

# Al Akhawayn Newsletter

November 2013

## Minister Declares Al Akhawayn National Capital of E-Learning



### Inside

Feature Story: Minister Declares Al Akhawayn National Capital of E-Learning p. 2

Al Akhawayn Hosts Second International Conference on the Muslim World p. 3

Al Akhawayn University to Offer New Degree Program in International Trade p. 4

Alumna Lamia Bazir Seeks to Improve Rural Living Conditions through Non-Profit Group p. 5-7

Al Akhawayn Alumni Association Hosts Job Fair for Students and Alumni p. 7

College Deans Discusses World Perspectives of STEM Education p. 8

Al Akhawayn President and Microsoft-Morocco CEO Inaugurate New Testing Center p. 9

Al Akhawayn Joins the European Union's Erasmus Mundus Program p. 10

Spotlights p. 11-14



## Minister Declares Al Akhawayn National Capital of E-Learning

**A**l Akhawayn University has been declared the “national capital of e-learning.” The declaration was made by Lahcen Daoudi, Moroccan Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Executive Training, during his opening remarks for a study day on e-learning held at the Al Akhawayn campus November 29, 2013. In addition, the minister also entrusted Al Akhawayn with the responsibility to develop and follow up e-learning implementation in the country.

The event, titled “E-Learning and Distance Education in Morocco: Current Status and Future Prospects,” gathered international experts on e-learning as well as faculty and staff from Al Akhawayn to discuss the challenges, trends, and resources of e-learning in the modern educational world.

Presenters contributed academic presentations during three distinct sessions, including “Practices of e-Learning in Education – Moroccan Experience,” “Practices of e-Learning in Higher Education – International Experiences,” and “Initiatives and Innovations in e-Learning Morocco – Private Initiatives.”

Beverly Leeds, Principal Lecturer and Lead Academic for e-Learning at Lancashire Business School in the UK, spoke on the current and future state of e-learning during her keynote address to the conference. Other notable foreign guests included Raimondo Sepe of UniNettuno in Italy, and Gianluca Elia and Alessandro Margherita of the University of Salento in Lecce, Italy.

The conference and announcement contributed significantly to the work Al Akhawayn has recently been undertaking in order to better develop e-learning on campus. In September, the university, in conjunction with the International Telematic University UniNettuno and PianoDam Training, signed a memorandum of understanding to create a new online educational endeavor, Telematic Mediterranean University (TMU).

The memorandum called for the parties to create a consortium in order to pool resources and utilize technology to disseminate e-learning and distance education programs in five languages – English, Arabic, Italian, French, and Spanish.

## Al Akhawayn Hosts Second International Conference on the Muslim World



Forty international guests, in addition to members of Al Akhawayn community, faculty, and students, took part in the Second Annual Conference on the Muslim World held October 31 - November 2, 2013, at the Al Akhawayn campus.

Sponsored in part by Al Akhawayn University, The Institute for Religion, Politics, and Culture (Program in Islamic, Turkish, and Near-Eastern Studies) at Washington College, and the non-profit Creative Learning of Washington, D.C., the conference strived to bring together academics of different backgrounds from around the world to join in the discussion of topics concerning the Muslim world.

“Actions like this are extremely important in bringing people together and bridging the gap between cultures,” said Cherif Bel Fekih, Vice President of Student Affairs at Al Akhawayn, during his opening remarks for the conference.

Under a theme of “Systematic Changes in the Muslim World” the first day featured sessions on “Transformations in the Muslim World,” “Foreign Policy Trends of Regional Hegemon,” and “Issues of Human Security and Social Justice,” as well as a keynote address on the topic of “Islam After the Arab Spring.” Key highlights of the second day included “Gender in Politics in the Muslim World,” “Political Ideas in the Muslim World,” and a round table on “The Muslim World’s Perception of Islamophobia.”

