ITU-Zero Project COSP14 Side Event 18th of June 2021

RATIH DEWI: Welcome to the ITU Zero Project special session on working in the EU and the importance of flexible work environments. So, the special session has a side event to a conference of the parties for the CRP D and our team for this year is building back better, COVID-19 response and recovery, meeting the needs, realising the rights and addressing social and economic impacts on persons with disabilities.   Let me quickly describe myself, ironing Asian woman with medium black straight hair, hopefully I still look like I am in my 20s, I am wearing a red dress and I'm sitting in my living room. I will be your moderator today for the session with my colleague from the Zero Project, Robin, if you could briefly introduce yourself.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you. So for those of you who can hear me but cannot see me, I am a white male in my early 30s, short brown cropped hair and wearing, according to the season, a light blue blazer with a striped dress shirt and a dark navy blue tie. I almost blending with my virtual background which is also very baby blue today and given that it is a joint event, I am on a virtual background and to the right and the left of me there is the Zero Project logo and a green seedling which emerges out of a low go circle and the ITU logo which is the words ITU over a blue circle. Those of you who would like to follow today's event in a separate caption viewer, perhaps with a font and captioning according to the speed you prefer, please follow along with the URL I have posted here, otherwise you will be able to see the live captioning in the Zuma window directly and also a big thank you to our international sign language interpreter today, Adam, and if I'm not mistaken, Susan. Thank you for making our event accessible today for all.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you Robin. So, I will explain about the captioning, and the ASL that is available here, I would also like to add that this assertion is recorded and the recording will be made available on the UN web cast and also on the webpage. So by staying in this meeting, we assume you will give us the consent to share this recording. During this session we ask you to kindly make sure that you meet yourself, to make the noise minimum. And we also encourage you to use the chat function in this meeting room, if you have any comments or questions throughout the session.   So we are delighted to be joined by Michael Fembek the director of Zero Project, and also we will be joined shortly, he is the head of the ITU office for Europe. So they will have a brief opening address for the session. I would like to invite first Michael to give his brief introduction. Michael?

MICHAEL FEMBEK: Hello, thank you. Thank you, it is an honour and a pleasure to reach you and open the session. I am a Michael Fembek and I am the director of the Zero Project. I am, I have already some grey-haired although I almost have all of them still, I am sitting in a pink shirt and what you see behind me if you can see me is a large chair since I am flying for the first time in 1 1/2 years to a family visit in London. So I am happy that this all worked out.   Just a few sentences before I hand back, we are really glad and happy to develop this cooperation with the ITU, our joint effort is to create an ecosystem of a way to work in the field of accessibility and inclusion related to ICT, we made some great progress in the last months of identifying and giving awards and of screening who should belong to this ecosystem and open this community up for new opportunities. That they would not have without us and without this corporation. That is the goal.   We are with the Zero Project, we are close to the finishing line of this years nomination, it ends in the next days, it is all on accessibility so if you are have an innovation that is related to accessibility which ICT is by definition based on, please do not hesitate to long as we are closing soon, nominate your innovation, it would be part of the Zero Project with all the merits that come with getting the award. But everything else we are doing we are joining with partners with the ITU, it is a great opportunity in the nomination process. We are all about working together and communication and networking.   Do not hesitate to

give us a call, send an email or getting contact in whatever way fits for you. So these are very general remarks, back to you. Thank you.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you Michael, for joining us from the airport. I would like to hand over next two Jarrow's.

JAROSLAW PONDER: I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our panellists who make the time to be with us today, in Europe region, digital accessibility is placed in the top priorities, it is reflected in our original initiatives for Europe, but also accessibility is one of the top priorities of the whole international and telecommunications Union. Which we, we have committed to make sure that enabling an environment, fostering development and enabling environment for the digital accessibility is thereby all countries by 2023. So, it is right around the corner and a lot of action is needed. A lot of partnership is required to advance this agenda at a global level. Of coming back to the Europe, this is the reason why we have started the Accessible Europe initiative and together with the European commission, we are making sure that we are addressing the importance and priorities with in the countries. Focusing on the capacity building, regional events for the awareness raising and knowledge exchanges. And very important, policy guidance and strategy developments with countries, for countries, what we are doing through technical assessments at a country level. We are pleased today also to join forces with the Zero Project to bring this critical discussion to you on the future of work and the elevated needs to also ensure this new setting to be inclusive for all people. Regardless of their ability, gender and age. I'm also delighted to learn that one of our winners from Accessible Europe competition of this year is joining in this discussion, we have been working for this past year and we identify innovative digital solutions inaccessibility through this contest and I take this opportunity to encourage all stakeholders in it knowing that the start-ups and research houses and other enterprises who are working on the accessibility solutions to join us and share with the community on the results of their work. And be a winner in the future. Just to close, let me thank our collaborator the Zero Project for bringing the accessibility features to this meeting, it is very important that we are very much inclusive, in particular in this discussion and I'm looking forward to our continuous and fruitful collaborations in the futures. Thank you very much.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you. We have more people joining us today, we also have five excellent panellists with us here, thank you so much for joining us today. So we will cite this with a five minute presentation and remark from each panellist on the topic and we will follow this with interactive discussions. We encourage you to post your comments or questions in the chat if you have any during the session. So without further or do, I would like to invite Roxanna to present. Roxanna is a senior worker on disability and inclusion and she has been working in ITU and the sector for over 23 years and contributes to her work and the goal of a digital inclusion with the Department of all people regardless of age, gender or limitations. The floor is yours.

