|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| D:\usr\campos\TSB-Reference\Logos\ITU\sigleITU.gif | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2017-2020 | | | | JCA-AHF-447 |
|  |  | | | | **JCA-AHF** |
|  |  | | | | **Original: English** |
| **Question(s):** | | N/A | Virtual Geneva, 2 September 2021 | | |
| **DOCUMENT** | | | | | |
| **Source:** | | Chairman of JCA-AHF | | | |
| **Title:** | | Draft report of JCA-AHF meeting, Virtual Geneva, 2 September 2021 | | | |
| **Purpose:** | | Admin | | | |
| **Contact:** | | Andrea Saks Chairman of JCA-AHF USA | | Tel: +44 1242 820 800 Fax: +44 1242 821 171 E-mail: [andrea@andreasaks.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:andrea@andreasaks.onmicrosoft.com) | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Keywords:** | JCA-AHF; accessibility; report |
| **Abstract:** | This document provides the draft report of JCA-AHF meeting (Virtual Geneva, 2 September 2021). |

Related links:

* [JCA-AHF webpage](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Pages/default.aspx)
* [Meeting documents page](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Pages/202109-docs.aspx)

1. Opening of the meeting

The JCA-AHF e-meeting was held on 2 September 2021 chaired by Ms Andrea Saks (USA), JCA-AHF Chairman. Interpretation of American Sign Language, British Sign Language, and Japanese Sign Language were provided. Japanese Sign Language was provided by courtesy of Mr Masayuki Inoue, associate professor of Tsukuba University of Technology, Japan. The list of participants is available on JCA-AHF [Document 446](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/April/JCA-AHF-Doc446.docx).

1. Approval of the agenda

The Chairman introduced the draft JCA-AHF meeting agenda and document allocation as contained in JCA-AHF [Document 434](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/April/JCA-AHF-Doc434.docx). It was approved by the JCA-AHF.

1. Approval of the last JCA-AHF meeting report

The Chairman introduced the report of the last JCA-AHF meeting jointly held with ITU-T Q26/16 (28 April 2021)(JCA-AHF [Document 433](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/April/JCA-AHF-Doc433.docx)), and it was approved by the JCA-AHF.

# ITU-T remote participation tool “[MyMeetings](https://remote.itu.int/)” (Gent Bajrami)

Mr Gent Bajrami, ITU-TSB Information Systems Officer, explained the functionality of [MyMeetings](https://remote.itu.int/) virtual meeting platform based on an Open-Source (BigBlueButton) solution customized by ITU-T TSB to meet the requirements of ITU-T meetings. This is completely web-based and requires no application installation. The platform is compliance with WCAG2.0 and Section 508 (see accessibility details at <https://bigbluebutton.org/accessibility/>). Closed caption is available on the platform. Since it is a web-based platform the space is limited, only the last three lines of captioning are shown on MyMeetings window. A separate webpage on captioning streamtext is always available. Mr Bajrami showed a demo on the platform.

Sign Language Interpreters can be shown at the same time on the right side of the screen of MyMeetings. It was suggested to have a test session with persons who are deaf.

MyMeetings uses voiceover IP calling and there is unfortunately no option of number-based calls for the time being, but there is a possibility to integrate it, if needed.

The presentation was well received by the JCA-AHF.

1. Q28/16 Safe Listening and Accessible health topics (Lidia Best and Masahito Kawamori)

Mr Masahito Kawamori from Keio University briefly reported the updates on the work of Q28/16. First, the group in collaboration with WHO, completed work on [HSTP-CONF-H870 "Testing of personal audio systems for compliance with ITU-T H.870](https://www.itu.int/pub/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=T-TUT-EHT-2021-CONFH870)"and it is published.

Second, the group, which also included members of JCA-AHF and Q26/16, in collaboration with WHO organized workshops and meetings on accessible telehealth. The draft of new Recommendation [F.ACC-TH “Accessibility of telehealth services”](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/Workshops-and-Seminars/dh/202106/Documents/ITU-WHO-Standard-Draft-20210618.pdf?csf=1&e=JieebB) was progressed.