Participants represented schools such as Washington College, University of Delaware, McDaniel College, Harvard University, Grenoble Institute of Politics, The College of New Jersey, Commercial University of Tajikistan, American University in Cairo, Gadjah Mada University, University of Edinburgh, University of Oxford (St. Anthony’s College), Fatih University (Istanbul), and Marmara University (Istanbul).

In keeping with the global nature of the conference, Al Akhawayn University also made select sessions of the conference available for live streaming. In addition, the university encouraged participants and outside observers to engage with the conference on social media by using the hashtag #2ndICMW in their posts.



A video recap of the conference can be viewed [here](#).

## Al Akhawayn University to Offer New Degree Program in International Trade

**Master of Science in International Trade**  
Part time Program offered in Casablanca Branch

The Executive Education Center of Al Akhawayn University, in cooperation with the Confédération Générale des Entreprises du Maroc, the Korea International Cooperation Agency, and Ministère délégué auprès du Ministre de l'Industrie, du Commerce, de l'Investissement et de l'Economie Numérique, Chargé du Commerce Extérieur, is pleased to announce the acceptance of applications for the new Master of Science in International Trade degree program to commence in 2014.

This part-time program will be offered exclusively at the Executive Education Center of Al Akhawayn University located in the Casablanca Technopark. In addition to a set of foundation course, students will receive specialized training in international trade, business law, marketing, finance, project management, logistics, customs and tax laws, negotiations, and electronic commerce. Students will also benefit from integrated lectures by real-world professionals working in the field of international trade.

The degree was launched with the intention to impart upon students the necessary knowledge and skills in international trade needed to begin or advance a career within international companies, government departments and agencies, or international trade organizations.

The first application deadline for the program is December 6, 2013. Additional information about cost, curriculum, and application procedures can be found at [www.eec.ma](http://www.eec.ma). Interested parties may navigate questions to the Executive Education Center directly by telephone at 05 22 50 36 64 or email at [eec@aui.ma](mailto:eec@aui.ma).

## Alumna Lamia Bazir Seeks to Improve Rural Living Conditions through Non-Profit Group



Lamia Bazir is a graduate student at Columbia University. She is also a fellow of the American Association of University Women at Washington, D.C., and was a graduate student at Sciences Po Paris. More importantly, she is an Al Akhawayn University Alumnus and is glad to share this initiative with the community.

**Where did you get the idea for "Empowering Women in the Atlas"?**

The idea for "Empowering Women in the Atlas" (EWA) was inherent to my encounter with the population of the village. However, I would have never gone to that village if my professor Yossef Ben Meir did not take me there for a training session. So, I met the local population, facilitated the participatory methods for the women's section, and left. That could be it.

But how can you sit in people's homes, share their food and concerns, and just leave? When the women shared their problems with me, their problems became mine too. So, I left Adghagh, but there was something I took from them with me. A few months later, I went to Paris for an exchange program and still had the idea that

I should go back and do something.

**Why did you want to do a project in Morocco?**

Doing a project in Morocco is my duty as a Moroccan. Without inciting to a deresponsibilisation of the state, I reject the "wait and see" attitude. EWA is designed with the strong belief that all citizens should get engaged in the fight against poverty. I believe that every one of us has a potential that we need to optimize and mobilize for a greater cause.

As importantly, as a young Moroccan woman I would like to demonstrate that you don't need to be the daughter or wife of someone important to have an impact; you don't need to be sixty years old to start giving back to the community, and you don't

need to be a millionaire to incorporate social responsibility. It is something you can do on your own and all along the way.

Last but not least, this project is a personal commitment. I remember that I have addressed the AUI community during my graduation speech on June 16, 2012 saying :

"When you live 20 minutes away from people who still undergo the risk of freezing to death, and where women have to wait hours to give birth; indifference is not an option."

The village is located 20 minutes away from Al Akhawayn University. I have never been indifferent. Today, I am just associating actions to words.

