

Hacker Is Beautiful and I Am One, Says Brazilian Minister

Contributed by Bruno Bocchini
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Brazil's Culture Minister, Gilberto Gil, defended in the recently finished 5th World Social Forum, in the South of Brazil, the use of open source and free software.

The Brazilian Minister affirmed to be "a hacker" in spirit and wish, position that, according to him, means "to have humanist posture, to try to build a new kind of citizenry, the one that involves an information society."

"I am minister, I am musician, but I am, above all, a 'hacker' in spirit and wish. Everybody here knows that I am a defender, a practitioner, almost an user. I still hope one day to be totally an user, an enthusiast without a doubt of free software, of the instruments that create virtual and remote networks thanks to the programs of digital inclusion."

In its original sense the term hacker means "skilful programmer" and, according to the Minister, it is linked to solidarity, "something more and more present in music, media, in the human sciences, in the social projects and in governments.

"Hackers create, innovate, research, enlarge and deepen knowledge. They solve problems and have a radical belief in sharing information and experiences. They exercise freedom and voluntary mutual help", Gil said.

Gil, who took part in several activities in the Forum, made it clear during the lecture "Social Implications of the Digital Revolutions" his preference for the theme free software.

"I confess to you that my agenda, my territory, my movement, finally, what seems to me to be more contemporary and challenging is here. There you have my personal and untransferable choice."

The Culture Minister also proposed the launching of a campaign called "Global Summons for Humankind's Digital Freedom", an allusion to the campaign "Global Call for Action Against Poverty", launched January 27 by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in the same Forum.

"I want to propose you an immediate global summons for humankind's digital freedom, which would be complementary to the global call for action against poverty, which was launched by several non governmental organizations and embraced by President Lula," he concluded.

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