

# Africans and Arabs Want Brazil's Know How on Open Source

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Tunisia is interested in the Brazilian project for the diffusion of the use of open source and freeware, computer programs distributed freely and that are already being used at the main Brazilian public organizations so as to promote digital inclusion.

"We believe that Brazil has had great progress in the sectors of computer technology and telecommunications. The country is currently developing a strategy that is very important for Tunisia and also for the other African and Arab countries, the freeware program.

"We are very interested in this project and we want Brazil to help us in this matter," stated the Tunisian minister of Foreign Relation, Abdelbaki Hermassi.

In November, Tunisia is going to host the second part of the World Summit on the Information Society, an event promoted by the United Nations (UN). The first edition took place in December 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland.

One of the main objectives of the meeting will be the creation of mechanisms for digital inclusion and, according to Hermassi, the question of open source software should be one of the central points of discussion.

"This is a way of reducing the distance there is between the countries that have access to technologies and the countries that do not. Open source will be an important ingredient in the Tunis summit and it will include Brazilian participation and (decisions from) this summit (between Arab and South American countries)," added the minister.

The final declaration of the summit between Arab and South American countries, which took place this week, in Brazilian capital Brasília, "restates the importance of the second part of the World Summit on the Information Society" and suggests mass "high level" participation by the countries interested.

The text recognizes the "positive impact" that communication and information technologies may have on the promotion of cooperation between countries and on the reduction of digital inequality between them.

## World Organization

Coincidence or not, the vice president of technology and logistics of the Bank of Brazil, José Luiz de Cerqueira César, gave a talk at the business forum that took place on the sidelines of the summit in Brazilian capital Brasília and is going to launch the idea of the creation of a "world open source organisation".

The proposal, according to the state-owned bank, is to involve governments, organizations and companies to strengthen certification and diffusion of open-source programs like Linux and make face to the power of the great companies in the sector.

At the Brasília summit, the computers made available to the press, offered by the Brazilian government, had some open source programs, among them word processors.

## ANBA