**How long did it take to develop this project into reality?**

It was a cumulative process that took one year and a half. I founded this social resolution in March 2011. It first started as an idea I designed and presented at the World Model United Nations in Singapore, where I got the Resolution fellowship and the award for social entrepreneurship. Later on, I had the chance to find resourceful people namely Dr. Abdelkrim Marzouk and Si-Mohamed Bouia, cooperative local authorities mainly Si Lahcen Lhssioui, and the support of Al Akhawayn University students and community. For the first phase of the project, we had to build trust with the community, conduct a socioeconomic and demographic study, create a women's association, negotiate land donation, get an architectural plan and a technical study.

**How do you raise money for this venture?**

Fundraising is the phase 2 of the project. On October 17, 2013, I had the opportunity to present the work carried by EWA at the Resolve Gala organized at the Harvard Club in the City of New York. This Gala was attended by over 600 people from leading organizations in the business and non-profit sector, including the UN and the Rockefeller Foundation.

This Gala was the point of departure of our fund-raising. I am mostly raising funds in the United States. The High Atlas Foundation will assist me in transferring the collected funds from the U.S. to Morocco.

I will resort to mixed-tools. I aim to get individual donations but I am also targeting institutions in order to build lasting partnerships. I will also try to get funds from Moroccan donors.

**What is the first project you are working on?**

Actually, the first project of EWA consists of building a public bathhouse (Hammam) that will be managed by the women of the village. This project is multidimensional and aims at improving the sanitary, health, and psychological well-being of the whole community, while addressing gender inequality.

However, this project is not limited to building an infrastructure, but rather aims at reshaping the power and gender structure within the village. The project embraces the participatory approach to development. The local people are involved throughout the process from design to implementation and evaluation. So, the project also promotes responsibility and leadership. It carries a political message and incentivizes citizens' involvement in the management of the public good.

**Why did you choose this project and location?**

The project of a public bathhouse was not imposed from the outside, it was actually suggested by the women when I first met them. I have listened to this suggestion and tried to mobilize my theoretical background and connections to concretize their ideas.

Indeed, the absence of water availability and heating systems in homes combined with harsh climatic conditions prevents the population from having basic and regular cleaning. In some instances, women had to leave their children without cleaning, up to one month.

Personally, I think that the Hammam can be an impactful project. It is grounded in the Moroccan cultural landscape and

is very inclusive. It will benefit all the community men, women, and children, thereby making the women's empowerment element more acceptable.

**What challenges, if any, are there to completing this project?**

There were, are, and will be challenges. The most important challenge I have faced was management. First of all, I was in Paris last year and could not be continuously in the field. I coordinated with student volunteers, but I did not have a "carrot and stick" mechanism, to reward them. In addition, we were at the first phase of the project and they could not see concrete outcomes. Consequently, motivation diluted and people did not always stick to their commitment.

I completely take responsibility for this challenge that I consider a personal failure. However, failures can be constructive. So, for the phase 3 of the project, I will delegate several tasks to the community service department so that the students involved count their involvement as the required social work. I will also build a partnership with the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University to have students work for us as a client, in the framework of their capstones in later phases of the project.

Concerning the current challenges, I have the tendency to centralize and work independently. I am trying to change that for fundraising. So, I will solicit the assistance of the Resolution project, as well as volunteers and professors from Columbia University.

**What do you wish you would have known before undertaking this project?**

This project was meant to be.

So, sometimes, it is good not to know everything beforehand.

**What would you like to see happen in the future for "Empowering Women in the Atlas"?**

I have a long term vision. Once we build the Hammam, I hope EWA can scale up, tackle other issues, and build new infrastructures. As far as the organization is concerned, I am still thinking about what institutional framework to adopt. I don't like dispersion of energy and resources, so I might not create an EWA foundation as such. I might rather integrate EWA within an existing institution such as the High Atlas Foundation, for instance.

