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PRESS RELEASE

**CText<sup>®</sup> makes a major contribution to multilingualism with Autshumato/  
CText<sup>®</sup> maak groot impak op meertaligheid met Autshumato**

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*(Afrikaanse teks volg op Engels)*

## **CText<sup>®</sup> makes a major contribution to multilingualism with Autshumato**

The Centre for Text Technology (CText<sup>®</sup>) at the North-West University (NWU), Potchefstroom Campus, is facilitating translation and communication in South Africa through the Autshumato machine translation project.

Autshumato is a collection of open-source translation software and tools that are developed and managed by CText<sup>®</sup>. It is already being used by the National Language Service, translators in parliament, the NWU Institutional Language Services, the University of Johannesburg as well as the University of the Free State and has been downloaded internationally by users in China, Spain, Denmark and Norway, among others.

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) recently awarded the third extension of the Autshumato project to CText<sup>®</sup>. This next phase entails the development of a machine translation system for an additional language pair, as well as making the existing systems accessible to a broader audience. CText<sup>®</sup> will work on and expand the project for the next three years.

According to Mr Wildrich Fourie, project leader, the first Autshumato project started in 2007 when the DAC realised that human language technology (HLT) can promote multilingualism in the country. "For them it was especially important that government documents and official communication should be clearly understood by everyone they were intended for."

He says the DAC had the vision for Autshumato to be in the open-source domain, resulting in freely available software and resources to make communication in all the country's official languages easy, understandable and effective. All the published resources are also freely available to the public.

The first Autshumato project focused on the development of machine translation systems for translation from English to IsiZulu, Sesotho and Afrikaans. The second project focused on translation from English to Xitsonga and the third project will focus on translation from English to Setswana. Wildrich says the ultimate goal is to have translation capabilities for all the official languages.

Ms Sunny Gent, project manager of the Autshumato project, says the project benefits everyone in the country. "We are very proud of Autshumato. We invite everyone to use it; it is free of charge."

Visit the Autshumato website for more information on the project:

<http://autshumato.sourceforge.net/>

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## CTexT<sup>®</sup> maak groot impak op meertaligheid met Autshumato

Die Sentrum vir Tekstegnologie (CTexT<sup>®</sup>) van die Noordwes-Universiteit (NWU), Potchefstroomkampus, bevorder vertaling en kommunikasie in Suid-Afrika deur middel van die Autshumato-masjienvertalingsprojek.

Autshumato is 'n reeks oopbronvertaalsagteware en hulpmiddels wat deur CTexT<sup>®</sup> ontwikkel en bestuur word. Dit word reeds gebruik deur die Nasionale Taaldiens, vertalers in die parlement, die NWU se Institusionele Taaldirektoraat, die Universiteit van Johannesburg, en die Universiteit van die Vrystaat; en die program is al afgelaai deur gebruikers in China, Spanje, Denemarke en Noorweë.

Die Departement van Kuns en Kultuur (DKK) het onlangs die derde komponent van die Autshumato-projek aan CTexT<sup>®</sup> toegeken. Hierdie volgende fase van die projek behels die ontwikkeling van 'n masjienvertalingsstelsel vir nog 'n taalpaar, asook om die bestaande stelsels beskikbaar te maak vir 'n wyer groep gebruikers. CTexT<sup>®</sup> sal vir die volgende drie jaar aan die projek werk en dit uitbrei.

Volgens mnr Wildrich Fourie, projekteier, het die eerste Autshumato-projek in 2007 begin toe die DKK besef het dat taaltegnologie meertaligheid in die land kan bevorder. "Dit was veral vir hulle belangrik dat regeringsdokumente en amptelike kommunikasie duidelik verstaanbaar moes wees vir almal vir wie dit bedoel is."

Die DKK het die visie gehad dat Autshumato in die oopbrondomein moes wees – dus vryelik beskikbare sagteware en hulpbronne om kommunikasie in al die land se amptelike tale maklik, verstaanbaar en doeltreffend te maak. Al die gepubliseerde hulpbronne is ook vryelik beskikbaar aan die publiek.

Die eerste Autshumato-projek het gefokus op die ontwikkeling van masjienvertaalstelsels vir vertaling van Engels na isiZulu, Sesotho en Afrikaans. Die tweede projek het gefokus op vertaling van Engels na Xitsonga, en die derde projek sal fokus op vertaling van Engels na Setswana. Wildrich sê die uiteindelige doel is om vertaalvermoëns vir al die amptelike tale te hê.

Me Sunny Gent, projekbestuurder van die Autshumato projek, sê die projek bevoordeel almal in die land. "Ons is baie trots op Autshumato. Ons nooi almal uit om dit te gebruik; dit is gratis."

Besoek gerus die Autshumato webtuiste vir meer inligting oor die projek:

<http://autshumato.sourceforge.net/>

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### Kontakbesonderhede vir meer inligting:

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