

ARAC

ARAB ACCREDITATION COOPERATION

الجهاز العربي للاعتماد



Delivering Confidence
in the Quality Infrastructure
of the ARAB Region

Message from the Chair



Mrs Amina Ahmad
ARAC Chair

The Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC) is the regional cooperation among accreditation bodies in the Arab region, which **coordinates and develops the accreditation infrastructure** with the aim of being **internationally recognized**. Through the ARAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangements (MLA), ARAC facilitates the **acceptance of the results of conformity assessment services** in one country by Regulators and the market place in another country without further examination, for the benefit of the Arab community and the global economy.

ARAC was established by the Ministerial Council Resolution of the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO) in June 2008. Following the 95th Ministerial Economic and Social Council meeting of the League of Arab States (LAS), held on 19th February 2015 in LAS headquarters, Cairo, Egypt, the Ministerial Economic and Social Council has recognized ARAC as **one of the main pillars of the Pan Arab quality infrastructure** in supporting intra-regional trade and the Arab Customs Union requirements.

Since October 2017, the ARAC MLA is internationally recognized by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

The current membership includes **21 members** covering **19 Arab countries**:

- Algeria
- Bahrain
- Egypt
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Oman
- Palestine
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Tunisia
- United Arab Emirates
- Yemen



ARAC safeguards internationally the value and credibility of accreditation delivered by ARAC members and services provided by accredited conformity assessment bodies within the Arab market, supporting Arab countries to facilitate trade, enhance health & safety, protect the environment and provide consumer protection.



ARAC Secretariat
Rue Al Khatawat. Rabat, Morocco
Phone: +212 600 78 5678
E-mail: secretariat@arabarac.org
www.arab-accreditation.org

https://www.facebook.com/ARAC_Official-312969329256872

https://twitter.com/ARAC_Official

https://www.instagram.com/arac_official



ARAC Main Objectives

The main objectives of ARAC are depicted below:



All countries, and all market sectors, have seen an increase in the number of technical regulations, standards, testing and certification procedures. Generally, these are introduced to meet the requirements of quality and safety that consumers, businesses and regulators demand of goods and services. The increasing number of specified standards has seen a corresponding growth in the number of organizations providing third-party evaluation of conformity and compliance with these standards.

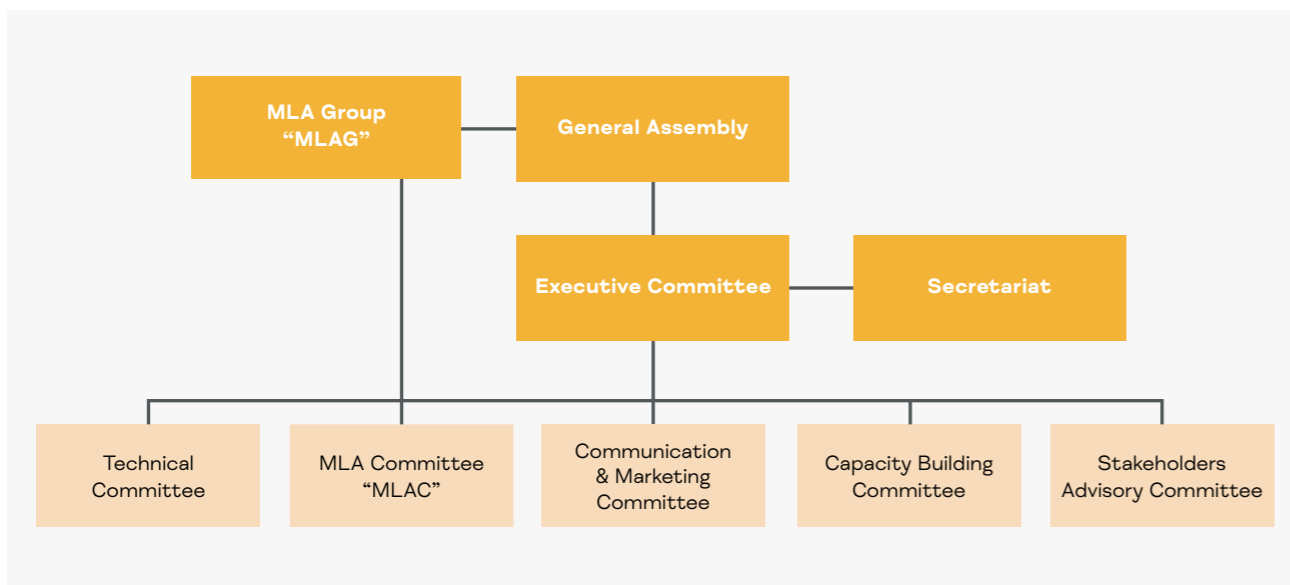
The accreditation process determines the competence, impartiality and consistent operations of organizations that offer conformity assessment activities. Accreditation operates in the public interest across all market sectors, providing a transparent assessment of these services, against internationally recognized standards and other national or sectorial requirements.