ROXANNA WIDMER-ILIESCU: Thank you very much, thank you everyone, I'm very pleased to share this moment with you. And I will invite you to look at the first light of this presentation. So, digital transformation is requiring cultural change. So adapting new ways of thinking including the way we live, learn, buy and we work. So the first slide please. Yes, here I begin this presentation by sharing with you some of the last year addiction issued about future trends for a person with disability work opportunities. So this particularly worth noting that the expectation with only two years from now is that the number of persons with disabilities employed will triple due to artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. And from a business perspective, the person with disabilities inclusion in the work landscape will result in two many benefits such as a 70% increase in productivity, 89 in (inaudible) and almost 70% in profitability.

In parallel, European parliamentary board entitled the impact of teleworking and digital work on workers in society, published just two months ago, indicates based on a survey that almost 90% of the respondents agreed that telly work and ICT's based work in crude opportunities for people with disability. In addition 70% indicated that all opportunities or women, and 86 indicated that will also be profitable for work opportunities for people living in rural areas. COVID was levelling the playing field between disabled and non-disabled employees. And telly work was a silver lining for workers with disabilities and by now it proved the added value for inclusion in general. So since it is a key part of this digital caution which involves to being inclusive, it is clear that remote working is most likely going to remain a permanent feature of the future working environment to ensure inclusive of all people with disability. So as a result, we can say that COVID-19 was a b accelerator of digitalisation and an unmissable opportunity for all of us to ensure that no one is left behind. Now, COVID has accelerated the move to remote marking -- remote working. And also to the use of digital platforms. So, however, this can be also an opportunity for those with disabilities. I have presented here the chart on digital platforms adoption in Latin America issued last in November. And I think it is self-explanatory. This is also likely to be the case for other regions too. As you can see, the lack of connectivity, accessibility, did lack of digital skills and knowledge, is to get a barrier that can keep the digital getting better for Pearson with this ability if they (inaudible). Please. How to address this gap between the purpose and the activities to be taken. So, looking at the Google trends research, the following proportion of users surge in interest is in place. Very recently it was done this way. So, for each 96 searches for the terms of digital transformation, there is only eight search for web accessibility, and 460 Sir for remote work, there's only three search for web accessibility. So, my interpretation of this result is that we still lack of awareness raising and knowledge on the importance of web accessibility to achieve a successful digital transformation. A remote work. So, therefore to promote digital and social economic inclusion of persons with disabilities, mainstreaming ICT accessibility at all levels and by all stakeholders is key. Raising awareness, adoption of policies and strategies jointly with implementation of standards while developing capacity to learn how to communicate it digital accessible formats. Or even monitoring implementation, are among the key requirements which should be done jointly with end user representatives and involvement. So to support this effort ITU developed a freely available resource that can be used by all stakeholders engaged in the digital transformation and in digital inclusion processes. Among our last resources, I was invited to consult on particular our ICT accessibility assessment for the Europe region and the toolkit of self-assessment which is actually based on the CIPD articles towards building inclusive digital communities. Which will provide you all valuable guidelines to advancing accessibility implemented Asian. Additionally, a series of trainings free of charge as well as video tutorials are available to support global info mentation processes. Last slide please. So, finally we should all have in mind universal design principle and apply also in technology. In our work environments to ensure that it is inclusive for all our colleagues, customers and partners including those with disabilities. Along with this I will mention accessible accommodation in place, the use of accessible and assistive technology, the communication using only accessible formats for digital content and ensuring that the working tools are accessible for everyone. Overall, let's lead by example towards creating inclusive working environments to enable social any comic opportunities for everyone. In the very last slide I invite you and encourage you all to use and disseminate the ITU resources on ICT accessibility, to jointly ensure that nobody is left behind and we all contribute in building a more peaceful, better and inclusive digital world. Thank you for your attention.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you so much Roxana for sharing with us this important data and trend and also highlighting the opportunity and challenge for the future of work. So now I will move to our second speaker, David Barnes, David is director of access and services and cloak co-founder of global singers, he previously led assistive technology services in Europe and the Middle East and now works across the globe including projects in Africa and South Asia, to support access and infrastructure from policy to practice so David, over to you.