1. ITU D update report on Accessibility

Skipped as no participation from ITU-D at this meeting. (Note to TSAG: Since ITU-D Question 7/1 meets just before TSAG in October 2021, an oral report will be provided by the JCA-AHF Chairman who is also a Vice Rapporteur of ITU-D Question 7/1.)

# Discussion Encouraging joint working collaboration between all 3 sectors at ITU – How to best do this (Andrea Saks)

This matter was addressed together with item 8 below. (Note to TSAG: The JCA-AHF Chairman will comment orally based on the comments of the ITU-D Question 7/1 meeting.)

# TSAG the parent group of the JCA-AHF: Accessibility Statement (Andrea Saks)

The JCA-AHF Chairman briefly mentioned on how to best collaborate with ITU-D and ITU-R. One way to do so is with the collaboration and utilisation of the JCA-AHF. The JCA AHF is empowered by its Terms of reference to send liaison statements to relevant groups when necessary. The [Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) on issues of mutual interest](https://www.itu.int/en/general-secretariat/Pages/ISCG/default.aspx) works on accessibility strategy, and the JCA-AHF Chairman will comment on their reports when it would be presented at TSAG.

# JCA-AHF webinar at WSIS Forum 2021, 4 May 2021 ICTs and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and specific Needs: [Accessible ICT during the Covid-19 Pandemic](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2021/Agenda/Session/414)

Ms Lidia Best briefly, JCA-AHF co-Vice Chair, briefly reported on the Webinar. Questions were raised on telecommunication relay services for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing and other disabilities, real-time captioning and other accessibility issues during the Pandemic, as well as webVRI (Video Remote Interpretation).

The recording is available from the [webinar webpage](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2021/Agenda/Session/414) and the presentations are available at the [JCA-AHF Webpage](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Pages/default.aspx). For easy reference the presentations are listed and linked from below:

* [Presentation](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/WSIS2021/Relay%20Services%20%20%20WSIS%20copy-REV1_Andrea%20Saks.pptx) by Andrea J Saks
* [Presentation​](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/WSIS2021/WSIS%202021%20version%202.pptx) by Lidia Best
* [Presentation](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/WSIS2021/WSIS_PPT_FORUM_2021_JCA-AHF-kawamori.pptx) by Masahito Kawamori​

# IGF (Internet Governance Forum) and DCAD (Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability) updates (Lidia Best)

Ms Best isthe liaison officer to IGF-DCAD from ITU-T JCA-AHF. She informed that the IGF would hold its annual event in Poland in December 2021with a hybrid format. IGF is in the process of developing new website and members of DCAD are invited to provide inputs on accessibility aspects. Mr Peter Crosbie, Ms Judith Hellerstein and Ms Best are temporary caretaker of DCAD after the resignation of Gunela Ms Asbrink, until a new coordinator or caretaker can be decided by the group.

# Mandatory Face Masks and the Inaccessibility of Virtual Events (Erich Kofmel)

Mr Erich Kofmel from Autistic Minority International, presented JCA-AHF [Document 439](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF%20Doc439.docx) via a pre-recorded video. His presentation addressed a number of situations that some persons with certain disabilities, especially persons who are autistic, are and have been facing during the Pandemic when participating in virtual UN events. Mr Kofmel raised the inaccessibility caused by, including, mandatory face masks, one-directional format of virtual events, and the lack of chat communication essential for many persons who are autistic. The JCA-AHF Chairman invited the meeting participants to read JCA-AHF [Document 439](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF%20Doc439.docx).

The presentation was well received by the JCA-AHF.

