



Masood M. Sharif Mahmood, CEO of Yahsat ●●●

Al Yah Satellite Communications Company (Yahsat) was established in 2007 and is fully-owned by Mubadala, the Abu Dhabi government's investment arm. With a range of multi-purpose services, Yahsat provides government and commercial broadband, broadcast, military, and communications satellite solutions to more than 140 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Central and Southwest Asia. Its first satellite, Y1A, was launched in 2011, and was quickly followed by Y1B in 2012. Its third satellite, Ah Yah 3, is due for launch in the first quarter of 2017.

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Question: Yahsat has been in operation for nine years now. Can you tell us about the company's development and key achievements during that time?

Masood M. Sharif Mahmood: Yahsat was established in 2007 and in just nine years of being operational, we have become the world's seventh-largest satellite operator in terms of revenue.

Our satellites, Y1A, launched in April 2011 and Y1B, launched in April 2012, serve more than 140 countries.

We provide multipurpose satellite solutions (government and commercial) for broadband, broadcast, and communications use across the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Central and Southwest Asia. Our satellite broadband service, YahClick, offers state-of-the-art satellite technology to send and receive high-speed broadband internet signals in 28 markets. With the launch of Al Yah 3 in 2017, this coverage will be extended to an additional 19 countries in Africa and also in Brazil.

We are also working on some innovative projects with our partners. For instance, last year we announced our plan to test high-speed Ka-band in-flight satellite connectivity using an Etihad Airbus 320. This would provide Etihad Airways and its customers with high-speed in-flight broadband, allowing them to stream movies and enjoy video conferencing.

Question: What is your assessment of the current status of the satellite industry? What trends, challenges and opportunities do you see?

Masood M. Sharif Mahmood: Satellite communication is one of the foundations of the modern global communications eco-system. It



Yahsat offers a range of multi-purpose services including government, commercial broadband, broadcast, military and communications ●●●



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connects individuals, businesses, and governments, enabling them to exchange information and facilitate socio-economic development. Today, it is becoming increasingly clear that reliance on satellites will remain at the core of communications networks. As with the home, where the WiFi router is so important, satellites play a major role in the wider communications infrastructure.

In terms of opportunities, satellite broadband is becoming popular and is now posing more competition for terrestrial internet providers as satellite services are getting easier to set up and offer significantly more reliable services. Additionally, satellite broadband can provide connectivity to users in underserved and unserved areas because it does not require heavy on-the-ground infrastructural investment and is not impacted by landscape limitations such as mountainous terrain.

Question: Where does Yahsat see itself in the local and global markets, and how has this changed in recent years?

Masood M. Sharif Mahmood: The UAE is pursuing its 2021 Vision, which aims to place innovation, research, science and technology at the centre of the economy. Yahsat is at the cutting edge of the UAE's space ambitions with existing infrastructure in space, and plans to continue to expand it.

In a short period, Yahsat has significantly grown its operations and launched two satellites, with a third set to be launched in Q1 of 2017. We strive to deliver multi-purpose satellite services that include satellite internet, managed solutions, government capacity, IP trunking solutions, and broadcast solutions. We are a technology enabler that facilitates regional and global development by connecting individuals and businesses across different continents.

One of our key priorities is to provide users in underserved and unserved areas with reliable and affordable high-speed satellite broadband. Our YahClick service has been pioneering Ka-band technology from inception and its coverage spans the globe across Asia, Africa and the Middle East. This cutting edge technology allows customers to access high speed broadband services through small receiver dishes.

Question: Can you provide an overview of AI Yah 3's progress to date, from the planning stage to where you are today? Have there been any significant challenges to resolve?

Masood M. Sharif Mahmood: AI Yah 3, which is based on Orbital ATK's GEOSTAR-3™ platform, is an all Ka-band high throughput satellite (HTS) which is being designed, manufactured and tested at Orbital ATK's satellite manufacturing facility in Dulles, Virginia.

In November 2015, we announced significant development in preparation to launch the AI Yah 3 satellite, with the delivery of the centre cylinder to the spacecraft manufacturer, Orbital ATK. This component is the core of the spacecraft, providing the anchor for the integration of the entire spacecraft structure. The cylinder also houses the fuel and oxidiser tanks required by the chemical propulsion subsystem, and provides the support for several other spacecraft modules.

We are currently on track and expect to launch the satellite in Q1 of 2017.

Question: With the launch of AI Yah 3, Yahsat will expand its coverage to Brazil and 19 new markets in Africa. Has the company made any deals yet for satellite capacity in those new regions?

Masood M. Sharif Mahmood: In March 2016, we were awarded a license to operate in Brazil by the National Telecommunications Agency, ANATEL. This is a significant milestone for us and affirms our commitment to developing the Brazilian satellite industry and the broadband market. Yahsat views Brazil as one of its key markets globally and

has made substantial investments to date in the country, including dedicated in-country gateways.

AI Yah 3 will reach over 95 percent of Brazil's population, across more than 5,000 municipalities, offering high-speed, affordable broadband satellite internet services to the Brazilian market, as well as economic, high data rate backhaul links for telecommunications operators and service providers.

Additionally, we have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore the possibility of new joint opportunities with our existing partner, IEC Telecom Group (IEC Telecom), in Africa. The launch of AI Yah 3 will see the entry of our satellite broadband product, YahClick, into 19 new African markets, almost tripling its existing presence across the continent covering 60 percent of Africa's population.

Question: Aside from the launch of AI Yah 3, what are Yahsat's plans for the rest of 2016 and 2017, and beyond?

Masood M. Sharif Mahmood: We have grown our operations significantly in a short span of time; we believe that we have the leadership and the vision to become one of the top five satellite operators around the world. Our global reach that covers three continents and over 600 million people will double with the launch of AI Yah 3 next year.

As part of the UAE's wider space and satellite ambitions, we also work closely with the UAE government, Space Agency and industry players. Collaboratively, we are constantly working towards new innovations and expanding the UAE's role in this field.

