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| INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2009-2012 | | **Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and human Factors (JCA-AHF)** |
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This document is submitted for information.

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| Telecommunication Development Sector  Study Groups | |  | |
| Second Meeting of ITU-D Study Group 1 | |  | |
| Geneva, 5-9 September 2011 | |  | |
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| Question 20-1/1: Access to telecommunication services and information and communication technologies (ICTs) by persons with disabilities | | | |
| SOURCE | Vice-Rapporteur for Question 20-1/1 | | |
| TITLE | Report of the Rapporteur's Group meeting on Question 20-1/1, Geneva 12 May 2011 | | |
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**1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

The Vice-Rapporteur for Question 20-1/1 Mr. Faruk Güven, Türk Telekomünikasyon A.S., Turkey, opened the meeting by welcoming all collaborators and participants, and noted that he had been requested to chair the meeting by the Rapportuer, Ms. Clara Luz Alvarez, Mexico, who was not able to join the meeting.

The agenda, available in document [RGQ 20-1/1/001-E](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\sund\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.IE5\QMEP8LPE\001EV2.docx), was adopted without change.

Vice-Rapporteur Güven introduced the other Vice-Rapporteurs present at the meeting Mr. Robert Alabatena (Cameroon), Mr. Michel Lemaître (Viable France, France), Mr. Abdoulaye Dembelé (Mali), and Ms. Andrea Saks, Convenor, Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA). The fifth Vice-Rapporteur for the Question, Mr. Yasumitsu Tomioka (Japan), was unable to participate in the meeting.

**2. Review of the main conclusions of the previous Rapporteur’s Group Meeting on Question 20-1/1 (held on 21 September 2010) and relevant outcomes of WTDC-10 and PP-10**

Vice-Rapporteur Güven reviewed the main conclusions of the previous Rapporteur’s Group meeting held on 21 September 2010, referring to its report (Document [1/REP/6(Rev.1)-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-SG01-R-0006/en)), and noting that this is the second study period to focus on a Question related to access to telecommunications for persons with disabilities who are reported to make up 10 per cent of the world’s population. While the first period (2006-2010) addressed general issues related to accessibility for persons with disabilities, mainly focused on telecommunications, the second (2010-2014) will expand its scope to include information and communication technologies (ICTs). The work on Question 20-1/1 will build on the previous work in this Rapporteur’s Group.

The last meeting included contributions from the BDT Focal Point, Turk Telecom, Mali and the JCA Convenor. Vice-Rapporteur Güven noted the need for all members to contribute to Question 20-1/1. He suggested creating an e-mail list, and proposed developing a final report that is useful for governments, regulators, operators and other members of society that identifies solutions that allow persons with disabilities to benefit from ICTs. The goal is to have a first draft of the report for the September 2011 meeting, reflecting new contributions.

Vice-Rapporteur Güven noted that Microsoft has accessibility documentation available on the ITU Academy portal that is available in two ITU languages. He suggested requesting Microsoft to translate these materials also into the other official ITU languages. He further suggested inviting experts from the European Commission to the September meeting, noting the EC is very active in accessibility issues and could share their practices. While the Study Group Question targets developing countries, much of the accessibility work is being done by developed countries so it is necessary to invite developed countries to share their experiences.

**3. Study of relevant input documents, including Liaison Statement (if any)**

In addition to Document [1/REP/6(Rev.1)-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-SG01-R-0006/en), the Report of the last Rapporteur’s Group on Question 20-1/1 on 21 September 2010) containing the Draft work programme for Question 20-1/1 for 2010-2014 (discussed in section 5 and 6 below), eight contributions and two information documents were submitted to this meeting of the Rapporteur’s Group. Vice-Rapporteur Güven invited those having submitted contributions to present them briefly.

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| Title | Source | Doc. No. |
| Follow-up to and application of Resolution 175 (Guadalajara, 2010) | Mali | [RGQ 20-1/002-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0002/en) |
| Report on Special Initiatives activities related to persons with disabilities | BDT Focal Point | [RGQ 20-1/003-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0003/en) |
| Current activities of the ITU-T with respect to accessibility | United States of America | [RGQ 20-1/004-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0004/en) |
| Draft Report on National Legal and Policy Frameworks to Promote ICT Access by Persons with Disabilities | BDT Focal Point | [RGQ 20-1/005-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0005/en) |
| Emergency services and accessibility | Rapporteur for Question 20-1/1 | [RGQ 20-1/006-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0006/en) |
| Making television accessible | BDT Focal Point | [RGQ 20-1/007-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0007/en) |
| Mobile Accessible and Assistive Technologies and Services for Persons with Disabilities | BDT Focal Point (Presentation by Mr. Axel Leblois Executive Director G3ict) | [RGQ 20-1/008-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0008/en) |
| Power Point Presentation on PP Resolution 175 | BDT Focal Point (Presentation by Ms Andrea Saks, Convener of Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA) in ITU-T, also Coordinator of Internet Governance Forum Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability) | [RGQ 20-1/009-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0009/en) |
| Draft Work Programme for Question 20-1/1 | Rapporteur Question 20-1/1 | [1/REP/6(Rev.1)-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-SG01-R-0006/en) and [1/41-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-SG01-C-0041/en) |
| Information Document: About the ITU Academy | BDT Programme 4 | [RGQ 20-1/INF/001-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-INF-0001/en) |
| Information Document: Liaison Statement on Child Online Protection (COP) | ITU-T Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF) | [RGQ 20-1/INF/002-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-INF-0002/en) |