# Accessibility Issues at UN-led online event Generation Equality Forum 2021 in Paris (Rosario Galarza)

Ms Rosario Galarza from International Disability Alliance (IDA) presented JCA-AHF ​​​[Document 442](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHFDoc442.zip) on Exclusion of women and girls with disabilities during the GEF Paris. She explained concerns about the accessibility and inclusivity of the Paris Generation Equality Forum (GEF), which was held from the 30th of June to the 2nd of July. The existence of different accessibility barriers prevented all women and girls with disabilities from participating effectively and in a meaningful way during this forum. These concerns were gathered in a joint letter which was prepared by the European Disability Forum (EDF), International Disability Alliance (IDA), Femmes pour le Dire, Femmes pour Agir (FDFA), the Inclusive Generation Equality Collective (IGEC), Women Enabled International (WEI) and was endorsed by more than 200 individuals and organizations.

The presentation was well received by the JCA-AHF.

# Vision impairment, standardisation and WeThe15 (Gerry Ellis)

Mr Gerry Ellis is a co-Vice Chair of the JCA-AHF, who himself is blind and has worked in technology for a back in Dublin for 40 years and has just recently retired. He firstly emphasized the importance to say persons first, and disability after, when we address persons with disabilities. It is not only the question of language, but respect. Persons with disabilities are disabled by society, not by disabilities but incorrect terminology as well as a lack of implemented accessible technology. Secondly, he highlighted the importance of standardization, emphasized that there has been much work already done at ITU. He stated that he looks forward to seeing more standardization work related to accessibility to include persons with visual impairments, in helping their activities in both outdoor and indoor.

Mr Ellis also mentioned an initiative called WeThe15 which is promoting meeting of the needs of the largest minority in the world, i.e., persons with disabilities and those with specific needs.

Mr Kawamori, Rapporteur of Q26/16 and Q28/16, commented that there is a published standard [ITU-T F.921 (08/2018)](https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-F.921) - Audio-based indoor and outdoor network navigation system for persons with vision impairment. He invited to visit the webpage of [Question 26/16](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/studygroups/2017-2020/16/Pages/q26.aspx) to check its work on accessibility standardization.

# Use of automatic captioning the pros and cons (Lidia Best)

Ms Best reported on the feedback from the European Federation of the Hard of Hearing on the use of automatic captioning. She stated sometimes persons with hearing disabilities are faced with no choice of types of captioning, either human-generated or automatic captioning, when they participate in events. It depends on various situations, such as on the size of events, but it is important that event organizers understand automatic captioning cannot accurately reproduce the spoken words of the participants as well as when human generated captioning is used. Ms Lidia thinks it is necessary to raise awareness on this point, as situations are observed too often when there is no choice in types of captioning by persons with hearing disabilities attending meetings.

# Sign Avatars

# General Discussion by meeting re the Pros and Cons on the issues re: sign language interpretation by signing avatars Statements

No discussion was made at the meeting. (Note to TSAG: The JCA-AHF Chairman will explain the drawbacks of the use of Avatars for sign interpretation in meetings for persons with disabilities in live real time meetings.)

# NHK's Avatar Sign Language Interpretation during the Tokyo 2020 Olympics” (Masayuki Inoue, Tsukuba University of Technology; Masahito Kawamori)

Mr Masayuki Inoue, associate professor of Tsukuba University of Technology, Japan, introduced their experience on the use of Avatar Sign Language Interpretation on the NHK’s broadcasting program for the Tokyo Olympic games 2021. Automated sign avatars and automated captioning were provided live. The demo video (some videos are available [here](https://sports.nhk.or.jp/tokyo2020/universal/paralympic/signlanguage/)) was briefly shown, showing that the technology has improved, the pros are:  
- quality of CG avatar is improved considerably  
- successfully captured non-manual signals such as, slight movements of the eyes, eyebrows, facial expression around mouth, body shifting/head tilting.

However, improvements are still needed on the points such as:  
- considerable delay (about 5 seconds)  
- very limited patterns of sentences

Mr Inoue highlighted that the technology is still under way but improving, and he looks forward to seeing the continuation of the work.

