

Announcement:

ITU and PITA announce partnership to strengthen ITU Academy Centres of Excellence network in the Asia Pacific Region

On the occasion of the *Pacific ICT Ministerial Forum: Connecting the Unconnected* held from 17-20 February 2009 in Nukualofa, Kingdom of Tonga, Mr Sami Al-Basheer, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Mr Maui Sanford, President of the Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association (PITA) have announced that their two organizations are launching a new partnership to strengthen the ITU Centres of Excellence network in the Asia Pacific Region.

An initiative of *ITU Academy*, the Centres of Excellence (CoE) network consists of regional nodes that strengthen human and institutional capacity to deliver know-how and expertise in specialised telecommunications and ICT training. The objective is a global cooperative network of institutions sharing expertise, resources and capacity-building know-how. Each CoE partner institution leads the design and implementation of a distinct training programme in cooperation with ITU offering either face-to-face and/or e-learning training opportunities. For more information about the ITU Academy Centres of Excellence network, visit: <http://academy.itu.int>.

This new partnership will assist in delivering on one of the key themes debated at the Pacific ICT Ministerial Forum: how to enhance learning and development (human capacity building) opportunities in the region. Launched in parallel with the inauguration of a new ITU-Cisco sponsored Internet Training Centre on Tonga, these two practical initiatives represent important steps to promote the use of ICTs and their role as a foundation for economic development in the region.

Under the partnership, **PITA** will host a minimum of two face-to-face and/or e-learning training opportunities (exact topics to be decided mutually) in the Pacific Region every year as a partner of the ITU CoE network in the region. PITA will also encourage participation, development and use of ITU CoE network training opportunities amongst its Members and share information on training needs and activities with the ITU.

For its part, **ITU** will provide the necessary expertise and/or training resources for a minimum of these two face-to-face and/or e-learning training opportunities. ITU will also extend all its other ITU CoE training opportunities to PITA Members and share information on training needs and resources with PITA.

ITU and PITA will also co-brand all training materials arising from their co-operation in the area of human capacity building for the Pacific Region and make them available on each of their respective capacity building websites.

For the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA) Mr Maui Sanford, President	For the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Mr. Sami Al-Basheer Al Morshid Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau
Place: Nukualofa, Tonga	Place: Nukualofa, Tonga
Date:	Date: