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Caption transcript

>> CHAIR: I would like to give the floor to the chair of that group. The report of the meeting held on the 11th of June of this year, and the reference document is TD487. So Ms. Saks, as we have agreed, you have seven minutes to make your presentation.

So please proceed.

United States.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Got it. There we are. Thank you very much. Thank you, Bruce.

I would just like to point out for the moment, I'm going to give the report, but I'm going to state at this particular time and you will signal me when I have one minute left, that I'm going to come back to 4.1.2, the pilot project on audio‑based navigation systems at the ITU.

So wherever I am, just put that finger up and then I will discuss that, because that's very pertinent to persons with disabilities.

For those of you who don't know me, and I do see new faces. Most people say everybody knows you, but you will in time, if you don't. I have been doing accessibility in the ITU since 1991. We have come a long way, but every once in a while, we get into all sorts of funny things when new technology comes about and people don't recognize that they might have to look a little further or consult.

The JCA is an organization formed in the T sector and with the cooperation of TSAG, it became ‑‑ TSAG became the parent group of the JCA. It has the mandate to take care of what's happening in T and also in D and R. So this report encompasses several areas of work, not only ‑‑ I love the person who is covering up my face.

(Laughter).

I thought I was prettier thank you.

Anyway. I would like you to ‑‑ hold on to ‑‑ I'm not going to do 4.12, I will go straight ‑‑ I will do that at the end.

To ITU‑R. ITU‑R has dealt with interference for hearing aids and is still doing that with frequency ranges, because sometimes people design something, and they don't realize that a person with a hearing aid will be in the vicinity and there will be buzzing and interference and they won't be able to use their devices. So there are recommendations. 1076, wireless communications for persons with impaired hearing.

And this is especially true of broadcasting situations. So ‑‑ and tapping into the potential of AI, which is what we have been talking about. We need to look at that very carefully so we don't design something that will exclude persons with those problems who also wear those devices.

So we have been looking at that. And we check and go to these meetings as well, just to remind everyone to do that, and some of our people actually do write their ‑‑ several people in particular who do work in the R area and report back to the JCA.

We have a whole list of events that happened in the ITU, which I don't actually organize, but they tell me what's going on and I have a wonderful Secretariat who is in the back Caru would puts this together to make sure that I know what's going on if I can't get there myself and she has put together a wonderful paragraph on Jaroslav ponder's events for the ITU regional office for Europe, and we have done events where we do have, we are in strange places and we try to bring a lot of people together to discuss what is going on in the country that we are in other areas. The pain one is the forum on innovation of digital solutions for accessible Europe. He runs that.

And this was a forum at the Zero project where this was done and this was done in Austria.

And then this was the ITU workshop on enhancing life using eservices. I'm not going to read it all to you, because I think you ought to take a look at that to see if your country or your administration might fit some work in here, because we could use more participation.

And then this' the ITU workshop on the future of television. Now, this is really important because as TV moves more and more away from terrestrial and on to digital, there will be other problems that occur, for instance, that we do have things for sign language and there are people who are not literate in spoken languages and require that. How do we put that in? Whether it's open, whether it's closed, and by the way, open means you see it and you can't turn it off. Closed means you can turn it off at will.

So this is ‑‑ this is an important area that Jaroslav Ponder does and he works very hard at that, indeed.

Then we have Chaesub Lee, the director of the T, the ITU‑T, who I quite enjoy working with, because he gives me a good run for my money. And I have got a list of all the recommendations under the T sector. The T sector really does a lot of work in accessibility with Chaesub's support and it wouldn't happen without the money he gives us.

One the things I would like to thank him for is this year, unfortunately Council didn't give us the top up and we have been totally dependent on his generosity in finding money. Because we pay to have persons with disabilities come and give us their expertise, and that means sign language interpreters. And I don't know if people understand that you have to have three language interpreter for each sign language. Every country has a different one. So far we only have to deal with two. And they come and they make sure that we do things correctly, that they tell us what they need, what doesn't work, what works and they come from many different countries, and work specifically with the T sector in question 26.