**Were the skills you learned at AUI applicable to starting "Empowering Women in the Atlas"?**

Absolutely! "Empowering Women in the Atlas" is a multifaceted endeavor, it really sets fertile ground for the application of

almost all skills and knowledge I have learned in my life: from communication, to anthropology, political science, research methods, statistics and even accounting, I have also mobilized a lot of theories for this project namely feminism, subaltern, and post-colonial studies. But most importantly, I think that Al Akhawayn University ingrained or rather reinforced in me the sense of citizenship and social responsibility.

**What advice would you give to students wanting to undertake a similar project?**

Well, the first piece of advice is: do not undertake a similar project until you are sure you can commit. This project entails a long-term commitment i.e. the disposition to work for years if necessary. Second, gather resourceful people. It is essential to have a complementary team, but also people who have experience and contacts on

the ground. Third: be modest; the local people know much more when it comes to their environment, problems, and needs, so listen to them. Last but not least, approach any endeavor you undertake with confidence and spirituality.

**How can members of the AUI community contribute to this project?**

First of all, I would like to thank Al Akhawayn University and the community for their support so far. As stated above, I hope to partner with the community service department for the phase 3 of the project. As soon as I gather the funds, I hope to get a team of students from this department to assist the women and men of the village in the building process (contact building company, construction, follow up). I also hope to get a symbolic financial donation from Al Akhawayn.

## Al Akhawayn Alumni Association Hosts Job Fair for Students and Alumni



Students and alumni of Al Akhawayn University had the opportunity to meet with representatives from major companies during the 10th edition of the Job Fair hosted by the Al Akhawayn Alumni Association on November 1, 2013, in Casablanca.

Organized under the theme of "Making Leadership Your Competitive Advantage," the fair saw the participation of roughly 150 students and alumni, and more than 20 companies.

The Job Fair allowed students and alumni to meet with representatives from the various companies in order to enlarge their professional network and obtain information about — and possibly secure — jobs or internships.

In addition, the Job Fair coincides with a stated goal of the Alumni Association to increase the promotion and development of Al Akhawayn University.

The following companies were present at the Job Fair:

\* Roche \* Unilever \* Banque Marocaine pour le Commerce et l'Industrie \* CTM \* Vigeo \* CEED \* Crédit Agricole du Maroc \* Injaz Al Maghrib \* Japan Tobacco International \* International Duty Free Shops \* L'Oréal \* Dell \* Aide & Action \* Zakoura Foundation \* Agence de Développement Social \* Stagiaires \* Careers In Morocco \* EEC \* Prêt à l'emploi \* The White Studio \* Pride Canada Holding \* Moroccan Express

## College Dean Discusses World Perspectives of STEM Education



The teaching of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) topics worldwide was the topic researched and presented on by Dr. James Riehl, Dean of the Swenson College of Science and Engineering at the University of Minnesota – Duluth, during an informative lecture held on November 7, 2013, at the Al Akhawayn University campus.

Riehl presented the findings of study he had conducted about a year ago when he received a grant from the 3M Corporation to travel the world and learn about why young people choose to study science and engineering.

Employed as an academic dean for 14 years, Riehl said his position caused him to worry about the state of engineering education in his own country and abroad, which led to his interest in re-

searching how STEM topics were taught. Using his grant money, Riehl visited Poland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Finland, Turkey, India, China, Japan, and Brazil, spending two or so weeks in each country collecting data.

In conducting his research, Riehl used his network of colleagues at universities worldwide to interview parents, students, government officials, and academic officials about why they studied these fields and how they prepared students. Based on his research, his ultimate goal was to relate his findings to the United States and come up with program policy changes that may be of benefit.

“I went out on the study thinking the U.S. was in big trouble, and came home thinking we’re not in such big trouble,” said Riehl. “I did

learn that I think we can improve our secondary schools. We can make them a little more challenging to students so that they come to university better prepared to be successful and not to fail.”

