**“ACCESSIBLE CITIES UNITED”**

**Roundtable Discussion**

**Observance of the 2016 International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

Friday, 2 December 2016, 5:00 to 6.00 p.m., Conf. Room 8, UN Headquarters

**Introduction**

Since 1992, the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) has been celebrated annually on 3 December around the world. The theme for this year’s International Day is “Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want”. This theme draws attention to the recent adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how these goals can build a more inclusive and equitable world for persons with disabilities.

This year, 2016, also marks the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a landmark international instrument aimed at ensuring the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life. 2016 also marks one year since the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and the commitment of world leaders to achieve inclusive and sustainable development that leaves no one behind.

By 2050, the world’s urban population is expected to nearly double and by 2030 about 60 per cent of the world population will be living in cites. At the same time, we are experiencing major demographic shifts with an increase of young people in some areas of the word and societies ageing rapidly in other parts. The increasing hazards due to climate change, new sicknesses, and increased conflicts are impacting the number of persons living with disabilities across the globe. Are we accommodating these demographic trends as world urbanizes? Where do young people, older people, persons with disabilities fit within the urbanization trend? Are their needs effectively accounted for or are cities leaving them behind?”

**The Event**

The event will be held at UN Headquarters in New York, where city leaders distinguished for their advancements in disability-inclusive development will be invited to gather for a mayoral dialogue on implementing accessible, inclusive and sustainable cities for all of all ages. The audience will be comprised of Member States, UN system officials, civil society and other stakeholders. Participants will have the opportunity to share their advances and plans for making their city more accessible and inclusive, forge connections with other leaders, and re-affirm their city’s commitment to a future in which no one is left behind, all in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Objectives**

* Unite mayors, city leaders and experts from different regions with the vision of bringing together various experiences in order to make cities truly accessible and inclusive for all as a core component of sustainable development, with special attention to persons with disabilities.
* Give mayors and city leaders an opportunity to make a commitment to act on matters of accessibility and disability-inclusion in cities.
* Create lasting partnerships between cities across the globe in their effort to become accessible, inclusive, and sustainable for all.

**Methodology**

Cities that are distinguishing themselves for their unique achievements in implementing accessibility and inclusiveness will be invited to participate in this event. The format of the event will be “Davos-style” interviews, with no PowerPoint presentations or formal speeches. The idea is to foster an open debate and lively interaction.

The moderator will briefly introduce each mayor and city leader, and then pose a question, alternating between mayors and city leaders for their responses.

Following the interviews, questions will be taken from the audience. Audience members will be asked to write their questions on a card, which will be collected by staff and handed to the moderator. The moderator will then present the questions from the audience to the panel of mayors.

**Questions for the Panel**

We often talk about ensuring “accessibility and inclusion for all”, but before we tackle this momentous challenge by building from the ground-up, we ensure that a firm foundation of understanding is in place.

1. How is accessibility, usability and inclusion defined by you and how does it look like in your city.
2. Consider the difference between accessibility and inclusivity, between a space that can be accessed or entered into, and a space that can be used. How the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has impacted the policies your city has adopted / is planning to adopt to ensure that places are friendly and accessible to those citizens with a disability, and that these spaces are also usable and inclusive?
3. Transportation is an integral component to the functioning of any municipality.

Can you provide an example of how your city has enhanced its public transportation systems to improve accessibility?

1. Technology is allowing us to innovate like never before and it seems that now for every activity there is an App available. How is your city using technology to innovate creative solutions that help improve accessibility, inclusivity, and sustainability for all?
2. The 2030 Agenda and CRPD have as main goal mainstreaming and inclusion because nobody has to be left behind. What has your city done to reduce the gap of inequalities and poverty by upgrading the education systems so that children with disabilities—both mental and physical—have access to the resources to attend school and be ready for the labour market? And do adults with disabilities have access to the resources they need to be successful in the workplace so that they are able to be sustainable?
3. What are the steps that could be taken between now and 2018 to improve the accessibility, inclusiveness and sustainability of cities to all of all ages?

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