What is remarkable ‑‑ that's in Study Group 16. Study Group 2 and Study Group 20 independent of Study Group 16 has begun to do accessibility work. And some of that is for transportation, and that's in Study Group 20. And Study Group 2, I can't remember what they do, forgive me, my brain is ‑‑ I'm having a brain freeze.

But the T supports accessibility to the nth degree. You see the ITU‑T JCA. I run around all over the place trying to keep track of what people are doing, if there are problems or a misunderstanding or they need to have more information, I try to provide that.

We have got people who come also and visit us from the United Nations High Commission On Human Rights, and we had a special person come this time. We had somebody come from the autistic association. We never had a person. We had blind people. We had people who are deaf, people who are hard of hearing and the two groups are the same. One needs volume and one needs visual. So they are to be called the hearing impaired because they have different solutions. The autistic minority came to us and explained what they needed. It was extraordinary. It was totally different from what I expected.

Kaouru wrote a very good paragraph to autism. I grew up in a deaf home, that I know. And Masahito is the rapporteur for question 26 and he has been with us a long time and helped us a great deal in other areas.

Now, we have done something important for you all to take a look at, and if you go down to page 5, at the bottom, you have SSTPAM2015 and FTPRAMPART, they tell you ‑‑ it's a guide line for an accessible meeting. A guideline for accessible meetings means that you can have people who have disabilities can participate and they can follow what's going on and also for remote participation. Nobody ever did that before and we want you to take a look at those and use them.

Now, there are issues here about testing for T coils that's again, for people with hearing impairment, difficulties in accessing communication and information for services on the Internet, using skills of deaf interpreters, sign language. It's so important. I had to fight to get this captioning that you have. I was first person to start screaming, because of my parents needing it for television and that's how I knew it existed. I used to have a problem with one of the Secretary Generals saying to me, don't use the C word, because it meant to spend money. And this is the problem. Spending money, it costs money to be accessible.

Now, my dad ‑‑ I got the one minute. I'm switching to the other thing and then I will be done, speaking of costing money, we go back to that other section. 4.1.2. Pilot project on audio‑based navigation systems at the ITU. It took me all day to find out what we had chosen as the ITU.

We had studied both of them in question 26. We saw both of them. We found out that the one we didn't like was the one that was chosen and we found out it was because it was probably less in cost.

We feel kind of let down by this, because not only was the other one, which is done by WayFinder, not AudioSpot was a member of the ITU and passed it through the correct procedure and standardized and the other group was not. The group which is made up of persons with disabilities found and felt that that was not the satisfactory system.

Unfortunately, it still happens that even in the most wonderful place like the ITU, that has supported my work for such a long time, something drops and we miss something. We need to go back and take a look at that, because that was not taken into account. The people who do the work here, who make things accessible and write the standards were not consulted. And now you have a good idea of what I do. I drive you all mad and tell you what to do, but it's with love. And thank you, Bruce, for the little extra time. Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Thank you very much, Andrea, as usual, for your interesting presentations.

Ladies and gentlemen, are there any comments or questions you wish to raise? United Kingdom, please.

>> UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. It's Study Group 2 chair. We took a mention during the presentation from Ms. Saks on the JCA‑AHF, and to clarify the role of Study Group 2, what we have done, we have granted use of the global telephone code for trials for a year to assess the viability of a ‑‑ of an accessibility product. While we granted the use, what we actually did was we advised Chaesub to grant the use as it is Chaesub's responsibility as the director of TSB for the assignment reclamation and use of such global codes.

So that's running for a year. We'll have an update, I'm hoping in December and then looking at sometime next year, as to what stages and activities we can take forward.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR: Yes, thank you very much for that information. So I see no further requests for the floor. Thank you, Andrea, for your presentation. And we take careful note of the points you have particularly raised.

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