

Intervention from Civil Society Disability Caucus on Political Chapeau paragraph 5

Hiroshi Kawamura
CS Disability Focal Point
The DAISY Consortium
Contact address:
National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities
Research Institute
4-1 Namiki, Tokorozawa-shi 359-8555
Japan
hkawa@attglobal.net

On behalf of the Disability Caucus of Civil Society, I would like to suggest as follows.

In the Political Chapeau paragraph 5, I am afraid that one of the most important key principles to bridge the digital divide is missing. Geneva Declaration of Principles paragraph 25 identifies “universal design and the use of assistive technologies” as one of the key principles. This is the design goal of ICT development to guarantee the digital opportunity for all of us including persons with physical, cognitive/intellectual or mental disabilities.

Everybody has special needs to be met by assistive technologies and universally designed ICT as part of whole life. It is always very important to develop use scenarios or use cases to develop Information and Communication Technologies.

For example, Tsunami alerting system must deliver information to those who cannot hear, see and have difficulty to understand in the language used. People need to be well informed and trained to evacuate safely with neighbors who may not able to evacuate by themselves with various reasons. Signs and symbols in accessible format must clearly indicate where to go and what to do in the event of disasters.

Based on realistic use scenarios, we will be able to develop ICT applications that will support safe evacuation of all people in the region.

We learned a lot from those victims of disasters, who lost their lives or injured

physically and mentally, to identify the requirements to develop universally designed early warning system that is accessible and easy to understand for everybody. Persons with disabilities are best collaborators to identify use scenarios from different point of views to develop not only assistive technologies but also inclusive ICT design for all.

Therefore, in order to stipulate such principle design goal for ICT development for everybody and guarantee participation of persons with disabilities as equal partners in ICT development process, I propose to insert “promote universal design and assistive technologies” in the paragraph 5 of political chapeau.

The Civil Society Disability Caucus will be very pleased to collaborate to implement this design principle throughout the implementation process of action plan to be adopted in Tunis as one of stake holders.

[Annex: proposed revised text of Political Chapeau paragraph 5]

5. **We reaffirm** our resolution in the quest to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer, by recalling that governments, as well as private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations, should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; promote universal design and assistive technologies; and encourage international and regional cooperation. **We confirm** that these are the key principles for building an inclusive Information society, the elaboration of which is found in the Geneva Declaration of Principles.