Women in Cyber Security Middle East
رابطة نساء الشرق الاوسط للأمن السيبراني

Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021-2025

11th Substantive Session

Women in CyberSecurity MiddleEast (WiCSME)
Statement on CyberSecurity Capacity Building

(Both English and Arabic Versions)

July 2025

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WiCSME Statement

July 2025

Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021-2025

11th Substantive Session

Women in CyberSecurity MiddleEast (WiCSME) Statement on CyberSecurity Capacity Building

(Both English and Arabic Versions)

Distinguished Chair, Esteemed Member States, and Honorable Colleagues,

I speak today as the Chairperson of Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME)—a movement born from our region's legacy of resilience, collective will, and the belief that cybersecurity is not merely a technical domain—it is a human responsibility.

Let me begin with a verse from the Holy Qur'an that reflects the spirit of our OEWG journey:

قال تعالى:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾ (الرعد:11)

"Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of people until they change what is within themselves." (Al-Ra'd, 13:11)

This reminds us that transformation begins from within. And today, as we share the higher purpose of guarding our digital realm, it is our collective resolve that can take this OEWG from aspiration to activation.

WiCSME: Rooted in Culture, Driven by Purpose

Knowing that *"Women are Nation's Builders",* Our Islamic and Arab culture has proudly empowered women for over 1,400 years—cultivating a supportive environment that continues to produce impactful female role models across various fields such as science, leadership, diplomacy, cybersecurity.

A powerful example of resilience was demonstrated by the Palestinian Women in Gaza, whose remarkable strength and iron grit under adversity resonated globally, reminding everyone of the enduring spirit of our region.

Today, WiCSME continues that legacy—uniting over 3,000 women across 22 Arab countries to strengthen regional cyber capacity, elevate women's voices, and deliver tangible, inclusive, sustainable impact.

Let us Remember:

"Empowering a Woman, leads to empowering a Nation.

Impacting a Region is a doorway to inspiring the World."

WiCSME: A Living Strategic Blueprint

WiCSME is not just a network, it is a global strategic blueprint and a practical playbook for building inclusive digital future. Some Examples include:

- Pioneering our Regional Capacity Building Program "CyberSHE", which aligns with National and UN OEWG Targets. The program aims to train up to 1,500 skilled Female Cyber talents across the region over three years. Starting with our first cohort launched in Kuwait.

- In Strategic partnership with ITU, WiCSME's participants made up one-third of the global cohort in ITU's Women in Cyber Mentorship Program- introducing Arabic content and localized support for the first time.

- Bringing more than 250 female speakers last year to global and regional stages, showcasing the region's talent and leadership.

- Serving as a global hub, connecting 18+ Women in Cyber Groups Worldwide, collaborating as a "United Nations of Women in Cyber" to support and amplify impact.

These are not just milestones of representation, they are models of regional ownership, Strategic Execution, and sustained impact.

Our Call to Action

As we approach the finalization of the OEWG's work, we respectfully propose:

- Positioning WiCSME and CyberSHE as global reference models for gender-responsive capacity building.

- Integration of Civil Society as Force multipliers and operational partners in norms implementation.

- And the establishment of a permanent mechanism for inclusive, sustained, multi-stakeholder engagement.

Closing: From the Region to the World

WiCSME's journey is the story of our region—culture-guided, resilience-built, and impact-driven.

Let us carry this spirit forward—not as parallel voices, but as partners in progress.

And Concluding with an insightful reminder from the Holy Qur'an:

﴿ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ﴾ (المائدة: 2)

"*Cooperate in righteousness and piety.*" (Al-Ma'idah 2)

When empowerment meets righteousness, when global strength is guided by shared higher purpose,

We build not only Safer Digital Ecosystems—but Stronger, more Compassionate Nations.

We thank you Chair for your Stellar leadership, your esteemed team members and to all OEWG members and Stakeholders for their collective efforts in this enlightening and enriching OEWG Journey throughout the past five years.

Thank you.

Dr. Reem Faraj AlShammari,

Chairperson and Cofounder
Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME)
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*** **Note:** *Longer Version of the Statement is included in Page 11*.

❖ **Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME) in Social Media:**
   ➢LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/
   ➢X (formerly Twitter): https://x.com/WiCSME
   ➢Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/
   ➢YouTube: www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669
   ➢URL: https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/
   ➢Youtube Video- UN WiCSME statement in OEWG:
   - WiCSME Statement on Feb, 2025: https://youtu.be/TEM2HOC9SqA?si=nBAB4WH-WpKlsalM
   - WiCSME Statement on July, 2025: Will be available soon on WiCSME Youtube Channel.
   - WiCSME Statement on July, 2022: https://youtu.be/G4zfDRDR7Lk?si=M6DWokfHH8xAJ3tW

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،

السيد الرئيس الموقر، السادة ممثلو الدول الأعضاء، الزملاء الكرام،

أتحدث إليكم اليوم بصفتي رئيسة رابطة "نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني — (WiCSME) " و هي رابطة وُلدت من إرث منطقتنا العريق في الصمود والإرادة الجماعية، ومن قناعة راسخة بأن الأمن السيبراني ليس مجال تقني فحسب، بل مسؤولية إنسانية بالدرجة الأولى.

و أبدأ بآية كريمة من الذكر الحكيم تعكس اتجاه سير رحلتنا في مجموعة الفريق العامل المفتوح باب العضوية (OEWG):

قال تعالى:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾ (الرعد: 11)

هذه الآية تذكرنا بأن التغيير الحقيقي يبدأ من الداخل. واليوم، ونحن نتشارك غاية سامية في حماية فضائنا الرقمي، فإن عزمنا الجماعي على الإنجاز هو ما سيحوّل هذا المسار من مرحلة الطموح إلى مرحلة التنفيذ.

رابطة (WiCSME) متجذرة في الثقافة، يقودها الهدف

وإيمانًا منا بأن "المرأة هي صانعة الشعوب و مربية الأجيال"، فقد عززت ثقافتنا الإسلامية والعربية مكانة المرأة بكل فخر منذ أكثر من 1400 عام، ووفّرت بيئة داعمة تقدم باستمرار نماذج نسائية ملهمة مؤثرة في مختلف المجالات كالعلوم والقيادة والدبلوماسية والأمن السيبراني.

وقد تجلّى مؤخراً مثالٌ قوي ملهم على الصمود الإنساني من نساء فلسطين في غزة، اللواتي أظهرن للجميع قوة استثنائية و عزيمة لا تقهر وصلابة حديدية في مواجهة المحن في هذه الأوقات الصعبة مما ألهب مشاعر العالم، لتذكرنا جميعاً بترسخ روح الصمود في منطقتنا.

واليوم، تواصل رابطة WiCSME تعزيز هذا الإرث، من خلال توحيد أكثر من 3000 امرأة في 22 دولة عربية، لتُسهم في تعزيز القدرات السيبرانية الإقليمية، وتمكين النساء و توصيل أصواتهن، وتحقيق أثر ملموس وشامل ومستدام.

و لنتذكّر دومًا:

"أن تمكين المرأة، هو تمكينٌ للأمة.

و إن ترك الأثر الإقليمي، ما هو إلا بوابة لإلهام العالم لغد أفضل".

رابطة (WiCSME) نموذج واقعي عملي

إن رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني (WiCSME) ليست مجرد شبكة عضوية، بل هي خارطة طريق عالمية و مرجعًا استراتيجيًا و دليلًا عمليًا لبناء مستقبل رقمي شامل للمرأة. ومن أبرز مبادرات الرابطة (على سبيل المثال لا الحصر):

- إطلاق مبادرة إقليمية لبناء القدرات الوطنية بعنوان"CyberSHE"، حيث تتوافق أهداف هذه المبادرة مع الأهداف الوطنية وأهداف الأمم المتحدة في مجموعة الفريق العامل المفتوح العضوية، وتتبنى المبادرة النموذج الثلاثي (تحقيق التعاون مع الجهات التنظيمية و الجهات الخاصة و العامة والجهات الأكاديمية). و تسعى المبادرة (التي تستهدف الخريجين و حديثي التخرج) إلى تدريب 1500 امرأة في مجال الأمن السيبراني خلال ٣ سنوات، حيث انطلقت الدفعة الطلابية الأولى للمبادرة من دولة الكويت و ستمتد لتشمل دفعات طلابية أخرى من مختلف أرجاء الوطن العربي.

- في شراكة استراتيجية مع الاتحاد الدولي للاتصالات (ITU)، شكّلَت المشاركِات من رابطة WiCSMEثلث نسبة المشاركات العالمية في برنامج " إرشاد النساء في الأمن السيبراني"، مع تقديم الدعم اللازم و المحتوى باللغة العربية لأول مرة.

- إتاحة الفرصة لأكثر من 250 عضوة من عضوات الرابطة للمشاركة كمتحدثات في محافل إقليمية وعالمية خلال العام الماضي، و ذلك لإبراز الكفاءات النسائية الاحترافية والقيادية الموجودة في المنطقة في مجال الأمن السيبراني.

- وتعمل الرابطة WiCSME كمركز عالمي يربط بين أكثر من 18 مجموعة نسائية في الأمن السيبراني من مختلف أنحاء العالم "تشكيل بما يشبه أمم متحدة لنساء الأمن السيبراني"، يتعاونن عالمياً من أجل توفير الدعم وتعزيز الأثر.

وهذه الإنجازات ليست مجرد معالم تمثيل، بل نماذج قيمة تعكس حس الملكية و المسؤولية الإقليمية، والتنفيذ الاستراتيجي، والاستدامة في صنع التأثير.

دعوتنا للإنجاز و العمل:

ومع اقترابنا من اختتام أعمال مجموعتنا (OEWG)، نتقدم إلى حضراتكم باقتراحاتنا التالية:

- اعتماد رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني (WiCSME) ومبادرة (CyberSHE) كنماذج مرجعية عالمية ومخططات عملية لبناء القدرات النسائية في الأمن السيبراني.

- إدماج المجتمع المدني كمصدر مضاعف للقوة و شريك عملي في تنفيذ المعايير.

- إنشاء آلية دائمة و شاملة لمشاركة المجتمع المدني بفعالية واستمرارية.

إن مسيرة رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني (WiCSME) هي قصة منطقتنا الإقليمية: ترسم معالمها ثقافتنا، و تبنيها روح الصمود لدينا، و يقودها الإخلاص و العزم على ترك الأثر النافع.

فلنواصل هذا النهج بهذه الروح، لا كأصوات تتعالى منفردة، بل كشركاء مجتمعين في التقدّم و التطور.

ونختم بتذكير حكيم من القرآن الكريم:
﴿ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ﴾ (المائدة: 2)

فحين يلتقي التمكين بالبر، وعندما توجَّه القوى العالمية لغاية سامية مشتركة، فإننا لن نبني أنظمة رقمية أكثر أمانًا فحسب، بل سنبني أوطانًا أقوى وأكثر إنسانية.

شكرًا لكم، سعادة الرئيس.

الدكتورة ريم فرج الشمّري
رئيس و شريك مؤسس
رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني (WiCSME)
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-reem-faraj-alshammari-b6324159

*** تتوفر نسخة تفصيلية من هذا البيان مدعومة بالإحصائيات في صفحة 11.

❖ **حسابات رابطة نساء في الأمن السيبراني الشرق الأوسط (WiCSME) على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي:**

- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/

- https://x.com/WiCSME: منصة X-تويتر سابقا

- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/

- YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669

- [الموقع](https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/) الرسمي : https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/

- بيان الرابطة مسجل – فيديو:
  - o بيان الرابطة في فبراير 2025:https://youtu.be/TEM2HOC9SqA?si=nBAB4WH-WpKlsalM
  - o بيان الرابطة في يوليو 2025: سـيتم توفيره قريبا في قناة اليوتيوب الخاص بالرابطة.
  - o بيان الرابطة في يوليو 2022:https://youtu.be/G4zfDRDR7Lk?si=M6DWokfHH8xAJ3tW

Distinguished Chair, Esteemed Member States, and Honorable Colleagues,

I speak today as the Chairperson of Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME)—a movement born from our region's legacy of resilience, collective will, and the belief that cybersecurity is not merely a technical domain—it is a human responsibility. Hence, I kindly invite you to engage with our intervention through three dimensions: Your Hearts, to connect with our shared humanity; Your Heads, to recognize the strategic value of our work; and Your Hands, to translate commitments into collective action.

In my Individual Capacity, I'd like to thank You Chair and All For the learnings you offered, the insights you shared, and the Collective efforts you're exerting towards hopefully achieving Consensus Adoption of the Draft Final Report of the OEWG that ultimately leads to a common Global Goal of a "Safe and Secure Digital World".

Watching and experiencing all that over the course of the OEWG's work, reminded me of a Verse from our Holy Quran that reflects the spirit of our OEWG journey:

قال تعالى:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾ (الرعد:11)

"Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of people until they change what is within themselves." (Al-Ra'd, 13:11)

This verse reminds us that transformation begins from within. And today, as we share the higher purpose of guarding our digital realm, it is our collective resolve that can take this OEWG from aspiration to activation.

WiCSME: Rooted in Culture, Driven by Purpose

Knowing that *"Women are Nation's Builders",* Our Islamic and Arab culture has proudly empowered women for over 1,400 years—cultivating a supportive environment that continues to produce impactful female role models across various fields such as science, leadership, diplomacy, cybersecurity.

A powerful example of resilience was demonstrated by the Palestinian Women in Gaza, whose remarkable strength and iron grit under adversity resonated globally, reminding everyone of the enduring spirit of our region.

Today, WiCSME continues that legacy—uniting over 3,000 women across 22 Arab countries to strengthen regional cyber capacity, elevate women's voices, and deliver tangible, inclusive, sustainable impact. That all aligns with various goals and targets addressed in OEWG draft final report.

Let us Remember:
"Empowering a Woman, leads to empowering a Nation.
Impacting a Region is a doorway to inspiring the World."

