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**ODF Alliance Hails Top International Standards Body's  
Approval of Open Document Format**

Washington, DC - The OpenDocument Format Alliance (ODF Alliance), a broad cross-section of associations, academic institutions and industry dedicated to solving the problem of improving access and retrieval of electronic government documents, today congratulated the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for its sweeping approval of the OpenDocument Format as an international standard, as well as OASIS which created and submitted the format to ISO.

Since its launch in early March, the ODF Alliance has grown to over 150 members worldwide. The Alliance was created to resolve the problem of governments' and their constituents' limited ability to access, retrieve and use critical records, information and documents in the future. To enable the public sector to have greater control over and direct management of their own records, information and documents, the ODF Alliance seeks to promote and advance the use of OpenDocument Format (ODF). ODF enables the retrieval of information and exchange of documents without regard to the application or platform in which the document was created -- both now and in the future.

"Approval of the OpenDocument Format by ISO marks an important milestone in the effort to help governments solve the very real problem of finding a better way to preserve, access and control their documents now and in the future," said Marino Marcich, Executive Director of the ODF Alliance. "There's no doubt that this broad vote of support will serve as a springboard for adoption and use of ODF around the world. At the same time, it also represents a milestone for the ODF Alliance, which in just weeks has seen a groundswell of support and continues to grow everyday."

The OpenDocument Format emerged from work done at the open source OpenOffice.org project. This work was later submitted to, and further developed at, OASIS, where it was accepted as an official OASIS standard in May 2005. The six-month approval ballot for its adoption as a standard by the International Standards Organization and the International Electrotechnical Commission ended on May 1.

In May 2004, the then European Commission's IDA (Interchange of Data between Administrations) Management Committee "TAC" had publicly encouraged OASIS to submit the OASIS ODF standard to ISO once it had completed its work on the standard. The ODF Alliance believes that approval of ODF by the ISO standards body as an international standard will thus have a particularly strong impact in Europe where ISO standards enjoy official recognition under European Union Directives.

In related news, the ODF Alliance also applauded the "Regional Open ICT Ecosystem" Conference currently convening in Bangkok. Attended by a number of Asian governments, this conference (organized by the United Nations' Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme, and hosted by Thailand's government) brings together experts, executives, and policy makers from government, business and academia. Within it, ODF is being discussed as a vehicle for universally compatible, innovative and cost effective technology used within governments.

"The examples of the conference taking place right now in Asia and the positive ISO vote clearly demonstrate the momentum behind the OpenDocument Format," added Marcich. "The ODF Alliance intends to build on this successful vote by working with governments around the world to adopt the OpenDocument Format. We believe access to public records and essential services should never be restricted to users of a particular brand of software or computer platform."

For more information about the ODF Alliance, please visit our web site at <http://www.odfalliance.org>.

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