The BDT Focal Point presented the contribution available in document [RGQ 20-1/003-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0003/en) highlighting the work of the BDT, including the e-Accessibility toolkit (<http://www.e-accesibilitytoolkit.org>) and the Connect a School, Connect a Community initiative, two forthcoming reports being prepared by BDT with its partner, the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict) on Mobile Phone Accessibility and Making TV Accessible, and identified these, as well as emergency communication, as some of the main issues related to accessible ICTs for persons with disabilities.

The discussion highlighted the need to also include aging populations in the work of this Question. The participants were advised that the World Health Organization and the World Bank will publish the World Disability Report in June 2011, and that it may contain more up-to-date data on the numbers of persons with disabilities. The high cost of developing accessible ICTs was noted as a challenge. Participants were reminded of the need for universal design to keep costs affordable, and that work is underway in this area in ITU-T.

Ms. Andrea Saks, the JCA Convener, presented contribution [RGQ 20-1/004-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0004/en) entitled “Current activities of the ITU-T with respect to accessibility” highlighting the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau’s efforts related to ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 175 (Guadalajara, 2010), including the use of electronic meeting tools to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities. The JCA Convener noted the work of the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility for the Internet Governance Forum as well as a workshop in November 2010 that gave rise to a new Focus Group on Audiovisual Accessibility. She encouraged participants to consult the ITU-T JCA webpage which includes many documents and Resolutions of interest (<http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Pages/default.aspx>). Ms. Saks also informed the Group that ITU was creating a Task Force to establish accessibility policies in ITU (accessible meetings, physical plant, etc), noting a general fund would be created for meeting accessibility, and that it is hoped that the Task Force will report on progress in implementing PP Resolution 175, the first Resolution passed by a UN agency, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The representative from Mali presented document [RGQ 20-1/002-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0002/en), “Follow-up to and application of Resolution 175” (Guadalajara, 2010), noting that following the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN agencies and Member States have modified their way of viewing persons with disabilities, focusing now on social protection. The CRPD requires State Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure persons with disabilities have access to ICTs. The representative from Mali proposed ITU Member States to adopt guidelines, within their legal framework, to introduce accessible telecommunication/ICTs to enable persons with disabilities to utilize these services on an equal basis and to participate actively in the accessibility-related work of ITU. The representative from Mali reminded the participants of the need to include persons with disabilities in developing their policies, following the motto, “Nothing about us without us.”

Mr. Lemaître (Viable France, France) indicated his support for document RGQ 20-1/002-E presented by Mali, urging all members of the Study Group to also support its conclusions, especially the need to include disabled persons in our work. The involvement of Mr. Dembelé in the work of this Study Group Question is very relevant in this regard.

The representative from Burkina Faso, noted subregional policies including persons with special needs that have been transposed into legislation of most countries. Due to costs of accessible ICTs, most work has been at achieving community access rather than individual access for persons with disabilities. The representative from RéCATIC noted the need also to educate and train persons with disabilities so they can use the services put at their disposal. The importance of including a full range of stakeholders was noted, including persons with disabilities, consumer groups, civil society, regulators, policy makers and service providers.

The BDT Focal Point presented document [RGQ 20-1/005-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0005/en), “Draft Report on National Legal and Policy Frameworks to Promote ICT Access by Persons with Disabilities.” She explained that this report is based on the Mobile Phone Accessibility report that BDT and its partner G3ict plan to publish later this year. It includes a description of the accessibility policies, legislation and regulations in 12 countries as well as the European Union. She invited the covered countries to review and comment on the reported description of their accessibility policies, legislation and regulations to improve the report. She also invited all participants to contribute similar summaries of their policy, legal and regulatory accessibility measures to this Study Group Question, a request echoed by Vice-Rapporteur Güven. The representative from Tanzania indicated it would submit a contribution on its national laws.