Regional Models importance in Enhancing The Draft Final Report

Moreover, and as multilateral cyber discussions progress, it's clear that a Regional adaptable Model that is rooted in inclusion, Collaboration and measurable execution are key to turning the Draft Final report from vision into reality

While the draft sets forth inclusive, multi-stakeholder engagement as a guiding principle, its successful operationalization depends on existing models that are already achieving meaningful impact in regions where diversity, workforce development, and digital resilience are both urgent and crucial.

One such Model is Women in Cyber Security Middle East (WiCSME). With broad reach across MENA and active collaborations spanning civil society, regulators, academia, and industry, WiCSME offers a working Blueprint for implementing the draft recommendations—rooted in cultural context, regional ownership, and proven effectiveness.

WiCSME: A Strategic Blueprint & Enabler

WiCSME is not just a network, it is a global strategic blueprint and a practical playbook for building inclusive digital future. Moreover, WiCSME is a policy-relevant actor bridging gender, skills, and governance gaps across the Globe specially the Global South through its flagship programs and global alliances.

1. Gender-Responsive Capacity Building at Scale

WiCSME delivers outcome-driven, inclusive, and scalable initiatives across MENA, including:

- Launching Pioneering our Regional Capacity Building Program "CyberSHE", which aligns with National and UN OEWG Targets. The program aims to train up to 1,500 skilled Female Cyber talents across the region over three years. Starting with our first cohort launched in Kuwait.

  - CyberSHE's structure—4-week immersive bootcamps blending technical skills, soft skills, mentorship, and role-specific certifications—is designed to produce job-ready cyber professionals.

- Collective collaboration with various stakeholders such as academia, industry, regulators, Private Public Sectors. This Initiative serve as a living pilot for national and regional cyber readiness improvement.

- In Strategic partnership with ITU, WiCSME's participants made up one-third of the global cohort in ITU's Women in Cyber Mentorship Program- introducing Arabic content and localized support for the first time.

- IBM SkillsBuild: Over 50 participants completed PBL-based certifications in cybersecurity and AI.
- Bringing more than 250 female speakers last year to global and regional stages, showcasing the region's talent and leadership.

- Serving as a global hub, connecting 18+ Women in Cyber Groups Worldwide, collaborating as a "United Nations of Women in Cyber" to support and amplify impact.

WiCSME's ecosystem also includes forums, awards, research groups, and regional events—all aimed at institutionalizing workforce inclusion, not just offering access. These are not just milestones of representation, they are models of regional ownership, Strategic Execution, and sustained impact (More details on WiCSME various Initiatives are shared in Annexure A available in this document).

2. Inclusion and Voice in Global Policy Platforms

WiCSME meaningfully contributes to global cyber governance through:

- Our Continuous Contributions at UN OEWG: Advanced the voice of Arab women in cyber norms discussions through sharing expertise, knowledge, and Regional Engagements and Success stories.
- Participation in GFCE Summits (Washington D.C., Geneva): Advocated for inclusive workforce models and civil society leadership in capacity building frameworks.
- Global Coalition with 18+ Women in Cyber Groups: A unique, multi-country platform for sharing best practices, co-developing policy templates, and potentially establishing a "United Nations of Women in Cyber Civil Societies"—to replicate success models across continents.

These efforts align with the Chair's calls in the Draft Final Report for a whole-of-society approach and multi-regional leadership in shaping global ICT security dialogues.

3. Operationalizing the Tripartite Model

WiCSME's initiatives already embraces the Industry–Academia–Regulator triad and illustrated how it can function in practice through shared KPIs and Goals—not in theory. For example:

- Industry Partnership: Google, IBM, Zain, KFH, BIG, Deloitte, EC-Council, London Business School and NetLabs contribute tools, Funds raising, Sponsorships, scholarships, labs, and curriculum design for inclusive cyber skilling and capacity building.
- Government and Academia: Regulatory engagement happens through CyberSHE KPIs, national talents training support, and academic partnerships like Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST), and Dubai Cyber Innovation Park (DCIP).
- Strategic & Community Partnership: WiCSME partners with Global and Regional leading CyberSecurity forums and Summits (such as ITU, BlackHAT MEA, GISEC, GITEX..etc), to deliver WiCSME members voices and promote their leadership and professional experience.
- Regional and Local WiCSME Chapters Community: WiCSME drives volunteer mentoring, bootcamps, workshops, local chapters, and cross-border knowledge exchange.

CyberSHE is a flagship Pilot of this model in action—fostering co-owned KPIs, localized delivery, and cross-sector investment. It is a blueprint that could be adapted for use in other parts of the Globe specially the Global South.

WiCSME's Unique Contributions to OEWG's vision

WiCSME offers the following distinct contributions that could directly support implementation of the draft's recommendations:

1. Execution Partner for Strategic Workforce Development: With its growing training footprint, WiCSME can help member states scale gender-inclusive cybersecurity workforce strategies—especially through CyberSHE.
2. Knowledge Exchange Platform: WiCSME's network of over 18 global women's cyber groups could serve as a vehicle for sharing national success stories, enabling cross-border replication of good practices.
3. Policy Innovation Lab: WiCSME could contribute to pilot initiatives for inclusive cyber policy, such as youth engagement, local GCI strategy acceleration, and metrics development for gender participation.
4. Civil Society Focal Point: As a trusted actor in both community and global policy spaces, WiCSME is positioned to amplify grassroots feedback into global norm-setting dialogues.

Our Call to Action
As we approach the finalization of the OEWG's work, we respectfully propose:

- Acknowledging WiCSME and CyberSHE in the final draft as Global Blueprint, case studies and reference models for gender-responsive capacity building and including it in the Final report.

- Utilization of Civil Society Stakeholders as Force multipliers and operational partners in norms implementation.

- Consider establishing Pilot partnerships with proven regional actors to ensure global frameworks are matched with grounded, scalable action.
- And the establishment of a permanent mechanism for inclusive, sustained, multi-stakeholder engagement.

Closing: From the Region to the World

WiCSME's journey is the story of our region—culture-guided, resilience-built, and impact-driven.

Let us carry this spirit forward—not as parallel voices, but as partners in progress.

And Concluding with an insightful reminder from the Holy Qur'an:

﴿ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ﴾ (المائدة: 2)

"*Cooperate in righteousness and piety.*" (Al-Ma'idah 2)

When empowerment meets righteousness, when global strength is guided by shared higher purpose,

We build not only Safer Digital Ecosystems—but Stronger, more Compassionate Nations.

We thank you Chair for your Stellar leadership, your esteemed team members and to all OEWG members and Stakeholders for their collective efforts in this enlightening and enriching OEWG Journey throughout the past five years.

Thank you.

Dr. Reem Faraj AlShammari,

Chairperson and Cofounder
Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME)
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-reem-faraj-alshammari-b6324159

❖ **Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME) in Social Media:**
   ➢ LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/
   ➢ X (formerly Twitter): https://x.com/WiCSME
   ➢ Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/
   ➢ YouTube: www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669
   ➢ URL: https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/
   ➢ Youtube Video- UN WiCSME statement in OEWG:
     - WiCSME Statement on Feb, 2025: https://youtu.be/TEM2HOC9SqA?si=nBAB4WH-WpKlsalM
     - WiCSME Statement on July, 2025: Will be available soon on WiCSME Youtube Channel.
     - WiCSME Statement on July, 2022: https://youtu.be/G4zfDRDR7Lk?si=M6DWokfHH8xAJ3tW

WiCSME Statement, February 2025

Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021-2025

10th Substantive Session

Women in CyberSecurity MiddleEast (WiCSME) Statement on CyberSecurity Capacity Building

(Both English and Arabic Versions)

February 2025

AlSalam Alaikom... Peace be upon you all.

