



ITU Transfers Americas Regional Internet Portal To Indigenous Peoples

BRASILIA, (August 9, 2009) -- The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) has transferred ownership of its Indigenous Americas portal to the Indigenous peoples themselves. The exchange took place in Brasília, Brazil on August 9, 2009, which is declared by the United Nations as the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

The transfer took place at the conclusion of the ITU's *Second Regional Workshop of Indigenous Peoples and ICTs* which was attended by over 120 Indigenous representatives from 21 countries of the Americas region. Also participating in the meeting were representatives of the International Indigenous Task Force (IITF) and the Board of Commissioners of the Indigenous Commission for Communications Technologies in the Americas (ICCTA). During the meeting the ITU also delivered a "train the trainer" program to enable the participants to extend their knowledge of the use of the portal to Indigenous peoples in their communities.

The ITU portal, which was formally transferred to the IITF, will be developed and managed by the ICCTA by agreement between the two parties. The Americas Regional portal will be integrated with the Global Indigenous Portal already developed and managed by the IITF at www.indigenousportal.com. An Americas Regional Editorial Committee (AREC), consisting of two Indigenous representatives of each country of the Americas region, is to be formed by September through terms of reference developed jointly by the IITF and the ICCTA in consultation with Indigenous representatives attending the conference in Brazil.

The transfer of this portal marks the evolution of a process that began during the two phases of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) hosted by the ITU in Geneva in December 2003 and in Tunisia in November 2005. The Indigenous Caucus at the meeting in Tunisia formed the IITF. The ICCTA was formed at the *1st Indigenous Workshop on ICTs in the Americas* held in Mexico in November 2005.

The agreement between the IITF and the ICCTA for the future management of the Americas Regional portal also marks a milestone in their quest to develop and provide mechanisms where Indigenous peoples can connect with each other and the public and private sector at large and share their websites, blogs and other media. The portal is expected to be fully functioning in the fall of 2009.

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