Kingdom of Tonga Hosts PacINET 2013

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PacINET is an annual regional conference to represent the interests of Internet users in the Oceania Pacific Region, held every year by The Pacific Islands Chapter of the Internet Society (PICISOC) at different Pacific Island countries. This year’s event, held in Tonga from September 9-13, brought together Internet experts from around the region to discuss issues prevalent to ICT development in the Pacific Islands.

The conference was hosted and organized by Tonga’s Ministry of Information and Communications with support from Tonga Communications Corporation (TCC), Digicel Tonga, Office Equipment, ICAAN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) and The Internet Society. The main theme, “Gateway of Opportunity,” is a reflection of Tonga’s latest technological advancement with the newly introduced fiber optic cable system. PacINET 2013 featured discussions over issues in relation to IXP, IPv6, cyber and network security, Internet governance and policy and Internet research in the Pacific.

The presence of the Prime Minister of Tonga and his involvement in the opening ceremony demonstrated his support for the event. Director for the Ministry of Information and Communications, Mr Paula P Ma’u, said “The Government of Tonga is very pleased and excited to be hosting this regional meeting here in Nuku’alofa as it will be our chance to showcase Tonga’s transition into a new era in Telecommunications. With the Cable system now in place introducing faster internet speed, higher capacity and broader bandwidth systems, it is fundamental that measures are in place to address the global issues affecting the development of the ICT sector. This Conference will provide the opportunity to dialogue and discuss resolutions to addressing these ICT impediments especially solutions that will positively impact Tonga and the Pacific region.”

The event formally began with the Annual General Meeting of PICISOC, where the Board Chair presented its annual chapter report followed by three days of conference proceedings. PacINET 2013 hosted topics based around both the local theme and ISOC’s mission of “The Internet is for Everyone.” Event participants attended deliberations on issues related to Internet governance and infrastructure, domain names and ccTLD policies, cyber security, digital inclusion and disabilities, regulators, e-governance, e-commerce, telecentres and local language and cultural content.

During the course, the Asia Pacific Network Information Center (APNIC) organized technical training workshops for the staff of the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) and the students of the TTI Cisco Academy for capacity building and meeting the technical requirements of the host country.

More details at http://www.picisoc.org/pacinet/pacinet-2013/