

Summary for the Inauguration

The Global Forum was inaugurated by the different partners that made the Forum possible, through an innovative format, in which a journalist asked questions to the different partners seating in comfortable chairs. Brazilian partners included authorities from all government levels: municipal (Florianopolis), provincial (State of Santa Catarina), and national (SEBRAE and Ministry of Science and Technology).

Guilherme Ary Plonsky, President, Brazilian Association of Science Parks and Business Incubators (ANPROTEC) explained how the partnership between Brazil and infoDev in organizing the Forum evolved. From the original idea of having two events (the Global Forum and ANPROTEC's national conference) with some articulation, one common event was organized, through a mutually enriching learning experience. The Governor of Santa Catarina, **Luiz Enrique da Silveira**, highlighted key strategies for the development of the State of Santa Catarina: decentralization, internationalization and innovation. Regarding innovation, the Governor pointed out to the new innovation law enacted by the State, and where technology parks and incubators have a prominent role. **Paulo Okamoto**, President, Brazilian Service of Support for Micro and Small Enterprises (SEBRAE), explained SEBRAE's newest programs: Local Innovation Agents and Businessmen Innovation Movement. At least 30 local innovation agents are being trained in each Brazilian state, with the objective of assisting companies to become innovative, and reaching the goal of 30,000 new innovative companies in Brazil by 2012. The representative from the Ministry of Science and Technology explained the new program known as PRIME (first innovative company) which provides seed funding to incubated companies. He also acknowledged that Brazilian participation in scientific production increased from 0.4% of worldwide production in 1985 to 2.2% at present; however, this increased scientific production did not necessarily got translated or transferred to the productive sector, and more linkages across sectors need to be built. **Mohsen Khalil**, Director, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), IFC/World Bank explained the mission of GICT, the Global Information and Communication Technologies Group, to which infoDev belongs. The mission consists in promoting the use of ICT to connect, transform and innovate. "Connect" is related to access, while "transform" is related to enabling or providing opportunities to people through the use of ICT. Mohsen emphasized the importance of ICT as an enabler of governments and business to "innovate", to unleash the power of human capital. **Valerie D'Costa**, infoDev Program Manager, explained that infoDev's supported global network of incubators now comprises about 300 incubators in 90 countries. D'Costa also highlighted the case of PV inova, a successful company incubated by network member Genesis, based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. PV inova's products include an on-line management system for public transportation fleet and an inexpensive public phone for use in buses. PV inova was a winner of the 2009 infoDev's Global Innovator Award.