ARAC Structure

The organizational structure of ARAC currently includes a **General Assembly**, an **Executive Committee**, **Secretariat**, **Technical Committee**, **MLA Committee**, **Communication & Marketing Committee**, **Capacity Building Committee** and **Stakeholders Committee**.

There are also working groups that are assembled on demand like the **Mapping Group** that was assembled for the purpose of mapping the regional countries to provide roadmaps for their accreditation system development.



General Assembly (GA)

The ARAC GA is the highest authority of ARAC. It is comprised of **all ARAC members**.

Executive Committee (EC)

The Executive Committee consists of ARAC Chair, ARAC Committees Chairs, ARAC vice Chair, the representatives from ARAC full members and one member from ARAC associate members, who will be elected by their representatives. Except full member representatives, EC positions are elected by GA for a three-year term renewable one time, while ensuring balanced representation of members and benefit from the expertise available at the organizational and technical level.

The ARAC Executive committee members are as following: **Mrs Amina Ahmad (EIAC)**, **Mr Moteb Mezani (GAC)**, **Mrs Lana Marashdah (JAS)**, **Mr Mohamed Abdelmotagali (EIAC)**, **Mr Brahim Houla (GAC)**, **Mr Hany El Desouki (EGAC)**, **Mr Adel Alkeaid (SAAC)** and **Mrs Maasouma Akbar (KAAS)**.



ARAC CHAIR
Mrs Amina Ahmad

The main functions of the Chair is to represent ARAC in the Arab, regional and international community and supervise furtherance of the objectives, aims and tasks of ARAC, and oversee the implementation of ARAC policy and management.



ARAC VICE CHAIR
Mr Moteb Mezani

The main function of the Vice Chair is to represent the chair and help in developing and formulating initiatives that support the accomplishment of ARAC objectives and strategies.



ARAC SECRETARIAT
Mr Moslem Barrak

The main responsibility of the ARAC Secretariat is to coordinate with ARAC members and follow up the implementation of resolutions and maintain the system of ARAC documents and records.



MLA COMMITTEE
Mrs Lana Marashdah

The MLA Committee main objectives are:

- to implement and maintain policies and operational procedures of the ARAC MLA
- to identify specific needs for development and continual improvement of ARAC MLA.



TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
Mr Mohammad Abdelmotagaly

The ARAC Technical Committee is the forum for the discussions of all matters related to the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies.



CMC COMMITTEE
Mr Brahim Houla

The ARAC CMC main objective is to provide support to the development of ARAC's activities in all issues related to promotion, capacity building and internal and external communications.



ARAC Membership Categories

The **membership** is divided into four categories and defines their rights and obligations under the ARAC implementing regulations, as set out below.

FULL MEMBER

All third party accreditation bodies, legally established and operating in the nations or bloc of nations in the Arab region and that have been accepted as ARAC Multi-lateral Recognition Arrangement MLA signatories.