Riehl holds a B.S. degree in Chemistry from Villanova University and a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry from Purdue University. He was appointed to his current position as Dean of the College of Science and Engineering and Professor of Chemistry at the University of Minnesota – Duluth in 2000. He has also held visiting faculty positions at Kings College, London, and the University of Leiden, The Netherlands. In addition, Riehl has been awarded the University of Minnesota McKnight Presidential Leadership Chair.

## Al Akhawayn President and Microsoft-Morocco CEO Inaugurate New Testing Center



Students, faculty, and staff will now have the ability to obtain Microsoft computer technologies certifications via an online testing center at the university.

President Driss Ouaouicha and Microsoft-Morocco CEO Samir Benmakhoulou formally inaugurated the CLT Lab in building 4 as a testing center for the Microsoft IT Academy Program on November 22, 2013.

“Akhawayn for me is the future,” said Benmakhoulou during remarks earlier in the day. “Akhawayn is preparing not only people who will be working for tomorrow, but who will be working for the future of this country, and we definitely need to be working close together to make things happen.”

Prior to the inauguration, Benmakhoulou drew an overall picture of the importance technology will play in the future, even for those not specifically studying computer science or other technology related fields.

“Technology today is in everyone’s life. It’s estimated that in 10 years, 80 percent of the jobs out there will require deep technology know-how,” said Benmakhoulou.

He went on to describe how certifications will be a crucial component of future employability in an employment landscape where everyone’s CV features a college degree. Benmakhoulou explained how certifications offered at the testing center are a good way to differentiate yourself in a pool of applicants and prove that you

have depth knowledge of a subject.

The inauguration was part of a larger visit in which Benmakhoulou and his team presented to the president and selected faculty members on major technology trends in education, Microsoft Office 365, using “cloud” computing for education, and current technological devices for education. In addition, Benmakhoulou also conducted a workshop on Office 365 for students at Al Akhawayn University.

# Al Akhawayn Joins the European Union's Erasmus Mundus Program



As the result of a meeting that took place on November 11-12, 2013, at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Spain, Al Akhawayn University is now formally a partner of the Erasmus Mundus Program, an educational program of the European Union that aims at enhancing educational cooperation between Europe and the rest of the world.

Under the auspice of the Erasmus Mundus program, Al Akhawayn University will participate in a project entitled University Network of Business and Administration (UNetBA) that will involve the mobility of students, staff, and researchers between European and North African universities.

With a total budget of more than 4 million euros, the project will enable the mobility of 234 North African nationals associated at various university levels (undergraduate, master's, doctoral, post-doc, and staff) to EU universities and 20 European post-doc academics and staff members to the North African region over a period of three years. The UNetBA Project will focus on business and administration in its first year, with the possibility to include other areas in the following two years.

The consortium of this project is composed of the following universities:

#### European Union

- University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain
- Université Montesquieu-Bordeaux IV, France
- Universidade do Porto, Portugal
- Universitat de les Illes Balears, Spain
- The Business School of Huddersfield, United Kingdom

#### North Africa

- Université 8 mai 1945 Guelma, Algeria
- University Abderahmane Mira of Béjaïa, Algeria
- Alexandria University, Egypt
- Cairo University, Egypt
- Port Said University, Egypt
- Suez Canal University, Egypt
- University of Benghazi, Libya
- Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco
- University Ibn Zohr-National School of Business and Management, Morocco
- University of Hassan II Mohammedia – Casablanca, Morocco
- Gabes University, Tunisia
- University of Sfax, Tunisia
- University of Sousse, Tunisia

#### Associate Partners

- AEGEE-Europe/European Students' Forum, Belgium
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Spain

Students interested in applying can visit the UNetBA page at [www.unetba.ulpgc.es/how\\_to\\_apply](http://www.unetba.ulpgc.es/how_to_apply)

## Spotlights

The process of drug smuggling as a strategy of socialization with the local Sahel population is the topic of a new journal chapter published by **Djallil Lounnas**, Assistant Professor of International Studies at Al Akhawayn University.