Dear Chair, esteemed members,

I begin with two chosen verses from the Holy Quran that deeply resonate with our mission today:

قال تعالى: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُو ا ﴾

"We made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another." (Al-Hujuraat-13)

كما قال سبحان ه: ﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِ ر وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَ ◌َ تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْ ◌ْ ◌ثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ﴾

"And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression." (Al-Maeda-2)

These verses reflect the heart of our work at UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)—as we are here to unite and collectively collaborate towards a safer and better Digital World.

Capacity Building: Investing in People

Dear Chair, Investing in our valuable asset (the people and their wellbeing) is the most powerful step toward resilience, security, and innovation. Furthermore, Diversity in expertise and leadership in shaping Our Digital Future, strengthens CyberSecurity, builds Trust, and fosters Collaboration on a global scale.

Today, and Despite the challenges we face globally, we shall collectively move forward as humans (irrespective of the hats we put on) with Authentic Grit, Hope, and Optimism, driven by the Belief that Empowering people Transforms Nations.

The Journey of WiCSME: A Story of Collective Impacts "StrongerTogether"

Our WiCSME Journey, started in 2018 with 8 Cofounders growing to a thriving community of 3,000+ members across 21 Arab countries, leading Collective regional and global initiatives that inspire change and focus on three key areas:

1. Building Capacity and Talent Development – such as the Global partnerships of United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Women in Cyber Mentorship Program, we achieved record-breaking regional participation, provided Arabic content and support, and showcased inspiring role models, making bigger and deeper impacts.

2. **Expanding Global Visibility**– Our Global Sisterhood Network connects 18+ women in cybersecurity groups worldwide and supports collaborative capacity Building initiatives across the globe, a dream we shared here in 2022 and made a reality.

3. **Breaking Records & Celebrating Excellence**:

- o Making history by securing the highest number of female speakers in various leading global cybersecurity events held in our region—surpassing other regions.
- o 250+ female speakers took the stage in 2024, bringing regional expertise to
- o the forefront of international cybersecurity conversations.
- o 119 WiCSME members excelled in Exam Certifications/Academic degrees/Career growth/Research and Publications/received prestigious awards.

****Note*: A Full list of significant milestones is enclosed for reference in Annexure 1 on Published WiCSME Statement on UN Website.

The Secret to Success

This Successful Journey was only possible after Allah's Support due to three key pillars:

1. Our Middle Eastern Islamic Arabic Culture & Values – had nurtured a genuine environment of Empowering Women continuing a journey started by our Prophet PBUH 1400 years ago.
2. Our Societies had always fostered this journey– Our brothers, fathers, and mentors have been our Strong Male allies all along.
3. The Collaboration & Trust by Global, Regional, and National entities in becoming our Partners in Success.

Our Purpose: A Mission that Drives Us

With such Culture of true Empowerment, our women's voices are heard, and their achievements celebrated. And for this progress to continue, support to Stakeholders like WiCSME must be strengthened and maintained.

This is not just about cybersecurity. It is about a resilient, innovative, and inclusive future in an ever-evolving Digital World. It is Our purpose, our Ikigai "Japanese word", the reason we wake up every day, determined to make greater and deeper impacts.

We thank you Chair for your Stellar leadership, and to all OEWG members for your collective efforts towards a safer digital world. And remember, We are and will always be Stronger Together.

Thank you.

Dr. Reem Faraj AlShammari,
Chairperson and Cofounder,
Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME)
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-reem-faraj-alshammari-b6324159

***<u>**Note:**</u> Longer Version of the Statement is included <mark>in Page 27</mark>.*

❖ **Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME) in Social Media:**
  ➢LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/
  ➢X (formerly Twitter): https://x.com/WiCSME
  ➢Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/
  ➢YouTube: www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669
  ➢URL: https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/
  ➢Youtube Video- UN WiCSME statement in OEWG:
    - WiCSME Statement on Feb, 2025: https://youtu.be/TEM2HOC9SqA?si=nBAB4WH-WpKlsalM
    - WiCSME Statement on July, 2022: https://youtu.be/G4zfDRDR7Lk?si=M6DWokfHH8xAJ3tW

بيان رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني - النسخة العربية:

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته...

السيد الرئيس، أعضاء المجموعة الكرام،

أبدأ خطابي هذا بآيتين كريمتين من القرآن الكريم تعكسان جوهر مهمتنا هنا اليوم:

قال تعالى : ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا﴾ (الحجرات: 13)

وقال سبحانه : ﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ﴾ (المائدة: 2)

هذه الآيات تعكس جوهر عملنا في مجموعتنا مجموعة العمل المفتوحة العضوية (OEWG) التابعة للأمم المتحدة، حيث نجتمع هنا لنتحد ونتعاون من أجل عالم رقمي أكثر أمانًا وازدهارًا.

بناء القدرات- الاستثمار في الإنسان

السيد الرئيس،

إن الاستثمار في تطوير أصولنا القيّمة (العنصر البشري واستقراره Wellbeing) هي الخطوة الأقوى نحو لعالم أكثر مرونة وأماناً وابتكارًا. كما أن التنوع في الخبرات والقيادة في تشكيل مستقبلنا الرقمي يعزز الأمن السيبراني، ويبني الثقة، ويعزز التعاون على نطاق عالمي.

اليوم، وعلى الرغم من التحديات العالمية التي نواجهها جميعا، يجب أن نمضي قدمًا كبشر (باختلاف الأدوار التي نلعبها) بعزيمة حقيقية وأمل وتفاؤل نحو تحقيق غاية مجموعتنا هذه، مدفوعين بالإيمان أنه بتمكين الأفراد تنهض الأمم.

رحلة الرابطة WiCSME - قصة تعاون ملهمة لترك أثر جبار "معا أقوى"

بدأت رحلة الرابطة WiCSME في عام 2018 بمشاركة 8 عضوات مؤسسات، لتتحول إلى مجتمع مزدهر يضم أكثر من 3000 عضوة من 21 دولة عربية، تقود مبادرات إقليمية وعالمية ملهمة تركز على ثلاثة مجالات رئيسية:

1. **بناء القدرات وتنمية المواهب** :مثل الشراكة العالمية مع برنامج الاتحاد الدولي للاتصالات التابع للأمم المتحدة لإرشاد النساء في مجال الأمن السيبراني، حيث حققنا مشاركة قياسية على مستوى المنطقة من حيث عدد المشاركات مقارنة ببقية المناطق الإقليمية في العالم، و تم تقديم محتوى للبرنامج و توفير الدعم باللغة العربية لدعم المشاركات وتجاوز حاجز اللغة وكما تم تقديم قصص ملهمة بمشاركة نماذج قيادية نسائية ملهمة من المنطقة العربية، مما خلق تأثيرًا قويًا في نفوس المشاركات.