DAVID BARNES: Thank you very much. Again like over others, a short description I have been described as looking like Father Christmas in a white shirt with a badly trimmed beard. I won't describe my background on the grounds that it is a fake one of a bookcase and nothing like where I live or work. I want to build upon a little bit of what Roxana said but really try to drill this down into something which is quite practical. A lot of the work I have done recently around employment has these – has been this SMEs rather than lodge culprits, some of the thinking I'm going to share with you was driven a little bit by some of those changes. But with that, I just wanted to mention, Jack Dorsey of Twitter is often quoted as saying that during COVID and during the change that you new normal, employees can work at home for ever. But what is less often quoted is the rest of what he said in that statement which is if our employees are in a role and situation that enables them to work from home. To be very clear, I think that stage whilst impalas could work at home for ever, the setting, the role, the tasks undertook could have a huge impact on whether or not remote working, homeworking, hybrid working was going to be possible. It raises the question very early on in these conversations as to what criteria we base these types of decisions on? Importantly are they those criteria the same for everyone with a disability? To what extent our accommodations and added factor in the discussions that we are having? Understanding the scale of the transformation and what might need to be done to support and promote working from home or working from locations. It's quite important to understand, I was recently in a meeting with a similar discussion and after some 40 minutes where we had basically talked entirely about videoconferencing solutions, I asked the question would anybody in the room do any real work or did they just attend meetings? For many of us, the work we need to do, the tools we need to do to work on more about just talking to colleagues, to customers and so on. All the different aspects of the workplace need to be replicated across locations. Is going to include things like availability of files and data, how we create store, manage retrieve and share information. How would messaging communicate internally. Personally and in groups. How are project management tools and task allocation are operated. Time tracking tools, implications for security and use of VPNs. In one company, a larger company I met, they actually identified 75 different productivity tools in use. Many of those were actually developed for implantation within a network within a building rather than for remote access. So the role and the technologies that are in place will have a big impact upon access to those devices and people are going to need solutions to work from home. Computer, phone, headset, physical space, Wi-Fi connectivity, printer, scanner, tablet, desk, seating. We will need to explore how things like remote technical support and mentoring provided to people. As we add more strands and tears onto this for people with disabilities, the availability of a system of technologies and insurance that all of those productivity tools are accessible will become extremely important. But when we are talking about small and medium-sized businesses, the shift to accessibility and productivity tools, that can be used remotely may be beyond their reach. One of the charges we face as we look ahead is that many of the traditional workflows and the workarounds that people with disabilities have to develop with their colleagues and teams email no longer work, may no longer be effective in a remote setting. So we see a very dynamic situation. That's going to be challenging as we started to design flexible workplaces and homeworking. With that in mind I wanted to take, just move us a little bit further on and make sure that we are thinking a little bit about the blurring of settings and contexts. Increasingly we find that all of our activities, certainly during COVID have been based upon working, learning, living, being entertained at home. Most funding of assistive technology is based upon the development of a rationale for its use in one single circumstance. That may be the work place, it may be education, it may be independent living. When all of these are happening in the same location using the same infrastructure and potentially the same devices, it is increasingly meaningless to distinguish between these. Our funders and our agencies are going to be challenged and should be challenged to support solutions and technologies that follow the user and develop much wider success criteria than they currently use. There are real issues in terms of challenging, the health of people in remote locations but it seems likely to me, the work I have done in the past in other organisations, that as we move to decentralise working that actually more employees may need accommodation to reduce the risk of acquiring conditions. I want to come back that Jack Dorsey could because not all jobs are suitable for working from home. Remote working has become the

norm for white-collar workers. Many people with its abilities aren't working in white-collar posts, they are in the service industry, they are working in blue-collar posts. When you talk about people with intellectual disabilities, as well as many other needs, actually the idea of being isolated and working from home has costs as well as some potential benefits. Increasingly we see companies with flexible hybrid working, not location-based decisions. Those mixed dynamics may well disadvantage some disabled workers. They might find it harder to reach, get noticed by the managers, get support when they need it and I think we are beginning to understand that hybrid working has a and impact on mental health, social exclusion, there may be an acceptable cost to the community. Figures I saw Risley that suggested that with current technologies, actually only about 10% of jobs are suitable for working from home. Unless we see significant economic transformation as well as the issues we are looking at. I want to finish with a couple of thoughts about how technology is developing and what indications of this might be. In the town I live, Milton Keynes here in England, we have little robots that trundle down our street, we live in a Victorian terraced area. Little robots trundle up and down the streets doing liveries, local shops, food and so on. They are perfect for visiting people who are elderly or disabled and making deliveries, they are used very widely during covered. – COVID. The ability to add to those remote presence resources, where someone remotely from the robot can speak to the customer, make sure they are happy with the delivery, ask if there is anything further they need, give them more information. Special offers. Maybe an opportunity for a different type of homeworking, a different type of post for people with disabilities. In the future. The one size doesn't fit all. I will leave you with one last example of how homeworking might look in the future. In Japan, in Tokyo, they are in the process of opening a restaurant with robot waiters. Each robot waiter is controlled by a disabled person somewhere in the city. Employment is changing, people's needs are changing and those accommodations must be tailored to meet needs. We don't want to see a return to the idea of a single model for everyone. Thank you.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you David for this great presentation. I agree on this, the setting of workplace and home can be a challenge for everyone especially for persons with disabilities. So now we will hear the perspective from the mobile and communication sectors, a reminder to all panellists, if you run out of time, if you could be brief then we will have more of a second section in the discussion part. So I will move now to Sabina Lobato, Sabine is the communication director, the Association of companies with interest in mobile malice communication, Sabine will now move to 1 of the main projects in the accessibility and supporting initiatives so Sabine, over to you.

SABINE LOBNIG: thank you very much Ratih. Hello everyone and welcome and thank you to for the opportunity to take place in this panel. I would like to step back from what David was talking about and we will focus on the accessibility of devices. When I have to work from home, when I work from a remote location ideally I would have an accessible device to then access the accessible online content and participate in accessible online meetings. There are a few things necessary for that to happen. Firstly, I need to be a where of what kind of accessibility features are available. And which one of those features help me in my personal situation.   Then I need to understand what kind of devices have the features that I need, and thirdly, I would need to know how to use the features, how to switch them on, how to make use of them for my work. So, from the NWF, we try to cover all three of those aspects in the global accessibility reporting initiative. We call it the GARI project. It is a central source of information for accessibility. If you open your browser and you type in GARI.info, you look at a website that you see on the screen. It is the screenshot of the homepage. When you come to the website, the website asks you right away, what are you looking for?   And depending on whether you are looking for an accessible mobile phone, tablet, app, smart TV, you can enter the database to anyone of those doors. Once inside the database, you can search for an accessible device depending on your specific needs, or you can have a look at the comprehensive list of available features. And for mobile phones, within the range of 130 features lifted today. But both of those things already mean you need to have a certain knowledge to know what you're looking for, otherwise you, otherwise the search is really difficult. However, if you are very new to the topic or if

