



Side Event Concept Note

Campaign “Universal Accessibility: Pillar and Bridge for Human Rights and Sustainable Development”

Organized by: Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General on Disability and Accessibility, Prof. María Soledad Cisternas Reyes

Sponsor: United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Co-Sponsors: UNDESA, Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN, Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the UN, Permanent Mission of Chile to the UN, World Enabled, The Global Network on Disability Inclusive and Accessible Urban Development (DIAUD), World Blind Union.

Date: November 30, 2020. 1:15 – 2:30 pm (Est)

1. Background.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities CRPD, the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, and the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons of the Organization of American States (OAS), establish Accessibility as a specific legal standard that bridges the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The 2030 Agenda is linked to the theme of Accessibility in its Sustainable Development Goal N° 11: Cities and human settlements must be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In turn, we can link this standard to the modern development of smart cities, which undoubtedly must meet accessibility standards, to “leave no one behind”.



Furthermore, accessibility is a fundamental element for deepening democracy.

The importance of accessibility has been repeatedly recognized in the jurisprudence of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The same is happening in judicial decisions at national level, which even declare that accessibility is a specific right.

The pandemic has highlighted the significant gaps between legislation, public policies, and different services in relation to a fundamental aspect of life for millions of persons: Universal Accessibility, including accessible local public services.

Many local governments have demonstrated the decisive role they play in being channels of a participatory and inclusive response, including public service, interacting with central governments in order to satisfy the needs and human rights of the population, including the opinions of persons with disabilities with a focus on human rights, where the implementation of universal accessibility is highlighted.

Universal accessibility is a pillar and bridge for the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and also for the fulfillment of the SDGs. Implementing universal accessibility is to move widely towards the eradication of multidimensional poverty (SDG 1), and a key factor to revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17).

Therefore, promoting universal accessibility through actions such as awareness raising will be a fundamental drive for the launch of the campaign "Universal Accessibility: Pillar and Bridge".

The local context is the natural space for participatory and inclusive management and planning for persons with disabilities and older persons, towards the full implementation of accessibility. In this sense, local governments must have the strong support of central governments.



2. Objectives

a. General Objective

To promote awareness raising of universal accessibility as a relevant factor in the fulfillment of human rights and sustainable development in the 21st century.

b. Specific Objectives:

1. To publicize the campaign on “Universal Accessibility: Pillar and Bridge”, through a video that substantively shows the importance and intersectionality of accessibility, with a balance of gender, age, ethnicity and types of disability, among others.
2. To present the conclusions of the paper "Universal Accessibility as a standard in human rights and sustainable development", as a substantive content prepared by the Special Envoy.
3. To display a poster referring to the campaign.
4. To hold an international open call event to meet specific objectives 1, 2, and 3, within the framework of the COSP 13.
5. To make the products mentioned in points 1, 2 and 3 available to all States, local governments, organizations of persons with disabilities, private sector, United Nations Agencies, Human Rights Institutions and other stakeholders, for massive dissemination.

3. Program

Duration: 75 minutes.



- **Opening Remarks**
 - HE Ambassador Munir Akram, President of ECOSOC
 - HE Cristian Espinosa, President 13COSP
- **Presentation of the Campaign**
 - Prof. María Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General on Disability and Accessibility
 - Description, Objectives and Campaign Video
- **Presentation of the central aspects of the paper on accessibility of the SE**
 - Ms Amalia Gamio Ríos, Rapporteur, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN
- **Reaction from sponsor and co-sponsors:**
 - Ms Emilia Saiz, Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
 - Commissioner Cid Torquato, Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities, Sao Paulo and Representative of UCLG Community of Practice on Inclusive and Accessible Cities
 - Dr Victor Pineda, President, World Enabled.
 - Mr Hannes Juhlin Lagrelius, Program Officer, World Blind Union
- **Closing**
 - HE Ambassador Milenko Skoknic, Permanent Mission of Chile to the UN
 - Farewell with video playback

English Captioning, International Sign interpretation, English-French-Spanish interpretation, will be provided

