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HAND TALK OF BRAZIL SELECTED AS FINALIST FOR GLOBAL PLURALISM AWARD

GLOBAL CENTRE FOR PLURALISM ANNOUNCES TECH START-UP PROMOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR DEAF PEOPLE IS A TOP CANDIDATE FOR PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

NEW YORK – June 20, 2017 – In recognition of outstanding achievements to support more inclusive societies worldwide, the [Global Centre for Pluralism](http://WWW.PLURALISM.CA/EN/), an international education and research organization founded by His Highness the Aga Khan and the Government of Canada, announced the 10 finalists for the 2017 Global Pluralism Award. Selected by a renowned international jury, [Hand Talk](#) of Brazil was chosen as a finalist for this year's inaugural award for their work building bridges through technology between mainstream Brazilian society and the estimated 7 million deaf living in Brazil.

“We are witnessing societies worldwide becoming more deeply divided. The need for respect and acceptance across differences is all the more urgent” said John McNee, Secretary General of the Global Centre for Pluralism. “The work of the 10 finalists of the Global Pluralism Award, and all the nominees, is a testament to what can be achieved when pluralism is put into practice.”

The international Award jury, chaired by the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada, is comprised of five independent members from various disciplines. The jury reviewed over 200 nominations from over 43 countries. After careful consideration, the finalists were selected for their extraordinary, innovative work to advance respect for diversity.

Hand Talk stood out among the nominations for its use of technology to offer automatic translation from spoken language into sign language, enabling communication between hearing people and those who are deaf. They aim to provide deaf people in Brazil, particularly illiterate ones, with more opportunities for education and to improve their inclusion in society.

Hand Talk has created an interactive 3D character, Hugo, which makes conversing between any two people easily understandable. A leader in its field, the tool has helped to increase accessibility in companies, giving deaf people greater opportunity to engage in their workplace culture.

Of the 10 finalists, three winners will be recognized at the inaugural Global Pluralism Award Ceremony, which takes place in the fall of 2017 in Ottawa, Canada. Each winner will receive \$50,000 to further their work.

About the Global Centre for Pluralism

Founded in Ottawa by His Highness the Aga Khan in partnership with the Government of Canada, the Global Centre for Pluralism is an independent, charitable organization. Inspired by Canada's experience as a diverse and inclusive country, the Centre was created to advance positive responses to the challenge of living peacefully and productively together in diverse societies.

Members of the Award Jury

- The Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, former Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of Canada (Jury Chair)
- Dante Caputo (Argentina), Member of the Council of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights of Argentina; former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Argentina
- Bience Gawanas (Namibia), Special Advisor to the Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Namibia; former Commissioner for Social Affairs at the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government
- Naheed Nenshi (Canada), Mayor of Calgary

- Pascale Thumerelle (France), former Vice-President, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, Vivendi, a global integrated industrial group in media and content

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