you are looking for a device for somebody else, you will first need to search an orientation. So, for this we have developed feature guides. And for example, you can say, I have moderate hearing loss, what kind of features would help me in this condition? And depending on the category, we have attributed eight to 10 features that can help with the impairment. Likewise, if you are looking for advice that you can give to an elderly person, or if you are deaf blind, you may be an occupational therapist is looking for features that can help their client. All of those features, we also provide on the website. Since two years now we have implemented in the website and outgoing user survey, where we ask people, what do you need in addition to what you find already on the website? In addition to information on devices and features? And the big winner in the answers as always, I need information on how to use the features. Because it is wonderful to have a device, but it, I am sure that I'm not the only one who really is not aware of all of the capabilities of my own devices. And we have certainly very knowledgeable users, but the majority of people is not well aware, it is not well trained in what the devices can actually do. So, in response to this, the past months we have deserted to develop a very short feature videos. These are one to two minutes long, and these guide you in how to find accessibility features in your device, and how to switch it on. Of course, this is not sufficient yet. Because then you still are in the position where you have an accessible device, you now know what kind of feature helps you, you even know how to switch it on. Yet, how to actually use it in your work, that needs another level of training. And that goes back to what David said, how do you provide the remote IT support? How do you get in touch and re-establish the workflow, because likely you had colleagues that have helped you or that were already in a circle of work where all of those processes work. So, we have a website on the information that is available. Then I look to my co-panellist, look to the audience, because the step further need strategic partnerships, we need to print together all of the stakeholders in the ecosystem with all of the necessary information to provide it to the person who is in the remote location and to need the help in the instance. So with this invitation to collaborate, I will conclude my presentation. If you want to get in touch, if you have an idea of how to use that information, how to join forces to make it work better in practice, please do get in touch. And I'm looking forward to the following discussions.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you Sabine, thank you for sharing that with us. I would like to move to our fourth panellist, it is from the on say found a. She is the director of a training operation and transformation. She has got several years of experience are linked to the foundation, so Sabina, the floor is yours.

SABINA LOBATO: OK, thank you very much. Thank you everyone, thank you to the Zero Project for the invitation to talk at this very interesting event. What I will start by saying is that it is clear that we can include more work, find a way to show us that telework is possible in a large extent, and we will learn that it is possible for people with disabilities. Our employment services employee, they over around 400 persons employed 80% of the staff are persons of disabilities. So, we could experiment in our own colleagues how to solve, and which are the main challenges in this. According to the stats in Europe, 13% of the population is in a form of telework, only 7.5% in Spain, previous to the pandemic. So, we will need to see what will be the impact of this new normal with more telework. We started in the foundation many years ago with some research and reports, I am saying many, many years ago when no one did telework because we identified that this could be a really opportunity to make possible for more people to work in a mainstream environment. So, we developed a platform with the support of an accessibility division and so our interest in this comes from many years ago. It is clear for me that telework promotes flexibility and worklife balance, adjusted to the needs of each individual. The common trend even in organisations like us is that what we say in Spanish is a solution that fits for everyone, I do not feel like this is, so it's finding a solution that are frameworks that are flexible and they depend on the needs of the person. Clearly telework improves environment protection, this is something that is really important in terms of all organisations contributing to this and for a more sustainable world. Also, something that could be very interesting for employers is the

cost reduction.   And this is the, in terms of what is, what is most seen, but it also is a less cost of working for the employee with a disability. And this is especially important when focusing on persons with for instance, high accessibility needs or personal support needs. And in many cases this persons are inactive because of the cost of working that works as an incentive, as this is incentive sorry. We can also look at the confinement of positive impact on absent rates, it is clear for us that this wasn't not normal situation, but in normal situation we see that also telework could also have a positive impact on absences. And also for instance accidents.   As some of the previous speakers said, it also has negative consequences like how to tackle the issue of isolation, because socialisation is for a person with a disability, the work environment in so, in sometimes it is the main space for socialisation. So this should be taken into account. And also not only for persons of disabilities but also important. But in general terms, we consider there are positives, the progress in labour inclusion for persons of disabilities, thanks to telework, also, we think that it could provide more mainstream options for work. And also have a higher impact to promote inclusion for women as well also.   So, things that should be taken into account is that telework should, it needs to be voluntarily accepted by the work world and can be in some cases imposed as a condition on the labour contract. The other hand, it is also important to prioritise workers with disability when access into remote working measures offered by the employers, so the issue of voluntary acceptance of that is really important under test clear that it could have a process of negotiation with the employer and in many cases some persons with disabilities will need support in this negotiation process. Also it is important to think about telework as of right or an option, but not as an excuse to avoid labour inclusion of persons with disabilities or even to include taking accessibility measures.   Also to avoid discrimination in the access to job opportunities because of the lack of adjustments in telework so adjustments also with persons with intellectual disability should also be taken into account. Same labour conditions, that is the risk of a decrease in wages with the option of telework.   In the case of Spain we have also, we already have a gap of 17% in salaries less for people with disabilities and persons without disabilities. Also employers should need to guarantee labour opportunities in terms of promotion and training. When teleworking. This should also be there for people with disabilities. And a important topic is an issue of skills, we are facing now a very b programs dealing with digital gaps and the training of skills. To face a digital transformation, but the collaborative way of working when you are in telework needs a very specific set of skills that should be given in training programs.

