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**Anvar Sadath From Kerala, India and Vitorio Furusho From Parana, Brazil Recognized for Outstanding Achievement in ODF Education and Community Development**

*ODF Alliance awards recognize the contribution of individuals or entities who have significantly advanced document freedom*

**Washington, DC, March 25, 2009.** The OpenDocument Format (ODF) Alliance today recognized Vitorio Furusho from Parana, Brazil and Anvar Sadath from Kerala, India for their contributions to ODF community development and education.

“ODF has become the format of choice in the public sector, a truly open standard that has achieved growing popularity and support in a variety of software products,” said ODF Alliance Managing Director Marino Marcich. “The actions of Vitorio Furusho and Anvar Sadath have significantly advanced the cause of document freedom, yet have not received the public recognition they deserve. Today, we honor their achievements.”

The purpose of the ODF Alliance Award is to recognize the contribution of individuals or entities in promoting ODF adoption, the mission of the ODF Alliance. Nominations were received for individuals and entities who stood out as leaders in advancing ODF in various segments of society including government, education, or community and rural development.

Vitorio Furusho is a systems analyst at CELEPAR, a public IT company in the state of Parana, Brazil, where, in the course of his 34 year career, he has been tireless in his commitment to the adoption of open IT systems both locally and nationally. Furusho coordinates CE21, the ISO/IEC SC34 mirror committee in the Brazilian National Standards Organization (ABNT). Under his leadership CE21 approved and translated ODF (ISO/IEC 26300:2006) as a Brazilian National Standard. Furusho co-authored Parana's state law 5742 which requires the use of ODF for editable public documents and Project 3070/2008 in the Brazilian National Congress.

“It is fitting that on Document Freedom Day we recognize Vitorio Furusho's achievements. The choice of a format today will influence your access to the information contained in a document 10 or 20 years from now, and, importantly, your ability to access it with the software of your choice. That is the essence of document freedom, why we honor Vitorio Furusho, and why document freedom is being celebrated at events in Brazil and around the world today,” commented ODF Alliance Latin America Director Jomar Silva. “Furusho is a professional with more than 30 years of experience working in the information technology industry, with emphasis on the public sector. His personal contribution has

been fundamental to the advancement of ODF in Brazil, where he lead the effort to gain approval of the first Brazilian ODF law in Parana State."

IT@School is a project of the General Education Department of the Government Kerala, India, which has introduced IT-enabled teaching and learning in over 2600 high schools across the state. The project began in 2002-03 with the introduction of IT in high school and is now being introduced in the higher secondary and upper primary level. The project integrates IT, including ODF, into the schools with a view to enhancing the productivity of teachers, improving students' learning capabilities, and increasing the management efficiency of school administrators.

Anvar Sadath, Executive Director, [IT@School](#), said: "It is indeed an honour for me to receive recognition from the members of ODF Alliance who are collectively working towards breaking down the barriers that constrain innovation and growth. Sharing technology and resources with communities worldwide to help eliminate the digital divide will create economic opportunity and foster equal access to technology. We look forward to extending our initiative across India so that more and more communities benefit from it."

"Anvar Sadath has bridged the digital divide in Kerala," commented the ODF Alliance's Marcich. "He was among the first to recognize that an open format like ODF means giving students, teachers, and parents alike the flexibility to use a wide range of software than they currently have, including free solutions. Just as importantly, Sadath translated ideas into actions for the benefit of educational development in Kerala."

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.*