STAKEHOLDER MEMBER

International, regional and national organizations having an interest in the work of ARAC and include bodies such as associations of Conformity assessment bodies, purchasing organisations, regulatory authorities, consumer associations and trade organisations and having a significant membership from the Arab region economies and actively present in the Arab social and economic context. Stakeholder Members are not eligible to apply to become signatories to the ARAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Accreditation Bodies that provide, or are building their capacity to provide, accreditation of conformity assessment bodies in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011.

AFFILIATE MEMBER

Non-Arab accreditation bodies which are committed to operate according to the requirements of ISO/IEC standards, guides and the relevant international documents of IAF and ILAC.



ARAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA)

The ARAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) is a signed agreement between the ARAC full members whereby the signatories **recognize and accept the equivalence of the accreditation systems operated by the signing**

members, and also the reliability of the conformity assessment results provided by conformity assessment bodies accredited by the signing members.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE ARAC MLA





In December 2012, ARAC has been accepted by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) as Regional Cooperation Body and in September 2013 as an International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Special Recognition Organization - Regional Accreditation Group Member.

In October 2017, **the ARAC MLA is internationally recognized by ILAC and IAF.** Following this decision, the regional accreditation cooperation ARAC MLA became internationally recognized in the accreditation scopes listed below.






Signing Ceremony ARAC ILAC and IAF (Vancouver, Canada, ILAC IAF General Assembly 2017)

International recognition of the ARAC MLA by ILAC

-  Accreditation of testing laboratories according to the international standard ISO/IEC 17025
-  Accreditation of calibration laboratories according to the international standard ISO/IEC 17025
-  Accreditation of medical testing laboratories according to the international standard ISO 15189
-  Accreditation of inspection bodies according to the international standard ISO/IEC 17020

International recognition of the ARAC MLA by IAF

-  Accreditation of Quality Management Systems (QMS) certification bodies according to the international standard ISO/IEC 17021-1
-  Accreditation of Environmental Management Systems (EMS) certification bodies according to the international standard ISO/IEC 17021-1
-  Accreditation of Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) certification bodies according to the international standards ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO/TS 22003

As a result of this great achievement, the ARAC MLA Signatories members are systematically




ILAC is the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation for laboratories, inspection, proficiency testing providers and reference material producers' accreditation bodies, formed more than 40 years ago to help remove technical barriers to trade.



IAF is the world association of Conformity Assessment Accreditation Bodies and other bodies interested in conformity assessment in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel, validation & verification and other similar programmes of conformity assessment.

internationally recognised by IAF and ILAC based on their recognition by ARAC MLA.

 Based on the international recognition of the ARAC MLA, the reports or certificates accredited by an ARAC MLA signatory are also recognized by the signatories to the ILAC and IAF MRA & MLA agreements. As a result, the ARAC MLA acts as an international passport to trade.



ARAC MLA Signatories

Among 19 ARAC members, 5 are ARAC MLA signatories:



The ARAC MLA covers the accreditation of:

- Quality Management Systems (QMS) Certification bodies
- Environmental Management Systems (EMS) certification bodies
- Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) certification bodies
- Product certification bodies
- Testing laboratories
- Medical testing laboratories
- Calibration laboratories
- Inspection bodies

Regional Cooperation

ARAC has signed technical cooperation agreements and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with the majority of the recognized regional

cooperation bodies operating at international level, and work in close cooperation with the remaining ones.

APAC In the margin of the ILAC and IAF General Assembly in Seoul, Korea, ARAC and Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) signed a MoU on 24th October 2013 that is continued with APAC.

AFRAC ARAC and African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) signed a technical cooperation agreement on 25th March 2013 in the margin of the first ARAC International conference held in Marrakech, Morocco.

EA In the margin of the 3rd ARAC General Assembly held on 22nd May 2014 in Dubai, UAE, a MoU between ARAC and European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA), the Regional Group of national accreditation bodies in Europe, has been signed by the two organization's Chairs.

IAAC During the ARAC regional workshop, organized in Amman, Jordan, in the days 17 -18 June 2012, the ARAC and the Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) signed a technical cooperation agreement.



Who Benefits from the ARAC MLA?