   Also, it is important to guarantee incentives for employers in the case of purpose is -- persons that go into telework and also the right to return to in-person work in the company premises if they decide to. So to finalise also our reflections on saying that the some types of disabilities, because of the diversity that disability has, we consider that telework would be a less hostile environment some types of disabilities. Disabilities like autism. So definitely it could lead employers to consider contracts to some kind of disabilities with more support needs and they need to consider that also supporting employment should, the way of providing supportive implement should involve -- evolved to adjust to the needs of telework. Just finalise to save that we have developed two very interesting documents dealing with the digital transformation and the digital economy. We think that an initiative called disability hub which is a corporation initiative promoted and is financed by the (inaudible) commission and we have two obligations in this half that are very interesting.   One is called making the future of work inclusive for people with disabilities. So I encourage you to, I will Thank you very much.

RATIH DEWI: Write a macro thank you Sabina for bringing these important points to us and now I will move to our last but not least because, it is coming from start a company who brings the solutions to inclusive work and home environment so we have Alberto Prieto with us (inaudible), so the floor is yours.

ALBERTO PRIETO: Thank you very much Ratih, let me share my screen so you can see it. I hope you can see it right now, yes? Perfect. So hello everyone, my name is Alberto Prieto, and the development manager and visual five. Thank you Festival for the opportunity, it is very good timing

to place me last, so I have the opportunity to introduce you to innovative technology also and how this solution can help to create a safe and autonomous workplace, specifically for co-working libraries and let me mention before, looking for a tailored solution to meet the needs. So just to give you a very brief explanation of what we are, it is a start-up company from deaf and hard of hearing people, we co-create a product together with them and not only for them so at the end deaf people are in our value chain and well I guess for everyone, for all of you here, you will know already the numbers but according to the World Health Organisation there are 466 million people with hearing problems and in addition 1.1 billion and a high risk of hearing loss, we… (inaudible) at the end, deafness (inaudible) how do I know this? What we have created, what we have done is to create this places which can be and sprawled in began private places to help them to comply with accessibility laws first of all and also related to co-working spaces, libraries and so on. So to show you a good example of this technology, these are the artificially linked inboxes that we installed and we usually install one by floor sector. One really important thing for us is to ensure the privacy of all users and workers so remote working should be safe and should also be with privacy. That's why we as an impact, we don't process anything any cloud. At the end we must make sure that they never reach the building so this is privacy. So at the end these boxes are continuously listening and recognising sounds and inside of them is the artificial intelligence algorithm and once it is recorded, recognises them sense to the sounds to the different devices as well as the boxes we also installed signal so that the person can receive it through an app and also on their phone, smart band or other wearable they have. So just very briefly to show you what are the different types of alert that the user can receive. Basically fire, gas, theft or any other thing that might appear in the workspace, bells and also so any applicable land service or seachange or something like this. Reminders, this can apply for very specific things for workers, they have to do something a regular basis any specific moment of time or do they have to do it functionally so this is key for their success as well. Finally, another functionality is connect, as you might understand the mandatory use of masks after created another barrier for this collective, popular users rely on lipreading so that's why these transcribed voice to text in real time and this is actually an autonomy tool that allows them to attend a meeting or understand all of the specific instructions or a task and also any other type of functional recording alert so those are closing doors or any other customer for occasion that can be controlled from one control panel. Once again, thank you for posting here. Thank you for having me here and giving the space to look at this tailored and specific solution and any questions I will be happy to answer.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you Alberto for sharing that, so this is the first part of the conversation before I hand over the moderation to Robin who will moderate the discussion. I would invite people to do a group picture together so if you could put on your camera, those who are willing to do so that would be great. I can see that people are starting to turn on the camera.   ROBIN TIM WEIS: Let's try to pretend like we are having fun okay (Laughs) Rally macro rally macro okay so I see, I will start counting, one… Two… Three… I will move to another station, so one… Two… Three… Thank you. So Rob and I hand over to you.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you Ratih for those great photography stills. I would like to mention in the chat just to point out that Saubiya will have to leave us at 5 PM, she was kind enough to share her contact information so please feel free to take down her email address and reach out to her, she is doing exceptional work and the specially if you are speaking Spanish or live in a Spanish-speaking area of the world, she is a great resource to have so please do reach out to her, Sabrina thank you for joining us. With that being said, I would first like to open it up to the audience, to the participants to get them engaged. You have been waiting patiently and listening to all of the presentations so please come in for an intervention, put on your camera, identify yourself and please ask a question and we will always appreciate comments and statements but let's try to keep it a questions to get a conversation started. Thank you very much and either feel free to raise your virtual hand in zoom or just come in and announce yourself with a question you might have. So seeing that some of you might still… You are still digesting the information of the presentations you have heard I will take the

moderators prerogative and coming with a question for both the audience and the speakers. So as I was listening to your remarks and also looking back at our working title, our title of our side event today, remote working and work environment, for me at least it starts and it ends with simply speaking humans, I think it is a human centric approach. Despite the technology we have been stressing and I recently came across a 2020 Accenture survey which said that while persons with disabilities are more aspirational than their peers actually 60%, they are more likely to feel excluded in the worst attack – workplace. The question is how each and everyone of us both persons with and without disability change that? How do employees and some of us are employees at companies, organisations, at start at – start-ups, SMEs, how can we come in and change the fact that while persons with this abilities have aspirations they are 1.6 times more likely to feel excluded in the workplace. I was wondering if any of you had some approaches or maybe some homework 1st to take home and to really ignite change within our own organisations. This post all of the speaker so feel free to comment with approaches you have seen which have been successful.

