

Global experts discuss cybercrime pandemic at Annual Research Conference

First time QF R&D puts cybersecurity on the agenda

Doha, 16 November 2013 – The Qatar Foundation Annual Research Conference (ARC '13) will bring together distinguished researchers and experts to discuss the growing dependence on computing and networking technologies by the world's economies, and the unprecedented security concerns and risk this has to a nation's cyber infrastructure. For the first time at the annual conference, organised by Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D), cyber security as a large-scale research challenge will be addressed in-depth through discussions and debates on risks, emerging threats and opportunities.

Cybersecurity is an increasingly important issue with cybercrime costing the global economy billions of dollars annually, and experts agree that as awareness and techniques to combat the problem increase, so too do the abilities of the cyber criminals.

Dr Farnam Jahanian, Assistant Director for the Computer and Information Science and Engineering at the US National Science Foundation (NSF), will deliver the keynote cybersecurity lecture on day two of the conference. Dr Jahanian is co-founder of Arbor Networks, an internet security services company whose technology protects 70 per cent of internet backbone transit traffic. Mr. Christopher Rouland, an independent expert known for his work in discovering security vulnerabilities, will take part in a 'Cyber Security – Emerging Threats' panel discussion. In addition, Dr Richard J. Lipton, Professor at Georgia Institute of Technology, will moderate a debate that will address 'Rights, Responsibility and Cost to Privacy, Security and Anonymity: Individuals, Enterprises and Governments'.

Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI), a principal constituent of QF R&D, will lead these cybersecurity discussions at the conference and will have local experts, such as Chief Scientist Dr Richard De Millo, present findings and moderate panel discussions.

According to Dr De Millo, Qatar is subject to specific risks that need to be considered. "Qatar is among the most connected countries in the world. Its various sectors, including banking, energy and media, are heavily networked due to its extensive global partners and networks. Although this presents great opportunity, it also holds great risk with a pandemic of increased attacks on global computer networks, exactly the kinds Qatar could be subject to," he said. "The cyber

security risks we face here in Qatar are exactly the ones that other industrialised countries around the world are facing, but our problems are unique in that we have a different economy, different neighbours and thus face different kinds of threats.”

The Annual Research Conference will unite these local and international information technology experts, facilitating a crossover of their defence efforts against cyberattacks. Dr De Millo explained, “The dialogues that will take place at the Annual Research Conference between Qatar’s experts and their international counterparts will enable information sharing where we will learn from each other in real time. If we had to wait to read something in a newspaper or scientific journal, it would automatically introduce a significant delay in this process.”

At the conference other research grand challenges faced by Qatar will also be addressed including water and energy security, advancements in diabetes and cancer research, preservation of Arabic culture, art, language and heritage, as well as ensuring sustainable food supply. Other QF R&D constituents including Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), Qatar Energy and Environment Research Institute (QEERI), Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP) and Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) will be among the entities to address how best to tackle such challenges.

The Annual Research Conference will be held at the Qatar National Convention Centre, between November 24-25, where national stakeholders, local organisations and international partners will be informed about Qatar’s latest research initiatives through networking sessions that will help facilitate knowledge transfer. Attendees will be granted access to poster sessions as well as exhibition stands showcasing the progress of Qatar’s research efforts.

For more information about ARC’13 please visit: www.qf-arc.org.

About Qatar Foundation Research and Development

Leading Qatar's vision to become an international centre for research and development excellence and innovation, QF R&D is home to Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), a world-class hub for technology innovation and commercialisation, as well as the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), a globally renowned scientific research funding organization, and prominent research institutes operating at the frontiers of science, including Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI) and Qatar Energy and Environment Research Institute (QEERI).

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