

06 Dec. 2008, 3rd IGF Meeting, Hyderabad, India

Hyderabad Declaration on IGF Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities - Proposed by the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD)

1. Recalling the historic number of signatories to the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as the impact of the Convention obligations on information and communication technologies, including the Internet;¹
2. Noting that the WSIS Declaration of Principles for Building the Information Society recognizes persons with disabilities world wide as stakeholders in the building of an inclusive Information Society;²
3. Being encouraged by the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to “promote and assess, on an ongoing basis, the embodiment of WSIS principles in Internet governance process” as directed in the Tunis Agenda, paragraph 72;³
4. Noting, however, with great concern that the disability perspective has not been fully integrated into the proceedings of the Internet Governance Forum partly due to both physical and programmatic barriers to participation by persons with disabilities;
5. Having high hope and confidence in the ultimate power of the united force, among persons with disabilities, IGF Dynamic Coalitions, stakeholders and friends in all sectors around the world, to work for a truly inclusive information society;
6. Therefore, we, participants of the Third Internet Governance Forum meeting held from 3 through 6 December 2008, in the City of Hyderabad, India:
 - a. Urge all governments to support the process of adoption, ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular the enactment of national legislation, as it contains strong elements concerning information and communication accessibility for persons with disabilities;
 - b. Strongly request that any international, regional and national IGF-related development program, funding or assistance, aimed to achieve the inclusive information society be made disability-inclusive, both through mainstreaming and disability-specific approaches;
 - c. Strongly urge that the needs of persons with disabilities be included in all aspects of designing, developing, distributing and deploying of appropriation strategies of information and communication technologies, including information and communication services, so as to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities,

¹ See UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities website at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>.

² See WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/4-E at <http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs/geneva/official/dop.html>.

³ See Tunis Agenda for the Information Society at <http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/6rev1.html>.

taking into account the universal design principle, existing standards, and the use of assistive technologies;

- d. Strongly urge that basic building blocks of assistive technologies, such as Text to Speech and Speech to Text software, Interactive Voice Command, Real time text solutions, Optical Character Recognition software and language rule tables for Braille transcription, are developed with high priority for all languages of all countries and licensed under an open source license, and open standards for structured access to oral and visual knowledge to enable development of various assistive technologies, such as screen reading software, text reading systems, talking mobile phones, talking ATMs, and real time text alternative communications that depend on these basic building blocks;
- e. Urge all governments to design ICT procurement and intellectual property policies in a way that promotes the adoption of vendor-neutral solutions, the acquisition of technologies that comply with open standards, and in general implement policies that enable and promote the availability of affordable assistive technologies, including open source software;
- f. Call upon all governments and participants to promote the active and equal involvement of persons with disabilities in all IGF projects, initiatives, and delegations and to make the implementation, evaluation and monitoring of IGF documents and communications to be inclusive of persons with disabilities since this action is paramount for achieving an inclusive society;
- g. Welcome the opportunity for the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD) to serve as the experts on accessibility for participants with disabilities and encourage other IGF organizations to join and contribute to the DCAD process of advising IGF in these matters;
- h. Propose to the MAG that a representative from the DCAD serve as an Observer at MAG meetings in order to mainstream the disability perspective and contribute information on accessibility matters; and
- i. Urge the IGF Secretariat and host countries for the IGF to address the DCAD accessibility recommendations concerning the problems encountered by persons with disabilities in their participation at IGF meetings and in their access to the IGF website and remote access hubs.⁴

⁴ See Dynamic Coalition paper on accessibility and disability at IGF meetings at <http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/index.php/dynamic-coalitions/80-accessibility-and-disability>.