Governments and regulators

The ARAC MLA provides a framework that allows Governments to rely on data from accredited organizations in other countries. Accreditation minimizes risk as decisions can be based on reliable certificates or reports and there can be greater confidence in the data being used to establish baselines for monitoring and enforcement.



Industry and the Business Community

Businesses can differentiate their services by providing evidence of technical competence, impartiality and compliance with international requirements within their supply chain.



ARAC MLA



Consumers

Accreditation can impact positively on all aspects of our daily life from the safety of the products we buy to the quality of the environment we live in. The accreditation of testing, inspection and certification ensures that these activities are carried out by competent organizations.



Health and Safety of the Public

Accreditation plays an important part in the health, safety and well-being of the public. Assurance that the test reports are reliable, that it conforms to the requirements of the specific test, is supported by accreditation.



Background on the AIDSMO-UNIDO-SIDA Project

In response to a request from the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO) and with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the United Nations Industrial

Development Organization (UNIDO) developed a **technical support program** to support AIDSMO in the implementation of the Regional Quality Infrastructure Strategy targeting the regional cooperation in accreditation as the main focus.



The project aimed at achieving **regional integration, harmonization and effective coordination in the quality infrastructure** ensuring compliance with international trade rules and regulations, through the establishment and/or strengthening existing regional support of standardization, conformity assessment and accreditation in order to achieve **international levels of quality** for Arab products and services.

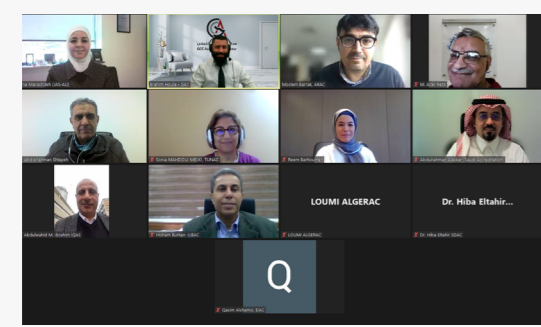
As a result of intensive and thorough work of ARAC members, supported by UNIDO, AIDSMO and SIDA during the phase one of the project ("Support the implementation of the regional Arab Standardization Strategy with focus on the regional coordination on accreditation", implemented from 2011 to 2016), ARAC MLA became **internationally recognized by ILAC and IAF**.





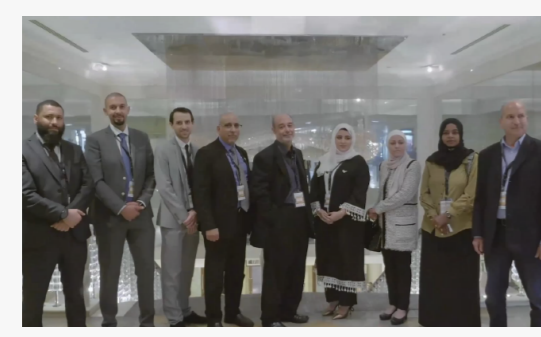
The second phase of the project started in June 2018 for a duration of 24 months:

- ensuring that ARAC, as a regional cooperation body, is legally incorporated, technically and financially sustainable and internationally recognized.
- supporting up to 4 ARAC members to become ARAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) signatories.



Building on successful achievements of phase I and II of the project, ARAC with its partners agreed to strengthen support to ARAC and its Member States until 2023 with the aim of building ARAC / Member States capacities and achieving ARAC sustainability and effectiveness while maintaining

and extending the MLA internationally recognized. The project is also expanding and now targets the entire accreditation value chain in the Arab region through direct support to Accreditation Bodies (ABs), Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) and Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs).





الجهاز العربي للاعتماد
ARAB ACCREDITATION COOPERATION

ARAC Secretariat

Rue Al Khatawat. Rabat, Morocco

Phone: +212 600 78 5678

E-mail: secretariat@arabarac.org

www.arab-accreditation.org



https://www.facebook.com/ARAC_Official-312969329256872



https://twitter.com/ARAC_Official



https://www.instagram.com/arac_official

