|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| D:\usr\campos\TSB-Reference\Logos\ITU\sigleITU.gif | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION**TELECOMMUNICATIONSTANDARDIZATION SECTOR**STUDY PERIOD 2017-2020 | JCA-AHF-379 |
|  |  | **JCA-AHF** |
|  |  | **Original: English** |
| **Question(s):** | N/A | Geneva, 10 October 2019 |
| **DOCUMENT** |
| **Source:** | ITU General Secretariat |
| **Title:** | Special Track: ICT Accessibility (WSIS Forum 2019 and WSIS Forum 2020) |
| **Purpose:** | Information |
| **Contact:** | Gitanjali SahITU General Secretariat | Tel: +41 22 730 6240Fax: +41 22 730 64 53 E-mail: gitanjali.sah@itu.int |
| **Keywords:** | Accessibility; ICT; WSIS; Forum; Inclusive; Disabilities; SDGs |
| **Abstract:** | Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) should be available, accessible and affordable for all. WSIS Forum 2019 introduced a new special track this year: WSIS Accessibility Day, which took place on 8 April 2019. The day focused on five main issues, namely Security, Communication, Mobility, Education and Emergency. The day comprised of full-day dedicated workshops on ICTs and Accessibility to discuss and share experiences on the application of innovative ICTs in empowering people with disabilities and persons with specific needs. In addition, the track aimed to raise awareness on the critical role of ICTs to enable and accelerate the social and economic inclusion. This was also an opportunity for the WSIS stakeholders to engage with new stakeholders from the accessibility community. ICTs have become a positive force of transformation and a crucial element for inclusive development. This track will be continued for the upcoming WSIS Forum 2020. |

# Discussion

* People with disabilities represent some 10% of the world's population, but they are also among the most marginalised. Most of them still remain excluded from the digital transformations that are taking place around the world. Discussions on WSIS Accessibility Day highlighted the contribution of ICTs in improving the everyday life of persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs.
* The creation of ICT Accessibility Track is also relevant to foster discussions in implementing the WSIS Action Lines, including, among others: C2 (Ensuring appropriate infrastructure), C3 (enabling people with disabilities to gain access), C4 (building capacity amongst policy makers and practitioners, C5 (Safety online), C6 (creating an enabling environment), C8 (supporting the cultural diversity and identity of people with disabilities), and C10 (the moral agendas that are important in contributing to their empowerment).
* WSIS Forum 2019 was successfully organized the WSIS Accessibility Day, which featured five workshops: (i) *Digital technologies and accessibility: from rhetoric to reality (interactive hands-on workshop)*; (ii) *Safe Listening*; (iii) *Workshop on Accessibility for Emerging Technologies*; (iv) *Special Recognition Ceremony & Workshop on telecom relay services; and (v) Universal Design for Sustainable Development* organized by various WSIS stakeholders. A High-Level session on *ICT Accessibility: The Key to Inclusive Global Communication* was also organized at the Forum.
* The success and importance of this event day at the WSIS Forum 2019 was noticed and highlighted by all stakeholders who requested to make this event bigger and better in 2020.
* At the end of the WSIS Forum 2019, stakeholders requested the creation of thematic groups with regard to topics of interest for the next WSIS Forum, including Gender, Youth, Ageing, Sports, and Accessibility.

# Conclusion / Proposal /Proposals

* In collaboration with the WSIS Stakeholders and at their request, a WSIS Accessibility Group (WAG) will be created to promote the issue of ICT accessibility and to jointly identify the following, in preparation for the WSIS Forum 2020:
* Identify priority areas in ICT Accessibility
* Identify workshops titles and promote it with other new stakeholders
* Jointly look for funding to cover expenses related to the track.
* Identify start-ups and companies to showcase their technologies in this area.

Plan of Activities/Ideas for the WSIS Forum 2020

* Organize a WSIS ICT Accessibility Track with workshops, displays, knowledge café etc planned around the topic.
* **A session** focused on **ICT accessibility for autistic people**

This will be organised under the leadership of autistic persons and the representative organizations (i.e. autistic-led self-advocacy organizations, rather than parents' organizations, "experts", charities, or other stakeholders). Autistic Minority International would be willing to lead this session.

Tentative date to be held: 2 April 2020, which coincides with the UN’s World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD).

* Accessibility should be part of **every international and national standard** or recommendation. ICT must be an integral part of a disability-inclusive development agenda.
* To identify experts to represent persons with disability in the High-level Track, WSIS Talkx and so on.
* To **mainstream accessibility** into **every session of WSIS** on all days

Accessibility awareness is prominent. Accessibility should be a required topic for further discussion/comments in every session.

* To invite panellists/speakers to consider and report on any possible accessibility ramifications
* To share the latest technologies that improve inclusivity.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_