2. **تعزيز التواجد العالمي** : تربط شبكة الأخوة العالمية الخاصة برابطتنا أكثر من 18 مجموعة نسائية متخصصة في مجال الأمن السيبراني حول العالم و من كل القارات ، وتدعم الرابطة مبادرات بناء القدرات محليو و إقليمية و عالمية ، كان هذا حلم شاركناه (تشكيل منصة تربط المجموعات النسائية المتخصصة في الامن السيبراني من شتى أنحاء العالم) في خطابنا الذي ألقيناه هنا في هذه المجموعة في عام 2022 وحولناه بفضل الله إلى واقع نعيشه اليوم بجهود عضواتنا و عزيمتهم القوية.

3. **تحطيم الأرقام القياسية والاحتفاء بالتميز:**

   ○ صنعنا التاريخ من خلال تحقيق أعلى عدد من المتحدثات في أهم الفعاليات العالمية للأمن السيبراني التي عقدت في منطقتنا الاقليمية ، متفوقين على المناطق الأخرى.

   ○ شاركت أكثر من 250 متحدثة من رابطتنا في عام 2024، مما وضع الخبرة النسائية من منطقتنا الإقليمية في صدارة الحوارات الدولية حول الأمن السيبراني.

   ○ تميز 119 عضوًا من الرابطة WiCSME في شهادات الاختبارات الفنية /الدرجات الأكاديمية /التطور الوظيفي /البحوث والمنشورات /الحصول على جوائز مرموقة و ذلك في استطلاع داخلي أجرته الرابطة مع عضواتها.

ملاحظة :يتم إرفاق قائمة كاملة بالإنجازات الهامة للرجوع إليها في الملحق 1 لهذه الوثيقة.

سر رحلة النجاح

كانت هذه الرحلة الناجحة ممكنة فقط بدعم من الله سبحانه ثم بفضل وجود 3 عناصر أساسية ممكنة في بيئتنا ألا وهي:

1. ثقافتنا العربية الإسلامية وقيمنا :التي وفرت بيئة حقيقية لتمكين المرأة وتقديرها و استقلالها ماديا، استمرارا لرحلة بدأها نبينا صلى الله عليه وسلم منذ 1400 عام.

2. مجتمعاتنا دعمت هذه الرحلة باستمرار، حيث كان الرجل باختلاف أدواره—الأب، الأخ، الابن، المسؤول، والمرشد-الحليف القوي لنا دوما على طول الدرب.

3. وجود الثقة الكبيرة بقدرة الرابطة وروح التعاون الاحترافي من قبل مختلف الجهات و المؤسسات العالمية والإقليمية والمحلية لتكوين شراكات طويلة الأمد ليصبحوا شركاء في النجاح مع الرابطة.

مهمتنا: غاية تحركنا

في ظل هذه البيئة الفنية و الداعمة و الممكنة ،ازدهرت رابطتنا و تألقت بإبراز خبرات و مهارات عضواتنا في مجال الامن السيبراني و تحفيزهم للتميز و العطاء و الاحتفاء بإنجازاتهن باستمرار مؤمنين أن نجاح عضوة واحدة ههو نجاح لعضوات الرابطة أجمع.

ولكي يستمر مثل هذا التقدم و الازدهار، يجب الحرص الدائم على توفير كافة أوجه الدعم للرابطة WiCSME و مثيلاتها من الجهات المجتمعية و التطوعية.

كل هذه الجهود ليس فقط لأجل جوارنا حول الأمن السيبراني، بل من أجل مستقبل مشرق مرن واعد يزخر بالإبداع والابتكار والشمولية في عالم رقمي يتطور باستمرار بسرعة متزايدة.

هذه هي غايتنا، "إيكيغاي" (الكلمة اليابانية)، وهذا هو السبب الذي يجعلنا نستيقظ كل يوم بعزيمة لخلق تأثير أكبر وأعمق.

شكرا سيدي الرئيس على قيادتك البارزة لمجموعتنا طيلة السنوات الماضية، ونشكر جميع أعضاء المجموعة على جهودكم التعاونية نحو عالم رقمي أفضل و أكثر أمانًا.

ولنتذكر جميعنا أننا دومًا: أقوى معًا.

شكرًا...

د. ريم فرج الشمري،

رئيسة رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني (Women in CyberSecurity Middle East- WiCSME)

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-reem-faraj-alshammari-b6324159

<<<< حسابات رابطة نساء في الأمن السيبراني الشرق الأوسط (WiCSME) على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي:

- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/

- X- تويتر سابقًا : https://x.com/WiCSME

- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/

- YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669

- الموقع الرسمي/https://www.womenincybersecurity.me :

- **كلمة البيان مسجلة** – فيديو: https://youtu.be/TEM2HOC9SqA?si=JE_R3UDgOAByoCk8

Women in Cyber Security Middle East
رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني

الملحق 1: إحصائيات وتقارير مبادرات بناء القدرات

1. **تعزيز التواجد العالمي:**

أطلقت رابطة نساء في الأمن السيبراني الشرق الأوسط WiCSME (بأكثر من 3000 عضو في 21+ دولة عربية) برامج مؤثرة لتمكين النساء في الأمن السيبراني، بما في ذلك تعزيز تمثيل النساء في هذا المجال من خلال شراكات طويلة الأمد مع مؤتمرات عالمية وإقليمية مثلWicked6 ، BlackHat MEA، GISEC، و.GITEX Global.

- أصبحت الرابطة مركزًا رئيسيًا لأكثر من 18 مجموعة نسائية في الأمن السيبراني عبر جميع القارات تحت مظلة شبكة الأخوة العالمية، لدعم مبادرات بناء القدرات التعاونية عالميًا.

- تعاونت الرابطة مع Wicked6 في مبادرة الدوري السيبراني للنساء لمدة 3 سنوات متتالية لإثراء دوري الأمن السيبراني العالمي للنساء (بمشاركة 23 متحدثة من 10+ دول).

- في BlackHat MEA ارتفع عدد المتحدثات من 17 (من 5+ دول) في 2022 إلى 28 (من 15+ دولة) في 2024، محطمة الأرقام القياسية العالمية لأعلى عدد من المتحدثات لثلاث سنوات متتالية.

- في GISEC و GITEX:شاركت 26 متحدثة في مناقشة مواضيع مبتكرة من 10+ دول عبر شراكات طويلة الأمد.

- تم تنظيم فعاليات شبكات نساء في الأمن السيبراني عبر المنطقة بحضور قادة الأمن السيبراني الوطنيين، مما عزز دعم مهمة رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني.

- تم توقيع شراكات جديدة مع مؤتمرات في سبع دول، مما أدى إلى مشاركة أكثر من 250 متحدثة في المنتديات العالمية في 2024.

2. **بناء القدرات وتنمية المواهب:**

- برنامج الأمم المتحدة – ITU لإرشاد النساء في الأمن السيبراني: تم اختيار رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني كأول مجموعة نسائية في الأمن السيبراني للتعاون في تنفيذ برنامج ITU في المنطقة العربية، حيث حقق البرنامج نجاحا متميز للمنطقة العربية وفقًا لإفادة المشاركات في تقرير النهائي للبرنامج المعد من قبل الاتحاد الدولي للاتصالات:

    - تم تحقيق رقم قياسي بأعلى عدد من المشاركين، حيث شكلت المشاركات من المنطقة العربية ثلث المشاركين عالميًا من مختلف المناطق الإقليمية.

