**Internet Society to help connect remote communities in Georgia**

***Signs Memorandum of Understanding to bring Internet access to Tusheti Region***

**[Tsbilisi, Georgia– 7 September, 2016]** – Villages and communities in the region of Tusheti, Georgia will soon have Internet access for the first time, thanks to a collaborative agreement between several Internet organizations. The agreement to build a new wireless network for the region was signed today by the Internet Society and its Georgia Chapter, the Small and Medium Telecom Operators Association, the Freenet LTD Association, the Internet Development Initiative and the Tusheti Development Fund.

These stakeholders will work together to provide affordable, high-speed fixed-wireless Internet service - including the construction of a radio network - in addition to technical training. Wireless technologies can provide cost-effective Internet connectivity to dispersed communities located in challenging terrain.

Tusheti is in northeast Georgia on the northern slopes of the Greater Caucasus Mountains and bordered by the Russian republics of Chechnya and Dagestan. Internet connectivity will help support the economic sustainability of this remote region and create opportunities for communities to sell their local products and services as well as access education, healthcare and government services. In addition, training on content and services will be provided to help maximize development opportunities using the Internet.

“This project demonstrates how to establish Internet access in a remote region under the leadership of the local community and stakeholders. We hope to use this as an example to roll-out similar projects for other remote regions in Georgia and Eastern Europe,” explains Maarit Palovirta, European Regional Affairs Manager for the Internet Society.

**About the Internet Society**

The Internet Society, [www.internetsociety.org](http://www.internetsociety.org), is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership from around the world. It is also the organizational home for the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). With its principled vision and substantial technological foundation, the Internet Society promotes open dialogue on Internet policy, technology, and future development among users, companies, governments, and other organizations. Working with its members and Chapters around the world, the Internet Society enables the continued evolution and growth of the Internet for everyone.

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