

## Press Release

# The Organization of Ibero-American States and the Elecnor Foundation to take power to 90 schools in Uruguay

- The *Luces para Aprender Uruguay* project will have an investment of over EUR 1 million and involves the electrification of all the schools in the country which currently lack electricity
- The equipment and systems needed to enable these schools to access the Internet will be provided through the Uruguayan Ministry of Education and Culture's CEIBAL programme.
- This initiative makes up part of the *Luces para Aprender* campaign of the Organization of Ibero-American States, which is seeking to provide over 66,000 Ibero-American schools with electricity and access to ICTs.

Madrid, 16 July 2013.- The **Elecnor Foundation** has signed an agreement with the **Organization of Ibero-American States** (OEI, after its name in Spanish) to collaborate in developing the ***Luces para Aprender*** (Lights for Learning) project in Uruguay. The project will involve taking electricity to around **90 rural schools** in the Ibero-American country, i.e., to all the schools that currently lack power. The aim is to improve the living and educational conditions of thousands of boys and girls in the region, who are some of the almost 1.4 billion people around the world - one in five - who have no electricity, which is a key factor for ensuring a quality education.

The agreement was signed in Madrid by **Álvaro Marchesi**, Secretary-General of the OEI, and **Rafael Martín de Bustamante**, Chief Executive Officer of Elecnor.

The project consists of installing a **PV solar system at each of the schools** to provide them with renewable, sustainable and environmentally-friendly energy that covers their internal and external lighting needs, in addition to supplying power to enable them to use technological and communications equipment, such as televisions, computers and mobile telephones, among other devices. Supplying and managing the equipment and systems needed for these schools to access the Internet will fall under the responsibility of Uruguay's Ministry of Education and Culture through its

CEIBAL Plan (an acronym in Spanish for Educational Connectivity for Basic Computing for Online Learning).

The project will be developed in two stages and is expected to be completed on around 31 October 2014. In total, this project will amount to nearly **USD 1.3 million** (equivalent to approximately EUR 1.01 million).

Under the agreement, the Elecnor Foundation will supply the necessary elements and be responsible for transporting and installing them and starting up the system, as well as the preventive and corrective maintenance of the system during the warranty period. It will also take charge of training and coaching the designated people in each of the beneficiary communities in how to use and maintain the system.

### ***Luces para Aprender* from the OEI, taking electricity and the Internet to 66,000 Ibero-American schools**

The ***Luces para Aprender Uruguay*** initiative is part of the Ibero-American ***Luces para Aprender*** project, coordinated by the OEI. It aims to install PV solar modules to supply electricity and provide computers, with the corresponding Internet connection, to over 66,000 schools in the Latin American region over a period of three years, ending in late 2014.

***Luces para Aprender*** was approved at the 22nd Ibero-American Education Ministers Conference held in Paraguay in September 2011 and originates from the “2021 Educational Goals” approved by the Heads of State and Government at the 20th XX Ibero-American Summit in December 2010.

It attempts to tackle unresolved challenges in the Latin American region, such as access to quality state education which offers better opportunities to girls and boys and enables them to address poverty and inequality, as well as to contribute in this way to the development and wellbeing of the communities in which they live. It also seeks to handle new educational challenges, like the inclusion of information and communication technologies (ICT) in teaching, and to end the isolation of rural communities which historically have been left behind as regards technological advances.

In addition to Uruguay, the Ibero-American countries participating in the ***Luces para Aprender*** project are Colombia, Paraguay, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Ecuador and Bolivia.

The specific protocol for carrying out the ***Luces para Aprender*** project in Uruguay was signed on 29 May 2012 between Uruguay's Ministry of Education and Culture and the OEI.

## **Elecnor Foundation: taking energy and water to disadvantaged communities**

The **Luces para Aprender Uruguay** project joins other projects which the Elecnor Foundation is actively developing in Latin America and Africa to extend a safe and sustainable supply of power and water to disadvantaged communities. This is the case of the **Ilumina** project in Honduras, through which PV solar power has been taken to a group of villages in the municipality of Cantarranas; of **Loma Atravesada**, in the Dominican Republic, which helps to provide access to the national electricity grid for isolated population centres; of **Sinergia**, in Chile, which involves access to electricity and drinking water; and of the provision of back-up power supply equipment for nine health centres in **Ghana**.

### **About the Elecnor Foundation**

The Foundation was set up in late 2008 to mark the 50th anniversary of Elecnor, which is one of the leading Spanish companies and a benchmark player in the infrastructure, renewable energies and new technologies sectors, present in over 30 countries and with 13,000 employees.

The Elecnor Foundation is a private, non-profit entity that pushes the company's intervention into the social arena in two areas: social infrastructure and training and research. The aim is to demonstrate the commitment engineering has to human beings and society. To achieve maximum effectiveness, the Foundation's work is closely linked to Elecnor's own activities.

### **About the OEI**

The OEI is an international cooperation agency for Ibero-American education, science and culture. It promotes the *2021 Educational Goals* which aim to improve quality and equity in education to address poverty and inequality.

**More information: [www.lucesparaaprender.org](http://www.lucesparaaprender.org)**

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