Mr. Axel Leblois, Executive Director of G3ict, invited by the Rapporteur as an expert, presented document [RGQ 20-1/008-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0008/en), “Mobile Accessible and Assistive Technologies and Services for Persons with Disabilities”. His presentation is based on the content of a forthcoming report to be issued by ITU and G3ict, on Accessible Mobile Phones, which will include a description of a number of accessibility features required for people with hearing, vision, speech, dexterity and cognition impairments. Because mobile phones are the number one ICT platform in the world, and due to the powerful accessibility solutions that can be made available on mobile phones, he identified a need to encourage mobile service provides to embrace delivering accessible services. Mr. Leblois noted that the technology exists today and cost is not a barrier. If regulatory agencies understand the technology they can ask operators to provide these services. Regulators could act by listing accessible specifications, negotiating with operators and disabled persons organizations and establishing charters for providing accessible handsets and services. He suggested that regulators could also brain storm with mobile operators and identify incentives for them to provide accessible mobile phones and services.

Some operators in both developed and developing countries have already begun selling accessible mobile phones and services, which has proved to be a great business opportunity, enabling operators to increase their market share, he added. Mr. Leblois identified cloud-based technologies that allow mobile service providers to house accessible applications on their server and provide them to persons with disabilities who can use them on low cost handsets. He demonstrated a number of exciting mobile phone applications for persons with disabilities, including by showing You Tube videos, e.g. of a mobile phone application that reads the value of bank notes so blind users are not cheated when given change. Application developers are making money on such applications; they cost little to persons with disabilities and provide new customers to mobile operators, offering tremendous market dynamics. The presentation also highlighted features such as text to speech (TTS) and voice recognition that can also serve illiterate users. One example is an Egyptian mobile operator which purchased a bulk license for TTS screen reader software, enabling it to make TTS available to blind users for free.

The representative from the BDT’s Human Capacity Building Division presented information document [RGQ 20-1/INF/001-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-INF-0001/en) on ITU Academy (<http://academy.itu.int>), demonstrating the available information on accessibility and ICTs. Participants requested that a link to the e-Accessibility toolkit and the JCA website be added to the ITU Academy portal, and there was an offer by G3ict to provide curricula on accessibility that could be used by employers and for ITU employees.

Mr. Peter Looms, representing the European Broadcasting Union, and the Chair of a new ITU-T Focus Group on Audiovisual Accessibility, was invited by the Rapporteur as an expert to present document [RGQ 20-1/007-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0007/en). His presentation was based on the content of a forthcoming report to be issued by ITU and G3ict, on Making TV Accessible. The report identifies the accessibility challenges and solutions, including the need to provide emergency alerts for people who are deaf, improve sound quality and visual contrast, provide affordable solutions, and adopt an evidence-based approach to Universal Design. Mr. Looms identified solutions such as captions for the deaf and hard of hearing, visual signing (e.g. for those born deaf), audio description (which sets the scene for blind users), multi-lingual solutions, age-related accessibility (including older persons who may be unable to understand fast speech or slang and children who may not be able to read captions so need dubbing or lectoring). The need to condense text in captions, and timing caption display with the dialogue were identified as challenges. He spoke about how captioning in multiple languages, now possible with digital television, can enable immigrants to understand local news and culture and thereby promote social inclusion. The report will also discuss the cost of providing accessible TV, funding options, and the need to provide carrots and sticks to build broadcasters’ motivation. The presentation also highlighted the newly launched ITU-T Focus Group on Audiovisual Accessibility which will hold its first meeting on 26 May and run through December 2012.

Ms. Saks presented Document [RGQ 20-1/006-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0006/en), “Emergency services and accessibility.” The report identified a number of measures that must be taken to ensure that persons with disabilities are able place calls to emergency services and to receive calls back from emergency services, including the need for relay services. Ms. Saks also presented document [RGQ 20-1/009-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-C-0009/en) on Resolution 175 of the 2010 Plenipotentiary Conference, providing further details to her morning presentation. She further introduced information document [RGQ 20-1/INF/002-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-RGQ20.1.1-INF-0002/en), a Liaison Statement from the ITU-T Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF) on Child Online Protection, to protect disabled children who may not understand cybersecurity threats such as phishing. The Vice-Rapporteurs from Viable France and Mali underscored the importance of this issue, noting that they would provide a contribution on this issue for the next meeting.

**4. Review of work plan for the study period**

In reviewing the work plan ([1/41-E](http://www.itu.int/md/D10-SG01-C-0041/en)) for the Question, the Group decided that no changes to the work plan were necessary at this point in time.

**5. Collaboration with Other Question in Study Groups 1 and 2 and with relevant BDT Programmes**

No additional Questions or Programmes were proposed.

1. **Collaboration with other Sectors and Organizations**

No additional collaboration was proposed.

1. **Approval of output documents**

Vice-Rapporteur Güven noted that he plans to submit a draft outline of the report for the September 2011 meeting, which depends on contributions for the report.

**8. Place and date of the next Rapporteur’s Group meeting**

The next meeting will be held the week of 5-9 September 2011. The exact date of the next meeting will be communicated in due course.

**9. Any other business**

Vice-Rapporteur Güven thanked the Vice-Rapporteurs, the BDT Focal Point, and all experts and participants for their enthusiasm.

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