Rome, the 14th December 2007

The International Telematic University UNINETTUNO, the University of Roma Tre and the Virtual Italian Parks, the Italian academic and technological excellence poles in the field of distance university education and communication by the new media celebrate the New Year on SECOND LIFE

Maria Amata Garito, President of UNINETTUNO: "The challenge is to fill our University campus on Second Life like and even more than discos"

The International Telematic University UNINETTUNO – Island of Knowledge on Second Life
http://slurl.com/secondlife/International%20Telematic%20University/123/16 5/33

Rome, the 20th December 2007
A great year-end Ball on Second Life, organised by the INTERNATIONAL TELEMATIC UNIVERSITY UNINETTUNO and by the UNIVERSITY OF ROMA TRE, in collaboration with the VIRTUAL ITALIAN PARKS, to celebrate the arrival of 2008 with the Italian and foreign students' avatars. The "virtual" party, but not only, was held today, Thursday the 20th December on the island of knowledge of the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO, the first Italian university that has realised a virtual campus on Second Life, and that has involved hundreds of students and teachers from all over the world who took part in the event with their avatars, the virtual character to which one entrusts his own identity on Second Life.

Not only a virtual party, since, at the same time, at 5:00 pm, at the head office of the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO in Rome, there was a year-end toast further to the agreement for the realisation of distance university courses signed by UNINETTUNO President, Prof. **Maria Amata Garito**, and the Rector of Roma Tre, Prof. **Guido Fabiani**. So doing, the real world and the virtual world celebrated together the New Year. Actually, at Rome site of UNINETTUNO the cameras filmed and aired the pictures on the virtual island, where the invited people's avatars gathered, while at the same time the virtual party on Second Life was connected live with UNINETTUNO party.

The Rectors, Garito and Fabiani, sent their message to the virtual students and, with the guests who were in Rome and those being on Second Life touched glasses simulating the arrival of the midnight of the New Year. The whole event, actually, which will include some pictures of the real party and of the virtual one, will be broadcast at midnight of the 31st December 2007 Rai Nettuno Sat 1 satellite channel to toast to the New Year. Many were the foreign students, above the Egyptian ones enrolled in the UNINETTUNO University (120 approximately are attending at distance UNINETTUNO courses in Cairo at the Technological Poles

set up the Helwan University and at Don Bosco Institute). Precisely in the Arab countries UNINETTUNO has cooperation relationships with the best universities and 31 technological poles set up in 11 countries. For the first time the real world, that one of Second Life and the satellite television got together to create a synergy of media that was highly innovative in communication terms: TV and Internet made real the second telematic life transforming it into a tool for dialogue, above all among younger generations.

The technical management of the Event on Second Life was carried out by **Virtual Italian Parks**, the first in Italy to work in this field, which realised the well-known and very popular Parioli Island on Second Life, leader in the field of professional services to companies based on virtual reality technologies. Virtual Italian Parks, beside supervising the presence on Second Life of leading Italian and multinational companies, is realising a technological platform based on virtual reality, named as Moondus, suited to realised futuristic educational projects, overcoming physical distances existing between professors and students. Ing. **Bruno Cerboni**, CEO of Virtual Italian Parks, attending the event, pointed out that the new partnership with UNINETTUNO, leader in the field of distance university education and in the use of the new learning technologies and the Virtual Italian Parks, leader in the services based on virtual reality, will be able to generate new metaphors for learning in 2008, enhancing the quality of the services offered to the UNINETTUNO students.

UNINETTUNO is already using Second Life to test new learning processes, that they find in their university to overcome geographical and cultural distances, on its virtual campus and to make many distance students from all over the world and from the Mediterranean area in particular interact, to get to know each other and exchange cultures, opinions and life styles. The next step will be to send to the faculties' buildings realised on UNINETTUNO island, the university video courses in 4 languages that they made well known in Italy and in the world the didactic and pedagogic model of the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO, which can currently be watched free on Rai Nettuno Sat 1 satellite channel (nr. 822 of the Sky package) and on the didactic portal in four languages: Italian, French, English and Arabic. www.uninettunouniversity.net, realised by the best professors of the Italia, European and Arab countries universities.

The real universities that are now operating on Second Life are more than 100; many American universities, but their campuses are often empty and there is no true interrelations among the enrolled students on Second Life who prefer go to the discos and to other place of entertainment of the virtual reality. <The challenge that the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO wanted to set with the Year-End Great Ball on Second Life – the President of the International Telematic University UNINETTUNO, Prof. Maria Amata Garito, remarked – is to fill with people the university campuses on Second Life like and more than the discos, to show, by means of our multimedia didactic contents, to the new generations how new technologies can become a tool for cultural dialogue and interrelation> Prof. Garito concluded.