from California State Polytechnic University Pomona in 1981. Before joining Arabsat, he held the post of Executive Vice President for Marketing and Sales at Lucent Technologies and before that, Vice-President of Operations and Maintenance in the Saudi Ministry of PTT, later known as the Saudi Telecommunication Company (STC).

Khalid takes the helm of ESOA at a time of opportunity, when the Association is mobilizing the global satellite industry to unite ahead of the World Radio Conference 2019 to defend its spectrum and ensure a solid basis for the future development of the satellite industry. ESOA is also driving forward cooperation with the mobile terrestrial industry, working on 5G standards through 3GPP and exploring synergies and avenues of cooperation to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of enabling the integration and interworking of satellite and terrestrial technologies required to deliver sustainable 5G services to a maximum number of people.

Speaking after his election, Khalid said: *“ESOA convenes operators of different sizes and priorities; we are united through our vision and will to cooperate to better deliver on the growing need for satellite communications worldwide, whether in responding to natural and man-made disasters or in bridging digital divides in developed and emerging economies. The spectrum debate must not be used as an excuse to overlook the real needs of citizens on all continents. Satellite is a crucial, complementary part of the digital ecosystem.”*

Stephen Spengler has been Vice-Chair of ESOA since 2017. He is Chief Executive Officer of Intelsat and a 30-year telecommunications and satellite industry veteran with experience in the media, broadband, government and Internet sectors.

Kyle Whitehill was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Avanti Communications in November 2018 before which he held various senior executive positions including CEO of the Liquid Telecoms Group in South Africa and 15 years at Vodafone.

Aarti Holla, Secretary General of ESOA: “I look forward to working with Khalid over the coming two years. ESOA’s strength comes from its diverse CEO leadership and with his experience as CEO of Arabsat, Khalid has an important contribution to make.”

About ESOA

ESOA is a non-profit membership organisation dedicated to serving and promoting the common interests of satellite operators from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the CIS. The Association today represents the interests of satellite operators who deliver information communication services across the globe. Together ESOA Members provide invaluable communications services to the whole world, including live broadcasting, emergency communications, maritime and aero communications, secure services for governments, 24/7 monitoring of industrial processes such as energy plants, weather forecasting and a whole range of other communications services.