<u>**Press Release**</u>

Kuwait's Central Agency for Information Technology wins ICDL recognition for promoting digital knowledge

Agency's IT training programs target 200,000 civil servants deployed in various government departments over next 5 years

June 16, 2009

Kuwait's Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) has recently won the special award for the promotion of informatics culture in the local community from ICDL GCC Foundation, the regional arm of the European Computer Driving Licence in the Gulf. CAIT is the second body in the Middle East to receive the award in recognition of its leading role in promoting digital knowledge in the country. CAIT received the award after emerging among the top of various individuals and organisations from across the world – all of whom contributed to promoting the electronic culture in their respective societies.

Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and certification authority of the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) program in the Gulf region, who presented the award to CAIT, said that CAIT has ambitious plans, in cooperation with the ICDL GCC Foundation, to enhance informatics knowledge in Kuwait over the next five years. He said that the two organizations are fully committed to promoting the use of computers among Kuwaiti citizens – particularly among government employees – by developing international standards in the assessment of computer courses and tests.

The cooperation between CAIT and ICDL GCC Foundation is part of the national project for enhancing IT skills, which target to help an estimated 200,000 civil servants, deployed in various government departments, to get the ICDL over the next five years with direct support from the Ireland-based ECDL.

Ezzo underlined CAIT's contribution to the implementation of the 'e-Citizen Program' in Kuwait. The 'e-Citizen Program' aims to enhance computer skills and increase the use of online services. He also confirmed that ICDL GCC Foundation will work along with the CAIT to ensure suitable support and finance for implementing the program on a large scale, especially by encouraging contributions from the public and private sectors to create an integrated digital society.

Abdullatif Al-Sarei', Deputy Director-General for National Projects Sector, CAIT, said that the award is the result of the great efforts made by the agency in raising awareness and providing training in information technology. He added that their collaboration with the ICDL GCC Foundation in offering IT skills for civil servants has led to their increased capacity to deal with the latest IT developments for the benefit of government agencies and individuals alike.

He asserted that the agency will pursue its ambitious plans to support local IT projects, in line with the government's directives to rehabilitate citizens and the workforce, especially by enhancing their computer skills. He also stressed CAIT's commitment to implement training programs that are at par with internationally recognised standards in terms of content, tests and quality criterion.

In his speech during the ceremony held in honour of the civil servants/awardees of ICDL certificates from 18 government departments, Al-Sarei' said that CAIT aims to provide training programs that enhance employees' skills for optimal use of computers. He also added that CAIT is working closely with the ICDL GCC Foundation to implement the quality standards of the ICDL program, with trainees who successfully pass the tests given ICDL certificates accredited by the international parties that offer such programs. He underlined that CAIT is starting another batch to train 480 employees from various ministries to be followed by another larger group of 1,200 candidates from 19 government agencies later this year.

- ends -