



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development
Nairobi, Kenya (28-30 October 2015)

REPORT

Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Division for Social Policy and Development
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
in collaboration with
United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Executive summary

The DESA Forum on Disability and Development, officially launched in July 2013, is an initiative of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (DESA). The aim of the Forum is to contribute to inclusive, equitable and sustainable development efforts, through the exchange of experiences, expertise and innovative ideas and development of practical solutions for pressing issues with regard to disability in development and society.

On the occasion of the 2nd World Cities Day, themed “Designed to Live Together”, a 3-day DESA Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development was held from 28 to 30 Oct 2015. The Forum was co-organized by DESA and UN Habitat, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the African Disability Forum as well as about 60 experts on urban planning and disability issues from 30 countries of five continents in the world.

The Forum consisted of six meetings including 4 thematic round-table discussions and a Special Session focused on African perspectives. The Forum resulted in a set of recommendations, with a view to strengthening urban policy and practices to promote an accessible and disability-inclusive urban development, and to provide concrete contributions to the Habitat III processes and its envisaged outcome.

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I. Introduction

The United Nations DESA/DPSD Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development was co-organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UN-Habitat in Nairobi from 28 to 30 October 2015. The Forum was held in the lead up to the 2nd World Cities Day, themed “Designed to Live Together” and involved experts on urbanization and disability from five continents.

The Forum took place following the recent adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides a framework for global development over the next 15 years, and in support of the operationalization of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal No.11 relating to sustainable cities and communities. Habitat III will take place in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016 and it is anticipated that a New Urban Agenda will be adopted to guide global urban development for the next two decades. The Forum provided an opportunity for stakeholders in the disability and urban planning community to come together to discuss priorities for the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III).

During the Forum, experts reviewed current international urban policies and practices from a disability perspective, and shared experiences and expertise in devising innovative strategies and solutions to further accessible and inclusive urban development over the 3-day event. The Forum was designed to support States and related stakeholders in jointly advancing accessible and inclusive urban development in terms of planning and design, regulation and strategies for development, in areas such as housing, transportation, ICTs and other infrastructures, facilities and public services. Findings and recommendations of the Forum discussions will contribute to the Habitat III processes and its outcome, the New Urban Agenda.

Disability inclusion, accessible urban development and the New Urban Agenda

Urbanization is one of the most significant global trends of the 21st century. By 2030, it is estimated that 60 per cent of the world’s population will be living in cities. This is expected to grow close to 70 per cent by 2050. Urbanization is a growing force that is influencing development across the world. It is helping to overcome major global challenges, including poverty, inequality and access to basic services and facilities such as water, health and education for millions of persons, as well as addressing issues of environmental degradation, climate

change, fragility and conflict.

As urbanization takes place, it can be a driving force behind profound change. However, urbanization can also perpetuate inequalities and can follow a pattern that is unsustainable. Cities tend to experience far greater inequalities than countries overall, as while income inequalities between the rural and urban populations typically diminish as economic growth occurs, inequalities within cities, particularly in the form of slums, often remain until later stages of development.

A growing body of research shows that the most pressing issue faced by millions of persons with disabilities worldwide is not their disability but rather social exclusion. Poor planning and unregulated urban development can have devastating consequences for persons with disabilities. Spatial inequalities and exclusive forms of urban development exacerbate poverty and marginalization. Insensitive planning and lack of accessibility of urban infrastructure, facilities and public services contribute to barriers that prevent groups, including persons with disabilities, from participating as both agents and beneficiaries of urban development.

It is essential that planners and developers respond to these inequalities in the design of urban policies and harness the potential of urbanization for social mobilization. Ensuring accessibility of infrastructure, services and facilities, including those provided through information and communications technology (ICT) as well as public spaces, not only contributes to social development, inclusion and cohesion in cities, but is also a smart investment. Accessible cities maximize utility and efficient use of finite resources. When urban spaces are accessible at the outset, new developments in city infrastructure are more sustainable and less likely to require costly renovations or supplementary facilities or services in the future to cater to excluded demographics such as persons with disabilities, the elderly and others with mobility limitations.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) includes accessibility as one of its key underlying principles — a vital precondition for the effective and equal enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of persons with disabilities. There however has been a huge gap and challenge in translating the existing commitments into specific urban policies and practices on the ground that promote accessibility and disability inclusion. Too often accessibility has not attracted enough attention or put in a high position in

the many cities' development agendas. It is therefore important that accessibility should be viewed and promoted in a proactive manner not only in the context of equality and non-discrimination, but also as an integral part of the sustainable development agenda.¹

As HABITAT III approaches, calls for an ambitious New Urban Agenda have gained momentum on the global stage. A more accessible and disability inclusive New Urban Agenda has the potential to not only address inequalities in cities to advance social and economic inclusion, but also, to contribute significantly to sustainable urban development. More inclusive communities are forming at global, regional, national and local levels. By creating a barrier-removal plan or a plan for accessibility, cities, towns, and villages can implement the CRPD and realize all internationally agreed development goals, including the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for people with disabilities.