    - تم تقديم محتوى للبرنامج و توفير الدعم باللغة العربية لدعم المشاركات وتجاوز حاجز اللغة.

    - تم تقديم قصص ملهمة بمشاركة نماذج قيادية نسائية ملهمة من المنطقة العربية، مما خلق تأثيرًا قويًا في نفوس المشاركات.

- برنامج تدريبي IBM SkillsBuild: تم اطلاقه بالتعاون مع IBM حيث ركز على أساسيات الذكاء الاصطناعي والأمن السيبراني، بمشاركة 101 عضوة من الرابطة.

- شراكات أكاديمية: تتعاون الرابطة مع الجامعات لتطوير المواهب التقنية والأمنية.

- تعاون مستمر مع المكتب الإقليمي للاتحاد الدولي للاتصالات- الدول العربية التابعة للأمم المتحدة عبر المساهمات الثرية في المنتديات و الفعاليات المنظمة من قبل المكتب كمنتدي التطوير و فعالية يوم الفتيات العالمي في التكنولوجيا.

- اطلاق برنامج حملات توعوية بالأمن السيبراني باللغة العربية بالتعاون مع CyberX: أطلقنا حملة إقليمية وندوة وبينار باللغة العربية حول العائلات الآمنة سيبرانيًا لاثراء المحتوى العربي و رفع التوعية بمجتمعاتنا العربية و ذلك بالتعاون مع شركة CyberX.

.

3. الاحتفاء بالمواهب والخبرات:

○ حصول أكثر من 25 عضوة من الرابطة WiCSME على جوائز عالمية وإقليمية في عام 2024، بما في ذلك:

■ جوائز أفضل 20 امرأة في الأمن السيبراني عالميًا: تم تكريم 8 قياديات من 6 دول عربية، مما يعكس حضورًا قويًا نساء للمنطقة العربية (40% من الفائزات) بين قياديات و احترافيات في مجال الامن السيبراني من شتى انحاء العالم.

■ جوائز التميز في GISEC، وجائزة ISC² العالمية، وجوائز CYSEC She Leads، وغيرها.

○ تحقيق إنجازات بارزة في الأمن السيبراني وفقًا لاستطلاع داخلي لعام 2024 قامت به الرابطة لعضويتها :

■ اجتياز اختبارات الشهادات الفنية: 38 عضوًا.

■ الحصول على ترقية أو تطوير وظيفي أفضل: 23 عضوًا.

■ إكمال الدرجات الأكاديمية: 19 عضوًا.

■ نشر أوراق بحثية أو اصدار كتب: 14 عضوًا.

و تستمر مبادرات رابطة نساء الشرق الأوسط للأمن السيبراني في إلهام النساء للقيادة والمساهمة في صناعة أمن سيبراني أكثر شمولاً، مع عرض المواهب الشرق أوسطية على المسرح العالمي.

WiCSME Statement- Long Version:

Al-Salam Alaikom .. Peace be Upon you All.

Dear Chair, esteemed Members.

Contributing in my Stakeholder Capacity as the Chairperson of our Regional Women in CyberSecurity MiddleEast "WiCSME",

I begin with two chosen verses from the Holy Quran that deeply resonate with our mission today:

قال تعالى: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ الله أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴾

[الحجرات: 13]
﴿And we made you people and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you﴾. Surah Al-Hujuraat

قال تعالى: ﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ﴾

[المائدة: 2]
﴿And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression ﴾. [AlMaeda: 2].

These verses are 2 Calls for Action to Connect and to Collaborate, it reflects the heart of our work at UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)—as We are here to unite and collectively collaborate towards a safer and better Digital World for the betterment of Humanity.

Capacity Building: Investing in People

Dear Chair, Investing in our valuable asset (the people and their wellbeing) is the most powerful step toward resilience, security, and innovation. Furthermore, Diversity in expertise and leadership in shaping Our Digital Future, strengthens CyberSecurity, builds Trust, and fosters Collaboration on a global scale.

Today, and Despite the challenges we face globally, we shall collectively move forward as humans (irrespective of the hats we put on) with Authentic Grit, Hope, and Optimism, driven by the Belief that Empowering people Transforms Nations.

The Journey of WiCSME: A Story of Collective Endless Impacts

Our WiCSME Journey, started in 2018 with 8 Cofounders growing to a thriving community of 3,000+ members across 21 Arab countries, leading Collective Impactful Regional and Global Capacity Building initiatives that inspire change and focus on three key areas:

1. Building Capacity and Talent Development

2. Expanding Visibility Through Global Partnerships

3. Breaking Records & Celebrating Excellence

Which all been leading to Success Stories and records breaking on Global levels (Detailed initiatives list is enclosed on Annexure 1 of our Statement uploaded on UN Website). Due to time, I'll briefly share below few Examples:

❖ *WiCSME had successfully become the Global Women in Cyber Central Hub*

connecting more than 18 Women in Cyber Groups across All continents under its Global

Sisterhood Network supporting collaborative capacity Building initiatives across the globe. This was a Dream shared here in our Statement back in 2022, and we're Proud to share today that it became a Reality.

❖ Collaboration with Global ITU in Being 1st Women in Cyber Group chosen to implement ITU's Women in Cyber Mentorship Program for the Arab region where we achieved record-breaking regional participation (1/3 of Global Participation), provided Arabic Contents and support, and showcased inspiring role models from our Region, making deeper and powerful impacts on participants.

❖ Community Partnership in Summits across *Seven countries, leading to over 250 female Speakers at global forums in 2024.*

❖ Collaboration with leading Global CyberSecurity forums and Making history by securing the highest number of female speakers in these leading global cybersecurity events held in our region—surpassing other regions.

❖ Reported Individual WiCSME members' Milestones achieved in 2024 only:

  o +25 members were Recognized in Global and Regional Accolades
  o 38 members had Passed a *Certification Exam*
  o 23 members had Received *a Promotion or better Opportunity*
  o 19 members had Completed *Academic Degrees*
  o 14 members had Published *Research papers or Books*
  o 101 members completed WiCSME-IBM Skills Build Program

The Secret to Success

❖ This Successful Journey was only possible after Allah's Support due to three key pillars:

> ➢ First, Our Middle Eastern Islamic Arabic Culture and values had nurtured an environment of Empowering Women and rising Stars to thrive, continuing a journey of Women empowerment and financial independence started by our Prophet Mohammad PBUH 1400 years ago.

> ➢ 2nd, Our societies had always fostered this journey where Men had been brilliant Sponsors, Mentors, Role models, and great allies all along. In addition, Our Countries had also ensured the continuous evolution to this journey by supporting call for equity in fair opportunities to compete and addressing unconscious biases once identified.

➢ And Finally, The High Trust given to us and Team Spirit embraced by Global, Regional, and National entities in becoming long-term Partners in Success.

