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Alliance Applauds Groundbreaking Call by European Commission to End Lock-in Created by Closed Formats

Washington, DC, June 12, 2008. The ODF Alliance (www.odfalliance.org) today strongly agreed with remarks made in support of Open Standards by European Commissioner Neelie Kroes during a June 10 speech before OpenForum Europe.

In reiterating the policy adopted last year by the European Commission to promote the use of products that support open, well-documented standards as a critical component to interoperability, European Commissioner for Competition Policy Neelie Kroes warned against the harmful effect on governments of lock-in:

"As purchasers, we need to be smart when we buy technology. We need to be aware of the long term costs of lock-in: you are often locked-in to subsequent generations of that technology," Kroes noted. "[The European Commission] must not rely on one vendor, it must not accept closed standards, and it must refuse to become locked into a particular technology – jeopardizing maintenance of full control over the information in its possession."

"The end is near for the era of public information being locked-in a closed format," agreed Marino Marcich, Managing Director of the ODF Alliance. "The OpenDocument Format, with its status as the only internationally recognized open standard document format with a wide range of supporting applications, is a critical tool for governments to help end the era of lock-in."

"The Alliance strongly concurs with Commissioner Kroes' statement that 'no citizen or country should be forced or encouraged to choose a closed technology over an open one, through a government having made that choice first,'" Marcich continued. "Commissioner Kroes' remarks validate the ODF Alliance mission and indicate the growing support for ODF and open standards that ensure interoperability and technological choice for the Commission and governments around the world."

For the full text of Commissioner Kroes' June 10 speech before OpenForum Europe, please visit: http://www.openforumeurope.org/press-room/ofe-events/ofe_breakfast-seminar-speech-of-commissioner-neelie-kroes

About the ODF Alliance:

The OpenDocument Format Alliance is an organization of governments, academic institutions, non-government organizations and industry dedicated to educating policy makers, IT administrators and the public on the benefits and opportunities of ODF.