Appendix C

Multi-stakeholder Conference Declaration

A conference on the National Open Source Strategy was organised by the Go Open Source Task Team and took place in Sandton in September of 2005. It comprised various stakeholders from the private and public sectors as well as government and academia. The declaration below was adopted unanimously.

Conference Declaration

Declaration on the South African National Strategy on Free and Open Source Software and Open Content ("National Open Source Strategy")

1. We, the delegates assembled in Johannesburg from 22-23 August 2005 for the Go Open Source Conference on the National Open Source Strategy, declare our common desire and commitment to the strategic use of information and communications technologies in order to further socio-economic development and affirm the central place that Free and Open Source Software and Open Content (FOSS/OC) have in realising this goal.

2. We recognise that FOSS/OC include both technological and environmental elements, that FOSS/OC are characterised by accessibility, collaboration, interoperability, open standards, transparency, customisability, contribution, and open licensing, and that FOSS/OC involve those who use, modify, enhance and create such technology and content.

3. We recognise that the South African national strategic objectives for socio-economic development are to improve competitiveness, support local innovation and investment, broaden BEE participation in the economy, build a better world, improve the reach and efficiency of government service delivery and in doing so reduce poverty and redress imbalances of the past.

4. We affirm that FOSS/OC help achieve these objectives by contributing to socio-economic development nationally, regionally and internationally in significant ways that other technologies and forms of content do not.

5. We conclude that it is strongly in the interest of all spheres of Government to adopt, support, develop and promote the use of FOSS/OC and its underlying principles

POLICY

6. The foundation of policy is for government to implement FOSS/OC unless proprietary software is demonstrated to be significantly superior. Whenever the advantages of FOSS/OC and proprietary software are comparable FOSS/OC must be implemented when choosing a software solution for a new project. Current proprietary software must be migrated to FOSS/OC whenever comparable software exists. When FOSS is not implemented, then reasons must be provided in order to justify the implementation of proprietary software. All new software developed using Government resources must be based on open standards, adhere to FOSS principles, and licensed using a FOSS license where possible.

7.An environment supportive of FOSS/OC must be created, ensuring that existing legislation on copyright, patents, trademarks, etc., do not present barriers to FOSS/OC utilisation. This must be done by developing awareness, capacity, knowledge and understanding nationally and within Government; developing broad FOSS/OC Research and Development initiatives; enforcing and giving preference to the use of FOSS and application of FOSS/OC principles in planning and procurement processes; creating opportunities for use of FOSS/OC. Creation of such an environment will require partnerships with relevant sectors of society.

8.Government should utilise the opportunities presented by the open and collaborative culture associated with FOSS/OC to promote access to information by citizens, by driving and embracing enhanced service delivery through electronic channels.

9. All content produced by Government or using public resources must be Open Content, unless analysis on specific content shows that proprietary licensing or confidentiality is substantially beneficial. Open Content and open standards will be encouraged generally within South Africa.

WE RECOMMEND

10.That national Cabinet formally adopt this policy on FOSS/OC within six months.

11.That national Cabinet mandate an appropriate multi-stakeholder entity to implement the National Open Source Strategy within twelve months.

12.The development of a FOSS/OC scorecard that will be used to evaluate progress of individual departments or clusters toward implementing this policy.

13.That relationships with regional and continental African organisations should be given special attention, including NEPAD's e-Africa Commission and Information Society Partnership for Africa's Development (ISPAD), and SADC, among others, in order to share the benefits of the National Open Source Strategy and for alignment with other ICT-related African development strategies. Similar attention should be given to IBSA collaboration.

IN CONCLUSION

14.As the policy, strategy legislative processes and their implementation move forward and in anticipation of their completion, we are committed to the implementation of FOSS/OC projects and open standards in our own organisations and areas of activity, and to helping address the many challenges that will be faced as the National Open Source Strategy is pursued.

15.As a multi-stakeholder conference with delegates from all spheres of government and across all government departments, from private sector companies, from civil society, and as private individuals with specific expertise in the area of FOSS/OC we urge the recommendations in this Declaration be carried forward.

Participating Organisations

Private sector

Accenture, Canonical Ltd, Computers 4 Kids, Dipalo School of ICT, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, IMPI Linux, Junior Chamber International, Magna FS, Mohwiti Technology - Innovation Hub, Obsidian, Olamandla (Pty) Ltd, Procentrica Africa, Radian, Redscreen, Sasol, Silverline Consulting, SLR Consulting, Target Training & Technologies, T- Systems

Public sector

Akani Retirement Fund, Cosatu, CSIR / The Meraka Institute, E-schools Network, NAFCOC, NAFCOC Youth Chamber, Netday, OSISA, SA Post Office, SA Revenue Services, SchoolNet Namibia, SITA, The Shuttleworth Foundation (TSF), Training Trade Unions, Translate.Org, Ubuntu Education Fund

Government

The Office of the President, National Department of Arts and Culture, National Department of Communications, National Department of Correctional Services, National Department of Education, National Department of Government Communications and Information Services, National Department of Local & Provincial Government, National Department of Public Enterprise, National Department of Public Service and Administration, National Department of Science and Technology, National Department of Trade & Industry, National Department of Water Affairs & Forrestry, The Presidential National Commission on Information Society and Development, Centre For e-Innovation (Provincial Government of the Western Cape), City of Johannesburg, Gauteng Office of the Premier, Gauteng Province (Sport, Public Works and Transport), North West Provincial Government, Eastern Cape Education Department, Free State Education Department, Gauteng Education Department, Kwazulu-Natal Education Department, Mpumalanga Education Department, Northern Cape Education Department, North-West Education Department

Academia

Eastern Cape Technikon, Rhodes University, UNISA, University of Cape Town, University of Western Cape