# Cyber Security and potential issues for Persons with Disabilities and specific needs (Brian Copsey)

Mr Brian Copsey presented JCA-AHF [Document 441](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF%20Doc%20441.docx). He raised an issue of cyber security, especially on medical devices including devices for persons with disabilities, such as hearing aids and cochlear implants. Such devices coming under the EC Medical Directive are exempt, but they come under the Radio Equipment Directive and are subject to compliance with it. Mr Copsey suggested to consider there was a need to address this issue in greater details. He will provide more details and updates at the next JCA-AHF meeting.

# EC-ESOs dialogue on AI (Artificial Intelligence) standardisation – and other issues re with accessibility work in ETSI and ITU-R (Brian Copsey)

Mr Copsey presented JCA-AHF [Document 440​](https://staging.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF%20Doc440.docx). He raised an issue of AI for devices for persons with disabilities, such as hearing aids and cochlear implants. While the European Commission has started to discuss the topic, wider aspects should be discussed and considered, beyond the EC level. Mr Copsey suggested to discuss this topic further at ITU-T with more details and updates. Mr Kawamori stated that ITU-T Q26/16 already has a work item on AI, and he suggested to liaise with the groups involved with this topic.

# Relay services

# Current state of relay services in US during the pandemic (Seth Bravin)

Mr Seth Bravin, from an international communications carrier T-Mobile, reported the current state of relay services for persons with disabilities and those with specific needs, that there was a sharp increase of use in US during the pandemic. There are several reasons for this, such as the obligation of doing remote work and the increased use of relay services for health-related communication. Facing this situation, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued temporary waivers which will continue until December 2021. The first waiver is the pace of how fast an operator needs to answer the call, which is 85% of the calls needs to be answered within 5 seconds on a daily basis, and those which are extended to 85% need to be within 120 seconds on a monthly basis. The second waiver gives relay providers more flexibility to deal with the reduction in staffing and allowed operators and interpreters to work from home. The third waiver for video relay service providers is that they're allowing them now to work with contractors who can provide ASL interpreters part time, while before they used to all have to be full time.

The presentation was well received by the JCA-AHF.

# Gallaudet University USA (Christian Vogler)

Mr Christian Vogler from Gallaudet University reported issues of captioned telephone services (CTS) and video relay services (VRS) in USA. Facing the increase of the use of CTS, the FCC gave an approval to the first traditional CTS provider to provide Automated Speech Recognition (ASR) as part of its repertoire. Other providers may follow suit in applying and providing ASR as well. Mr Vogler emphasized that CTS users must be given choices around ASR versus human delivery methods. In addition, an in-call switch ability should be considered so that a caller who uses the ASR does not need to disconnect and recall when that person finds the ASR to be ineffective. Persons who are deaf may be those persons who do not have the spoken language of the relay as a first language, have voices are varied and not interpreted well by ASR.

Mr Volger then explained a concern around VRS, as the deaf community in USA has not been aware of the background of a new enterprise which has submitted an application to the FCC to provide VRS. This new enterprise does not seem to be connected to the community. Thus, attention should be continued to be made on this new player to see whether this group has any deaf-lead or deaf-centred approaches to VRS. Do they consult the def community was an unanswered question.

The presentation was well noted by the JCA-AHF.

# STIR/SHAKEN and relay Services (Chris Drake, iconectiv)

Mr Chris Drake presented JCA-AHF [Document 443](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHFDoc443.zip). STIR/SHAKEN is call authentication technology and was designed to mitigate the threat from illegal robocalls (including CLI spoofing with intent to do harm). Voice service providers who deploy Call Authentication will need to “attest” to the authenticity of the calling party number used in all call originations including relay calls. Relay services (e.g., signing, captioning, etc.) for voice service accessibility is an important use case for legitimate CLI spoofing. Determining the attestation level is based on SHAKEN guidelines and the local policy of every originating voice service provider. The local policy must address how full attestation could be provided for such legitimately spoofed relay calls. Their company, iconectiv, is the administrator of the eligibility criteria and enforcement point, and Mr Drake gave a presentation in a recent meeting of ITU-T SG2.