SABINA LOBATO: came Robin, I can start by saying that we have several in quite a number, a significant number of support on how increasing diversity and in particular including persons with disabilities have changed even the way of delivering services and how also this has forced it innovation within companies. I think this could be the most important and the central reason that could change things in employer's minds. I think also we have to take into account that digital transformation is also linked to increases in some technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Deep learning et cetera. There is now the risk of this technology not being inclusive or even discriminating persons, including persons with disabilities. So the best way to approach this, the development of technology including Artificial Intelligence is to increase diversity in the teams that develop these technologies. So I encourage very much employers to think about this and I think if this can be the way, the path that should be taken in the future for really giving opportunities for everyone.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you, I see Roxana would like to elaborate on some of your input Sabina, Roxanne please to come in.

ROXANNA WIDMER-ILIESCU: Thank you very much, I just want to complement to what Sabin has said and to reiterate the fact that actually at ITU it is very much committed and we have a specific target, to support all countries have an enabling environment for persons with disabilities so this also includes the working area. Also within the UN as you know the UN disability inclusion strategy is there and the most important thing that I want to say is that as my colleague Jaroslav said in the opening remarks, I see T accessibility is the key to this. If we all learn on how to deliver, how to communicate the new common language, if this new technical common language is an accessible format, so inaccessible digital format, I think in future we will all have much facility to communicate to each other and to actually… We don't need to be included or excluded. We will all have a common language. I would also like to highlight that in ITU, we would also like to address employment, recruitment opportunities in accessible format from the beginning and IT and I law, is just answering a project on this and we hope they're developing these guidelines to ensure that from the recruitment process this is in an accessible format. As also mentioned in my presentation I think that leading by example is very important. If each of us are doing this effort to ensure that whatever communication we are doing in digital, is embedded in all aspects of our lives and when I post a photo on my mobile with my family, I put an alternative text behind in order for my friends and colleagues who may have some visual disabilities to let them understand. I think this is progress. So it is very nice to talk about and very important that we identify how to do it and now I think it is a great time to really make the effort, each of us and with our institutions to enable everyone to be included and in the environment of being more inclusive and with diversity. Thank you.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: All right, we just received a request from one of our participants who was asking for me to read out the question. So this is what I will be doing, this is the question on behalf of

Rebecca Kane singer who asks, should there be some responsibility on employees to understand the needs of people, including invisible disabilities such as autism. This will include discipline to training in the workplace and ways to accommodate the needs of their disabled employees. If so, who enforces this responsibility and effort and how? So basically the sun -- the question is should employers be responsible for providing services, especially for invisible disabilities, such as autism, and how could we enforce those responsibilities? Perhaps legislative or other mechanisms. Any experiences or any best practices that some of the speakers could point to?

SABINA LOBATO: I could say Robin, that at least in Spain, that in many cases, it makes it possible the progress in including disabilities with more support needs are organisations representing persons with those type of disabilities and their families.   And even in the case of in Spain, there are providing employment training services and working with employers in the way of making the environments and the work environment inclusive for them. So this is a place where we can see, and identify best practices and I think we need an evolution or legislation on frameworks that at least for sprain, they are very general. And even not taking into account all of the employers. Because for instance, the system in Spain only applies for companies of 50 employees or more. So 90% of the companies in fact do not have the obligation of hiring persons with disabilities.   So I think it is a combination of many things. I'm sorry but I have to leave, so I will be pleased to answer any question if you would semi-an email. Thank you very much.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you, I that was a perfect input prior to your departure. So, I can see your hands are raised, please do come in.

DAVID BANES: I just want to add that this issue about small and medium-sized businesses, put, first of all I do want to understand the challenge that SMEs are facing currently simply to stay in business, we talk about adding extra obligations upon that sector, we may actually put many of those completely out of business. I think people forget that in many businesses with very small numbers of employees, the manager, the owner, does everything. Hence we have to be really cautious I about just saying that these people should have a whole range of extra responsibilities placed upon them. We cannot afford to see that sector disappear on the horizon. And with that I comes an obligation upon us as professionals to understand that sector better.   I think I have seen so many conferences, events, and papers that tell me how wonderful the hiring process is for autism in this multinational corporate. All this huge organisation with HR Department of about 300 people, and that is not going to help as Sabina said and certainly I have seen, 80, 85, 90% of employment is happening in that small sector. It is no surprise that we see an employee -- unemployment of people with disabilities being greater when we are not supporting those sectors properly. And that includes sporting their technology needs.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: David, I that is a really fascinating and interesting point, and I was wondering if then this creates a dependency of the SMEs you mend into who do not have the resources and will naturally gravitate towards where artificial intelligence was mentioned, either towards the recruitment software or the AI software been provided by the big five or you know, other big corporate's that did not look in this regard, do wonder if this development is to be welcomed in the sense that more of these resources and which are scalable, or if you see in a more critical like that SMEs are going to be very dependent on systems which also will probably have built-in biases since the team to develop these systems are not particularly inclusive to begin with.

DAVID BANES: Yes, if you operate in that level, you are looking at a system that is fit for purpose, you are going to choose cloud-based systems but if you're not having a person that decision-making process, if you have got five or six employees and commonly none of those employers have a disability that has been declared she, it is going to be very challenging for them to respond to some

need in the future. How we, as professionals, as people working within the accessibility movement provided them with resources and support, so that actually they can select technologies that are fit for them. And I think part of that may be making people more aware of what is available as open source and free software, that is accessible.   But that is within the context of huge marketing coming from large telecommunications companies and what they will offer at a certain price. It is a very, very difficult situation for small companies.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you David, I see Sabina your virtual hand is raised.