In his chapter "Al Qaida au Maghreb Islamique et le Trafic de Drogue au Sahel" published in the fall/winter edition of the journal *Maghreb Machrek*, Lounnas examines how Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) was able to implement itself in the Sahel region through a strategy of socialization with the local population that included being involved in drug smuggling.

Additionally, Lounnas explores the reasons that allowed AQIM to proceed with such tactics, such as local corruption and the extreme poverty of the local population, as well as the opposition AQIM faced internally in regards to this practice.

Citation:

Lounnas, Djallil. «Al Qaida Au Maghreb Islamique et le Trafic de Drogue au Sahel.» *Maghreb Machrek* 216 (2013).

**Christopher Longhurst**, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Al Akhawayn University, published an article titled "Palestrina's Outworking of Sacred Music – Divine Infinity and Omnipotence in the Sounds and Silences of Missa Papae Marcelli" in the November/December 2013 issue of *The Catholic Response*, which reflects on the theological significances of sacred music with reference to Giovanna Pierluigi da Palestrina's masterpiece *Missa Papae Marcelli* (Pope Marcellus Mass).

In the article, Longhurst states that the piece is "considered by many to be the purest and most sublime example of what sacred music should be," and then presents an analysis supporting the significance of the work.

Citation:

Longhurst, C.E. "Palestrina's Outworking of Sacred Music – Divine Infinity and Omnipotence in the Sounds and Silences of Missa Papae Marcelli." *The Catholic Response*, X, 3 (November/December 2013).

**Karim Moustaghfir**, Associate Professor of Human Resource Development at Al Akhawayn University, recently participated in the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) Senate and Management Board Meetings and the 4th Higher Education & Research Conference held in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, November 21-23.

As part of the conference, Moustaghfir presented a working document and chaired the workshop on "Study Programs, Professional Upgrading Study Programs and Summer Schools in the Euro-Mediterranean Region: Trends, Challenges and Perspectives."

In addition, Moustaghfir also represented Al Akhawayn University in the general assembly meeting that gathered more than 70 delegates from different Euro-Mediterranean countries.

Additional information on the conference and EMUNI can be found at [www.emuni.si/en](http://www.emuni.si/en).

Branding a university can be challenging in general, but rebranding an American-style liberal arts university in the MENA region provides a specific set of unique challenges to overcome.

Addressing this topic, **Amina Lahbabi**, Assistant Director of Development and Communication at Al Akhawayn University, presented her paper "Refreshing the Brand of an American-style Liberal Arts University in the Middle East and North Africa Region: What Works?" during the American Marketing Association's 2013 Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education held Nov. 10-13 in Boston, Mass.

In her presentation, Lahbabi explained to the audience how after 14 years without a cohesive communications plan, Al Akhawayn University was able to develop a branding strategy and create an integrated marketing approach to its communications model.

To read the abstract, [click here](#).

**Nicolas Hamelin**, Assistant Professor of Marketing and Management in the School of Business Administration at Al Akhawayn University, recently presented his paper "Funding Efficient Entrepreneurship Education Training: Building away from the colonial past" during the annual conference of the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Nov. 12-13 in Cardiff, Wales, UK.

In the paper, Hamelin surveyed the attitudes and beliefs of business and management students from Morocco, the United States, Canada, and China. The results suggested that the Moroccan students regarded certain business principles differently than their non-colonial peers and allowed Hamelin to draw a possible link between educational systems and entrepreneurship spirit.

**Khalid Sendide**, Associate Professor of Molecular Biotechnology at Al Akhawayn University, Abdelkrim Ouardaoui, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Al Akhawayn University, and Jaouad Anissi, PhD student at Université Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah, recently published the paper "A comparative study of the antioxidant scavenging activity of green tea, black tea and coffee extracts: A kinetic approach" in the prestigious Elsevier journal Food Chemistry. The paper is the result of four years of research work conducted at the AUI biotechnology laboratory, and was funded by the seed money research grant. The paper can be accessed through Science Direct or by contacting the authors.