The presentation was well received with interest by the JCA-AHF with the consideration to study further the ramifications on Relay Services. The JCA-AHF Chairman invited Mr Drake to collaborate with Mr Bravin and Mr Vogler on standardization work at Q26/16.

# (How could we together enable) Global cross-border access to relay and all other forms of assisted telecommunications? - The status of work on international numbering resources for the provision of services of a humanitarian nature SG2 and SG16 update (Grigory Miloradov)

Mr Grigory Miloradov introduced the work of World Global Telecom (WGT) on their draft F.ACC-Humanitarian “Humanitarian global networks and services for global accessibility for persons with disabilities”. He eemphasized the need for a global cross-border access to relay services for all persons with disabilities especially when traveling, but many countries do not have any relay services at all. There were only 28 different relays services globally. A humanitarian global network would help persons with disabilities living in countries without relay services. It also would give a flexibility to those who may have already have access to relay services, in calling to any persons in the world no matter of their current location. Future work is planned, and contributions are welcomed.

## WebVRI (Video Remote Interpretation)

## Collaboration with UN-ESCAP and ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific on VRI and other aspects updates (Masahito Kawamori)

Mr Kawamori briefly updated the current activities on the collaboration with UN-ESCAP on VRI which was agreed at the last JCA-AHF meeting. They are currently progressing on the way forward. There are regional or national projects are emerging, and Mr Kawamori introduced the Croatian Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association which has started their project on VRI (see 19.2).

## Croatian Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association Work on VRI (Tea Domin, Zdravka Baštijan)

Ms Zdravka Bastijan from Croatian Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing introduced their project “Slavica” WebVRI. “Slavica” is the name of a famous Croatian deaf artist. They have developed a platform using WebVRI, by implementing ITU-T Technical Paper [FSTP-ACC.WebVRI](https://www.itu.int/pub/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=T-TUT-FSTP-2020-ACC.WEBVRI) “Guideline on web-based remote sign language interpretation or video remote interpretation (VRI) system”. This ITU-T Technical Paper was developed by Q26/16 and approved in July 2020. The project was started in May 2021 and has been continuing for the duration of 20 months. The project is funded by the European Union.

## Incoming Liaison Statements

The JCA-AHF Chairman invited the JCA-AHF members to read the incoming Liaison Statements below, and to provide feedback via email. All Liaison Statements are for information to the JCA-AHF.

## LS/r on Draft ITU-T Recommendation J.acc-us-prof “Common user profile format for audio visual content” [from SG9 to IRG-AVA] JCA-AHF [Document 435](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF-Doc435.docx)

## LS on approval of Technical Paper ITU-T HSTP.ACC-UC "Use cases for inclusive media access services" [from SG16 to ITU-T SG9, JCA AHF, IRG AVA] JCA-AHF [Document 436](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF-Doc436.docx)

## LS/r on invitation to provide inputs to the roadmap of AI activities for natural disaster management [from SG20 to FG-AI4NDM] JCA-AHF [Document 437](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF-Doc437.docx)

## LS on accessibility matters JCA-AHF [Document 438​](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf/Documents/docs-2021/September/JCA-AHF-Doc438.zip)

## Future events

Events in near future were noted by the Chairman.

* Joint meeting of SG9/Q11 and SG 16/Q26 on 22 September 2021
* SG 16 Q 28 on 8 September 2021
* ITU-D SG1 Question 7/1 on 14 October

1. Next JCA-AHF meeting

To be decided and announced accordingly.

## Closing

The JCA-AHF Chairman thanked all speakers of the meeting, participants, SL interpreters, captioner and TSB. She closed the meeting.

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