UN telecom agency launches partnerships for Pacific Island countries

ITU Director of Telecommunication Development Bureau Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid

20 February 2009 – The United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU) today launched new partnerships to help 13 Pacific Island countries develop information and communications technology (ICT) in the region.

In a joint communiqué issued at the end of the Pacific ICT Ministerial Forum, held in Tonga, senior officials from the 13 countries called for greater coordination to minimize overlap in ICT initiatives and maximize the impact of investments in development projects.

The ministers, including two Prime Ministers, called for rapid implementation of regional connectivity projects and for reinforced efforts to create more ICT professionals and a workforce with technical skills.

"The Pacific Island countries have clearly stated their objectives and priorities," said Director of the **ITU** Telecommunication Development Bureau, Sami Al Basheer Al Morshid.

"ITU is fully committed to work with our partners in delivering results for the Pacific Island States," added Mr. Al Basheer, who announced several new partnerships to assist the countries.

"We are building on the expertise and resources of all interested partners to reinforce our collective impact on ICT development in the Pacific."

The Pacific Island ministers also directed officials to work towards establishing a shared regulatory resource centre and encouraged regional States to make full use of ICT for early warning and response systems to improve disaster preparedness.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue
UN appeals for funds to bridge 'digital divide' in the Asia-Pacific region