Our Purpose: A Mission that Drives Us

With such Culture of true Empowerment and for these reasons, our WiCSME Regional Family had been flourishing where our Women expertise are acknowledged, their voices are heard, their self-confidence are boosted, and their achievements are celebrated. Hoping that such Models encapsulating true empowerment of Women is replicated across the globe.

And for this progress to continue, Support to support to Stakeholders like WiCSME must be strengthened and maintained.

This is not just about CyberSecurity. It is about a Resilient, Innovative, and Inclusive Future in an Ever-Evolving Digital World.

That is our Purpose. And that is our Ikigai "Japanese word", the reason we wake up every day, determined to make greater and deeper impacts.

We thank you Chair for your Stellar leadership and for creating this platform for us civil society stakeholders to contribute, hoping it will be taken as model on various UN's platforms. Thanks to all OEWG Respected members for their collective efforts in a better and safer Digital World.

And let us All remember that We are and will always be Stronger Together.

Thank you.

Dr. Reem Faraj AlShammari,
Chairperson and Cofounder,
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LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-reem-faraj-alshammari-b6324159

❖ **Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME) in Social Media:**
    ➢LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/
    ➢X (formerly Twitter): https://x.com/WiCSME
    ➢Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/
    ➢YouTube: www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669
    ➢URL: https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/
    ➢Youtube Video- UN WiCSME statement in OEWG:
      - WiCSME Statement on Feb, 2025: https://youtu.be/TEM2HOC9SqA?si=nBAB4WH-WpKlsalM
      - WiCSME Statement on July, 2022: https://youtu.be/G4zfDRDR7Lk?si=M6DWokfHH8xAJ3tW

WiCSME Statement, July 2022

Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021-2025

6th Substantive Session

Women in CyberSecurity MiddleEast (WiCSME) Statement on CyberSecurity Capacity Building (English Version Only)

July 2022

..

Civil Society Statements to OEWG, Wed 27 July 2022

"6th Substantive Session of the OEWG"

As the Founding Partner and Board member of Women in CyberSecurity MiddleEast Group and presenting under the Umbrella of Write Pilot, I would like to thank you Chair for this valuable opportunity to hear our voice. I hope you find our success stories and initiatives insightful to learn from, as much as we have learnt from your stellar leadership and member of states insights and discussions in the past couple of days. I thank you for such a outstanding learning experience that will help us indeed in enriching our knowledge to better serve our communities and societies.

Now in addressing the guided question #1, I would like to state the following:

The 'Women in Cyber Security Middle East' Group also short for "WiCSME", was formed in 2018 to promote and increase women's participation in Cyber Security. It is a Voluntary Group with a vision to build strong, dependable, and a growing network of passionate Female CyberSecurity Professionals in the Middle East and North African countries, and eventually increase the percentage of Women Workforce in the field of Cyber security and encourage for more Female Leadership in Cyber Security in the region.

During these 5 years, WiCSME has built a strong foundation fully in line with our regional culture, religious and societal values and has as a result grown from 9 members to over 1800 members from 23 countries. We have experienced historical moments where we introduced many initiatives to successfully create a platform for our sisters in the region, that is fueled by respect, openness to ideas, constructive feedback, and strive towards excellence.

And in this manner, I would like to bring special attention to the key Capacity Building initiatives and achievements by WiCSME, all of which were firsts in our Middle east region:

1. We are Proud to say that we now have a platform in which Women in CyberSecurity, 'our young rising stars and experienced professionals', have equal chance to share their knowledge, have their voices heard and their individual strengths appreciated.
2. We have created opportunities for Our Women to participate alongside their male peers and build their technical, soft and collaborative skills as part of the WiCSME Annual Regional Capture the Flag "CTF" competition. In 2020's CTF, 36% of the 600 participants were females, and in 2021, we had 63% female participants. This is a double-digit year-on-year growth, which speaks for the impact we are making, while recognizing and managing the challenges that are often faced in a regional setup.
3. For the first time, we introduced a formal way of recognizing, appreciating and showcasing the unique capabilities and contributions of Women in CyberSecurity through the Annual WiCSME Awards – be it in their capacities as leaders in the field, rising stars, or contribution towards their community. We do not only celebrate our Women, but our Male Allies whose support is fundamental in steering this movement forward.

We have felt a tremendous increase in confidence level of our members, who are now taking on bigger and better challenges in their personal and professional lives. They are now transforming from being a follower to a leader, and from setting in the passenger seat to taking the wheel in the driver seat. In doing so, they don't only think about themselves, but also contribute back as Givers to the community in their own unique and talented ways and capacities. They now have a network and Safety Net of like-minded Women to feel confident and to lean on when in a problem or dilemma.

Looking at this congregation here, I feel that we are very similar to the UN in terms of capacity and ethos. We are bringing together our WiCSME affiliate countries towards a common goal. Needless to say, we could not achieve all this without the support from our Partners Of Success. I would like to pay special thanks to Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences "KFAS" and the UK-Gulf Women in Cyber Fellowship who have been with us in this journey since the beginning.

While we have achieved so much in a voluntary capacity and contributions from our passionate and brilliant members, we recognize that we now need to build a more formalized and structured framework focused on creating a more sustainable organization which will carry forward the torch of this movement, build the foundation and breath the life to the organization to flourish and create many more historical moments for generations to come.

This will require more collaborative efforts and support from various corners of society – including and not limited to- private and public organizations, governments, academia, and community programs.

It is a moment of pride to be able to state in this global forum and stage that WiCSME has successfully created an Avenue for the Women in CyberSecurity in the MiddleEast, that is nurtured by our Values and Culture, and keen to showcase, foster and celebrate their talents In and Beyond the world of CyberSecurity. We are creating "Leaders" who believe in being 'Stronger Together', and "Givers" who actively contribute to our Societies and to the 'Global Sisterhood of CyberSecurity'.

To conclude, we hope there will be a day where we have a 'United Nations of Women in Cybersecurity' that unites these tremendous efforts of various Women in CyberSecurity Groups' from all over the globe, to collectively support us in achieving The Mission and making A Difference for generations over the World.

This might sound like a big dream and "perhaps, Mr Chair, a bit complicated ingredients for a Smoothie metaphor you had kindly referenced to", but this dream was envisioned in 2018, and like Denzel Washington once said "Dream Big, but remember that Dreams without Goals are just Dreams, and ultimately they fuel Disappointment. And On the road to achieving these dreams, one's must apply Discipline but more importantly Consistency.. Because, without Commitment you will never Start, But without Consistency you'll never Finish'.

Today we are Here and that's A Start. And Together, by putting collectively Our 3H's in Action (Our Hearts, Our Heads, and Our Hands), We will hopefully be able to achieve our Goals and Finish. As we are and will always be "StrongerTogether".

Thank you Mr. Chair.

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❖ **Women in CyberSecurity Middle East (WiCSME) in Social Media:**

➢ LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-cyber-security-middle-east/

➢ X (formerly Twitter): https://x.com/WiCSME

➢ Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/womenincybersecuritymiddleeast/

➢ YouTube: www.youtube.com/@womenincybersecuritymiddle1669

➢ URL: https://www.womenincybersecurity.me/

➢ Youtube Video- UN WiCSME statement in OEWG:
  - WiCSME Statement on July, 2022:
https://youtu.be/G4zfDRDR7Lk?si=M6DWokfHH8xAJ3tW

Annexure A: WiCSME Highlights: Measured Impact Through Empowerment & Partnerships

1. Capacity Building and Talent Development

WiCSME continues to foster growth through key initiatives:

- **Regional Capacity Building "CyberSHE" Program** -Women in Cyber Security Middle East (WICSME), under its flagship program, 'She Talks Security', is pioneering a regional training and enablement program called, 'CyberSHE'.
  - The program aims to create capability of up to 1500 trained cyber talents across the Middle East region over a period of 3 years, and it aligns with National and UN OEWG Targets.
  - Collective collaboration with various stakeholders such as academia, industry, regulators, Private Public Sectors. This Initiative serve as a living pilot for national and regional cyber readiness improvement.
  - The program is designed for graduate/senior students with Bachelor/Diploma degrees in Cybersecurity, Computer Engineering, Information Technology or equivalent.
  - The pilot cohort was conducted in Kuwait in May 2025, and is currently targeted to be implemented as "Phase 1" in Oman, Saudi Arabia, and UAE; with an intention to expand to other Arab countries upon successful execution in the target countries.
  - While the program aims to train a minimum of 25 students in one country, a high-level view of the intended target numbers of students it aims to enabled each year across respective countries each year is included in next slide.

- **ITU Women in Cyber Mentorship Program** (UN-affiliated)**:** Being 1st Women in Cyber Group chosen to implement ITU's Women in Cyber Mentorship Program for the Arab region:
  - Scored highest number of participants as Our 107 Arab region Participants had formed the 1/3 of global participants and had completed a structured 3-month cyber mentorship,
  - Provided Arabic Program's Contents and Support to break the Language Barrier,
  - Showcased Inspiring Women in Cyber Role model from the Arab region creating deeper and powerful impacts as expressed by the participants in their feedback reports in ITU Program's Survey.

- *IBM SkillsBuild: Focused on AI and cybersecurity fundamentals, with 101 participants and* 50+ members earned certificates in cybersecurity and AI through 6-week Project-Based Learning courses.

  - **Google Certificate Courses (via Udemy)**: Free access extended to all WiCSME members through Years 2024-2025 — promoting digital literacy and career development at scale, and supporting continuous professional upskilling on various Technical and soft skills tracks.

- **Academia Partnerships**: Collaborated with Universities to develop tech and cybersecurity talents.
- **Cyber Aware Culture Campaigns**: Launched a Regional Awareness campaign and webinar in Arabic on cyber-safe families in collaboration with CyberX.

- Conducted Hybrid Regional conferences, with **CTF (Capture The Flag)** female participation growing from 33% to over 60%.

2. Membership and Regional Reach

- Grown from 9 Cofounders in 2018 to nearly **3,000 active members** across **22 countries**, fostering one of the most influential women-in-cyber networks in the Middle East and beyond.

- More than 9 Affiliates (local WiCSME Chapters) are created to arrange and conduct members' local meetups and related activities.

3. Ecosystem Building & Global Alliances

- Launched the **Global Sisterhood Network**, collaborating with 18+ international women-in-cyber groups.
- This Global hub acts as a multi-country platform for sharing best practices, co-developing policy templates, and potentially establishing a "United Nations of Women in Cyber Civil Societies"—to replicate success models across continents.
- Delivered cross-border mentorship, skills exchange, and policy collaboration through strategic partnerships.

4. Expanded Global Visibility

WiCSME has launched impactful programs to empower women in cybersecurity, including strengthening women's representation in cybersecurity by forming Strategic long-term partnerships with global and regional conferences. Below are some examples of these partnerships:

- Global Women in Cyber Central hub: Our Global Sisterhood Network connects 18+ women in cybersecurity groups worldwide and supports collaborative capacity Building initiatives across the globe.
- Global CyberSecurity Women League: Collaborated with Wicked6 for 3 continuous years to enrich the Global CyberSecurity Women League (+23 Speakers from +10 Countries, Advisory board member, Cyber Competitions participants).
- Community Partnership with Global and Regional Leading CyberSecurity Conferences:
  - BlackHat MEA: Increased female speakers from 17 (+5 Countries) in 2022 (@Hack Executive Summit) to 18 (10 countries) in 2023 to 28 (+15 countries) in 2024, breaking global records in highest number of Female Speakers for 3 consecutive years.
  - GISEC & GITEX Conference: Featured 26 female speakers discussing cutting-edge topics from +10 Countries across long-term partnerships.
  - Organized across the region Women in Cyber networking events attended by key Nation's CyberSecurity leaders, reinforcing support for WiCSME's mission.
  - Signed new partnerships with conferences in Seven countries, leading to over 250 female Speakers at global forums in 2024.

5. Global Advocacy

WiCSME contributed to global cyber diplomacy by voicing regional priorities, advocating for inclusive cyber norms, and reinforcing the role of women in shaping international cybersecurity policy. Below are some examples to such contributions by WiCSME Leadership:

- WiCSME Chairperson Dr. Reem AlShammari represented WiCSME at the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group (UN OEWG) on the security of and in the use of ICTs.

- Irene Corpuz (Head of Governance and Strategy, WiCSME) represented WiCSME at GFCE (Global Forum on Cyber Expertise) Summits in Washington, D.C. and Geneva, actively contributing to global capacity-building discussions and highlighting WiCSME's tangible impact on diversity and inclusion in cybersecurity.
- Rising Stars and Younger Generations advocacy: WiCSME Chairperson Dr. Reem AlShammari contributed in Discussions to ITU Regional Arab Development Forums and ITU Girls in Tech Day Events.

6. Breaking Records & Celebrating Excellence (Annual Survey - 2024)

- Making history by securing the highest number of female speakers in various leading global cybersecurity events held in our region—surpassing other regions.
- 250+ female speakers took the stage in 2024, bringing regional expertise to the forefront of international cybersecurity conversations.
- +25 WiCSME members received numerous Global and Regional accolades in Year 2024 alone for example and not limited to:
  - World's Top 20 Women in Cyber Awards: Eight leaders from six Middle Eastern countries recognized globally forming strong presence of the Middle East (40% of the Top 20 Winners) from around the Globe.
  - GISEC Cyber Excellence Awards, ISC^2 Global Achievement Award, International Security Journal Influencer, CIO Middle East, CYSEC She Leads Awards..etc, where our WiCSME members are recognized for their outstanding Achievements and Stellar CyberSecurity leadership.
- Achieving Outstanding CyberSecurity Milestones:
  - Passing a Certification Exam: 38 members
  - Receiving a Promotion or better Opportunity: 23 members
  - Completing Academic Degrees: 19 members
  - Publishing Research papers or Books: 14 members

WiCSME continues to shift the cybersecurity narrative — from presence to purpose-driven impact. With representation at UN forums, global partnerships, and outcomes-based programs, it is driving inclusive transformation in the cyber ecosystem across the Middle East and beyond.

WiCSME's initiatives inspire women to lead and contribute to a more inclusive cybersecurity industry while showcasing Middle Eastern talent on the global stage.