Mysticism in the 21st Century is the topic and title of a new publication by **Connell Monette**, Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs at Al Akhawayn University.

In the book, Monette explores five contemporary spiritual movements – Hermeticism, Paganism, Sufism, Tantra, and Yoga – in an attempt to understand each movement's system or path toward a personal experience of the divine presence.

Citation:  
Connell Monette. *Mysticism in the 21st Century*. Wilsonville: Sirius Academic Press, 2013.

Members of the **Mimouna Club** recently represented Al Akhawayn University at the 10th edition of the "Festival des Andalalousies Atlantiques" that took place in Essaouira, Morocco, from October 31 to November 3, 2013. H.E. André Azoulay, Senior Adviser to King Mohammed VI, publically welcomed and introduced the Mimouna Club of Al Akhawayn University. In addition, H.E. Rachid Ben Mokhtar, Minister of Education and former President of Al Akhawayn University, honored their mission in Morocco with a tribute to the club's cultural and interreligious significances. Attendees of the event included:

Mohamed Reda Ayadi (Executive President)  
Sarah Benomar (Executive Secretary)  
Ihab El Alami (Executive Treasurer)  
Hamza Benlarabi (Member)  
Nikki Haley (Member)  
Dalal Rachid (Member)  
Wissal Elhachimi (Member)  
Eunsil Park (Member)  
Dr. Christopher Longhurst (Advisor)

Additional information about the event can be found at:  
<http://www.dimabladna.ma/images/stories/presse/2013/Novembre/08lemusulman.jpg>

Al Akhawayn Assistant Professor of Philosophy **Christopher Longhurst** participated in the Eurasian Multi-disciplinary Forum (EMF) 2013 at Tbilisi, Georgia, on October 24-26, 2013. The EMF was remarkable not only for its depth of scientific research but also for its broad range of academic topics. Longhurst introduced his research on Islamic cosmogony and chaired one of the 16 panel sessions.

Organized by European Scientific Institute, Grigol Robakidze University, and The University of the Azores, Portugal, the aim of the forum was to increase the internationalization of scientific discovery by uniting academics to present publications from all academic areas in an interdisciplinary setting. 36 countries participated. Longhurst was the only participant from Al Akhawayn and Morocco.

Al Akhawayn Assistant Professor of Media and Communication **Bouziane Zaid** presented his research on "Online Freedom in Morocco" at the 8th Internet Governance Forum (IGF) held in Bali, Indonesia, on October 22-25, 2013. The IGF is the United Nation's flagship conference for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on global Internet policy. Zaid participated as a member of the Freedom House delegation.

At the conclusion of the conference, participants drafted a joint statement that highlighted concerns and provided recommendations on how to best protect Internet freedom. The joint statement can be viewed in its entirety at:

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/article/joint-statement-civil-society-delegates-2013-internet-governance-forum>

**Ahmed Driouchi**, Professor of Economics and Dean of the Institute of Economic Analysis & Prospective Studies at Al Akhawayn University, has recently completed the editing of two new books set for publication in 2013 and 2014 respectively.

The first book, *Labor and Health Economics in the Mediterranean Region: Migration and Mobility of Medical Doctors*, is set to be released early November 2013. According to the text, issues discussed include “the mobility of physicians in the Mediterranean region within a global context, focusing on the role mobility has played in the global health system in both developed and developing economies.” More information can be found at: <http://www.igi-global.com/book/labor-health-economics-mediterranean-region/78250>

The second book, *Knowledge-Based-Economic Policy Development in the Arab World*, is set to be released in February 2014. The text “focuses on knowledge economy as the most important engine for economic growth and development under the globalizing world economies,” according to its page. More information can be found at: <http://www.igi-global.com/book/knowledge-based-economic-policy-development/90653>