SABINE LOBNIG: First of all, I agree very much with what David said and what was said before, I would like to react also to one of the comments in the chat box by Rebecca who asks then if we think it is, if it is the responsibility or at least a partial responsibility of people with disabilities then to raise awareness about their needs. And I think while maybe not their responsibility, but of their associations also of us who know about accessibility, because as David mentioned, the big corporate, they have the legal obligations, they have the people who know about it, they have the system that enables people to implement them. The SMEs, most often, if you come with accessibility, you do not know what you are talking about, they just do not know. It is not that they make the conscious decision, I do not want a person with a disability, it is, they do not think about it, when they think about it it is scary because they do not understand it, So the fact is today, accessibility doesn't have to be so complicated. Everyone has a mobile phone, most mobile phones are accessible today. The majority of users don't know about it. All of the rest, I think the responsibility is for the representatives of the people with disability so the Self-advocacy associations but then also certainly come associations like mine who work on accessibility, the ITU, Zero Project, all of us to do a better job in reaching the people who don't know about accessibility yet and who are not actually in conferences like this because it is not their business and they don't know about it. I would say the main responsibility is for us to communicate better. I don't have the answer of how to do that because we have been working with Gary for 13 years now on that and we are only scratching the surface. We reach a few people, certainly not enough. So if someone has a really good idea of how we can reach the majority of people who just don't know about accessibility yet, they are very welcome to get in touch with us.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: I think that is a very great call, into the room Sabina. I wonder if you and others agree may be that to go brand – beyond the scope of this event and to ask yourselves, it's not necessarily malice within SMEs that they are not actively do not want to employ persons with disabilities but simply do not understand the code – scope and range of disabilities in society so I'm wondering whether items such as cultural representation movies, representation films, representation music, and sports, from early on that generation's Co-op seeing ability as just another skill… Disability as just another skill sketch rather than a barrier or something with which hold people back a different skill set that can be brought out easily and equally. My question is can and should we really try to think beyond maybe this ICT focus which the session has in order to ensure that we have that representation, that mainstreaming which will lead to the fact that SMEs actually consider persons with disabilities because they've seen them in a cross sectoral manner so does the room think that would be helpful in this regard? Roxana I see you have your hand raised.

ROXANNA WIDMER-ILIESCU: Yes thank you for addressing this issue. So in fact it is very important to change mindset and I cannot agree more with what sappy Sabine was saying, we've known for so many years I think that IT is doing great to address and still you are very right Sabine, we still lack enough to raise awareness, to explain what it is, there is still confusion in some… For some persons so they say accessibility but they are thinking to affordability or to the access connectivity and as you know in some language like in French, in person access easily, and accessible person is very open and you can dress very easily. The terminology is not very helpful. We have to ensure that we address properly this issue and perhaps having in mind this final goal

and end goal and everything that we are doing, we would to dash to inclusive society, we want a better world we don't want it to scrimmage and of any kind so indeed having more models in television, in our photos, even in ITU, we are struggling with that accessibility always looks with a photo of someone in a wheelchair, it is not necessarily – necessary. I think everybody can and should make an effort to change mindset around the working environment and as the colleagues said I think it was Alexander, I was trying to respond to the chat, Alexandra… So I do believe that instead of creating working for silos for people with disability, we have two have a holistic approach. We are young, none of us is getting any younger and so we will all get older and with some age-related disabilities. Anyone can have an accident in any moment in their whole life can change. So having a holistic approach, inclusive and without any discrimination can be a huge benefit for all of us. Thank you.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: David I do see your hand raised however I would like to give the floor to Alexandra who would like to come in with an intervention, she did post one of the questions which has got this conversation going. I will let her intervene and David please do come in after two, meant her remarks.

SPEAKER-PARTICIPANT: Thank you very much so for the context just to let you know, on one hand and disability advocate for many years, and today I'm representing (unknown term), a big IT company that you might know. I'm the assistant program lead for accessibility and inclusion programs of this discussion is especially interesting and I completely agree it is the representatives of the companies like mine who should be here to discuss these things. Yes, for the remote working one of my questions that I raised was that it yes it is nice to see that now positive disabilities, the record can show that potential and start working may be for the first time in a way that didn't even need them to disclaim that they have a disability. But how should employers really react, to be inclusive, to put persons in the future always in the remote working place, that might not be a solution in terms of inclusion but exclusion, insertion in a way because the real participation on the work in case there is hybrid future workplaces, people working remotely and on-site, remotely and in physical meetings, to guarantee a real participation there might be the need of advocating for everyone being able to participate also on site and is something which needs to be discussed, because obviously big companies think about, if people don't need to go anymore to the site, this means we don't need big rooms, big spaces we have now we can reduce it. For persons with disabilities this might also mean that they… The remote workplace needs to be adjusted and the workplace which is on site and it needs to be understood that having the choice to do both has allowed real participation and I would like to know the opinion about this hybrid workspace model for you from the speakers and from the persons with disabilities obviously. How you see the opportunity as well as the risk of the now unknown remote working as a model of people with disability to access. Thank you.

DAVID BANES: Thank you and

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you, would you like to comment!?

DAVID BANES: Yes it was definitely relevant. Alexandra I think the point you make is an unbelievably important one. We are advocating for a system which could exclude people from with discipline very widely, from social interaction in the workplace but actually beyond. I just want to say that we are seeing cinemas not opening, people are watching the latest movies at home in isolation. Self accessible cinemas out there we're not going to meet people with disabilities at the cinema. Social spaces are now staying many many spaces apart. We are connecting to people. I think this has real implications for a population that is already being in isolation and socially excluded. If we continue to extend that.   By saying things like remote working is 100% part of what you do, it is

going to be a long-term part of your life, it has to be a hybrid model. That hybrid model needs to extend beyond employment. We really are at risk if people do not go to shopping malls, they do not go to cinemas, they do not go to theatres, everything is delivered through a screen. And I cannot think of anything more exclusionary than everything through a screen. No matter how good and how inclusive the technology is. And I just want to add one other thing which I think turned up in the conversation, but it is important that the level of digital skill required for this new normal, this future that we are outlying is incredibly high. And how, whether to small businesses, corporate, it is in people that are not in employment. How do get the digital skills to be part of a society that uses digital connectivity to this extent, that is going to be critical. If you really want to see about the people that are going to be excluded, it will be the people without those digital skills and we know that they lack behind in the opportunities that require digital skills. The digital project is a great open source and open license resources for people that they should be using and reusing in different countries.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you very much for the nice plug, David, appreciated. And if anyone does have the interest, I can post a link to our almanac resource which really encompasses all of what David has talked about, so really global innovations, 700+ of those in 2013 until today. Really distributed across the globe for you to see and to browse through as well and also feel free to use the search portal on our website I think being conscious of time that we have come to a close I would like to give a short closing statement to you all, but I will make it a bit creative. So all of you have just been appointed as the head of human resources and I would like to know in a world with infinite resources, at what would be the first point of action that you would take on day one as a human resources leader of your organisation? So you know, feel free to give our participants a little bit of inspiration to take into the weekend of how we can actively change and really ensure that remote working becomes a bit more of hybrid working which David talked about and then we can build flexible working environments to really facilitate the person with disabilities social economic inclusion. So I will take it in the order of presentation perhaps Roxanna you would like to come in with the first point of action as the new head of real human resources at the ITU?

ROXANNA WIDMER-ILIESCU: Thank you Paul for this new position. So, definitely I would lead by example, my first decision would be to be to be that the organisation should be an inclusive one, and I will try to ensure that I make all of the necessary requirements and I put in place everything that is necessary from access perspective to the work environment to the workplace, to the colleagues that I have, as I already told you, I think IT is already in this league because we also try to have our accessible recruitment. And for me, this will be the most important. The flexibility I will not impose if it is from home, or if it is inside, because we can have life where we feel comfortable from home and then from site with person with disabilities been particular, so I would rather be focused on the delivery of a product rather than our physical presence. Between sure that everyone can come based on the work deliverables to feel free to come and to do and to contribute to the best of their ability

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Next up, David Bain's full stop

DAVID BANES: As my business is the sum total of me and a few others, I would like to think of myself as head of HR, I think that's a great position as I manage my own human resource. I think what I would really… As I connect, I have a lot of associates and partners that I work with and some of those are people who have the work in this area very much, finding, creating useful resources to help and a low level and build up and thinking beyond the specialist providers, looking at things like what is available for people to learn from on YouTube, the examples curating that this stuff and making it available to people. I like simple, easily digestible material. Because my brain won't cope with things more complicated. So if I want to bring people, if they want to work remotely with me I

want resources, I want to be able to give them resources there going to be able to digestive minutes, not hours.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Wonderful thank you David. Next, Sabina.

SABINE LOBNIG: the MWF is a little bit more than one person but not so many, for altogether because one left us for retirement. Infinite resources, definitely I would implement and accessibility training, a yearly one for the whole team and recruit people with disabilities. Really built up the team. Also not only for a specific position but also for example blind users, deaf users, really also have two have entrained the team. And that perspective. With their specific advantages, their perspective and their skills that they bring. I won't go into detail for that but I mean just knowing that if you have, the context of sign language and spoken language. Everyone benefits. I would tap into that potential and definitely have everyone train up inaccessibility.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you Sabina and Alberto please come in with your promotion as head of human resources.

ALBERTO PRIETO: Thank you very much, first of all I think I took some notes, sorry for that. I don't want to forget all of this netiquette is important to be able to connect the triangle, basically all of the part in making this possible and actually these are the ones that they need to make it even better. I think that all of the importance of public administration, stakeholders like private companies like start-ups, we all have the knowledge we just need to make away and if I would be like the head of human resources in this case, I think it is very important not to lose any talent just because someone has a disability so I work in a company, a start-up that is actually informed by deaf and hard of hearing people so at the end, the relationships with the director are people who are of hearing loss and it is one of the best people in the company. I think that is the key of the success, all the communication and the connection of stakeholders. Thank you.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: For me the positive takeaway, I give you all infinite resources and you all described very reasonable steps we can take already today. Including everyone, persons with and without disabilities. They are there, we don't need to find them they are out there. We need to bring them in and to take Davies point we need to create content, low hanging fruit which is easily digestible, accessible to all free of charge so also in line with what the ITU is doing so for me, even with infinite resources you will give me very manageable tasks, we can all take it to our organisation so I hope this serves as a bit of FID inspiration you can take into the weekend and into the next week, from perhaps approach the human resource department, approach your fellow employees and encourage them to create content that everyone can understand regardless of digital literacy, to encourage them to really include everyone. Also to point out where they are not including everyone. So really to hold them accountable and with that being said I would like to invite in Ratih as well, for some closing remarks from my end and from the Zero Project. Thank you very much for joining us. On a Friday afternoon. For those of you interested I will put in my personal email address, please do reach out with any questions you have about the Zero Project, may name is Robin device, if you like to build coalitions with me, I very much look forward to hearing from you. Macro

RATIH DEWI: Thank you so much everyone for joining us, it is been a delightful discussion and there are so many interesting representations and we will share all the recordings with all of you as we have your email due to registration. Like Robin said, hopefully this will be a weekend takeaway full of us and we can make a small step every day for more inclusive worlds. Thank you.

ROBIN TIM WEIS: Thank you, and some music for everyone to take into the weekend.

RATIH DEWI: Thank you, have a good weekend.