HABITAT III, and the processes leading up to the Conference, offer a critical opportunity for the international community to make more progress in advancing disability-inclusive development towards cities that are inclusive of all. As one of the first UN global summits to take place following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Habitat III aims to help cities fulfil their role as drivers of sustainable development, and hence shape the implementation of new global development and climate change goals. There is still an opportunity to raise the profile of disability and accessibility in the planning and preparatory efforts leading to the development of the New Urban Agenda.

II. Outcome: Recommendations on advancing accessible and disability-inclusive urban development

At the sixth meeting on 30 October, the Forum resulted in the adoption of the following set of recommendations as a key outcome in order to make further progress in achieving accessible and disability inclusive urban development worldwide.

The Outcome reads as follows:

¹ CRPD/C/GC/2

We participants gathered at the UNDESA Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development, which was co-organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UN-Habitat in Nairobi from 28 to 30 October 2015, and in conjunction with the 2nd World Cities Day themed “Designed to Live Together”, have reviewed the situations, experiences and solutions for persons with disabilities in cities and countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Pacific, Europe and Western Asia,

We found with concern that the estimated one billion persons with disabilities experience various physical, technical or institutional barriers in many cities and towns, ranging from inaccessible built and virtual infrastructures and resources, to a lack of user-sensitive facilities or limited access to basic public services, which present significant obstacles to inclusion and full and effective participation of persons with disabilities, and impede achievement of sustainable and inclusive development,

We further noted that international norms and standards such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and national legislation and policies play important roles in contributing to accessibility in built and virtual environments, facilities and services, including information and communication technologies (ICTs), which benefit all, including persons with disabilities,

We are encouraged that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development addresses accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) in particular,

We recognize that Habitat III and its outcome, the New Urban Agenda, would offer an important opportunity to further advance sustainable and inclusive urban development for all,

We are encouraged by the increasing number of initiatives, experiences and lessons learned from good practices in countries, promoting accessible and inclusive development for all.

Recommendations

We, therefore, propose the following as our contributions to the ongoing consultations on the New Urban Agenda to further accessible and inclusive urban development:

- Accessibility is a collective good that benefits all. It facilitates full and effective

participation of all and should therefore be considered a central component of good policy to achieve inclusive and sustainable urban development. A city that is well designed is well designed for all.

- Accessibility is a precondition for the enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities and is a means for economic, social, cultural and political empowerment, participation and inclusion.
- An accessible and disability-inclusive urban development agenda can be realized everywhere. This requires strong commitments in concrete terms, which include inclusive and disability-responsive urban policy frameworks, appropriate regulatory structures and standards, "design for all" approaches in planning and design, and predictable resource allocations. It also requires active and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their organizations, as rights-holders and as agents and beneficiaries of development during all stages of the urbanization process.
- Accessibility is broadly understood as products, services, built environments and information communication technologies that respond to the interests, needs and capabilities of a wide range of end users, persons with disabilities in particular.
- The Sustainable Development Goals message to “leave no one behind” seeks to ensure that the targets are met for all peoples and segments of society, including persons with disabilities in cities.
- Achievement of a truly inclusive New Urban Agenda, where no one is left behind, requires a holistic and people-centred approach that informs, engages, and involves persons with disabilities and their organizations in all aspects of urban development, in particular in their access to adequate housing.
- The New Urban Agenda should further advancement of accessibility for all with respect to the right to adequate housing, the built environment, public spaces, transportation, facilities and services and information and communication technologies (ICTs).
- A New Urban Agenda cannot be achieved unless it responds to the needs and rights of everyone, including the estimated one billion people with disabilities.

I. Housing as a key element of inclusive cities

- Integrated approaches to housing, positioning housing at the centre of inclusive urban development, need to take account not only of environmental sustainability, diversity (including disability) and financial aspects, but also human rights.
- Universal design, as a concept and principle, should be reflected in designs and plans for new built environments and in renovations to existing buildings and facilities to ensure they are accessible for all.

- Building standards, laws and effective enforcement mechanisms are essential to ensure accessibility, availability, affordability and quality of housing and public services for all, including persons with disabilities.

II. Transportation and public services

- Integrated transportation facilities and services not only provide accessibility for all but are also reliable and affordable. They drive sustainable and inclusive growth and change.
- Inclusive transportation requires continuity of accessibility throughout travel chains, meaning all elements of a journey from the starting point to the final destination include accessible entranceways.
- Integrated urban policy and plans must identify and address gaps in accessibility in public spaces and from one built environment to another.
- Social equity requires that the costs of accessible transportation and basic public services shall not be borne fully by users who require services since these are essential to ensure opportunities for full and effective participation in social, economic, cultural and political life for persons with disabilities.

III. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) for building inclusive, resilient smart cities

- Governments should develop accessible information and communication technologies (ICTs), including mobile applications, government websites, public kiosks and automated teller machines, and should include the use of accessible ICT services in their urban development plans.
- The rapid pace of development and innovation in ICT products and services means that assistive and adaptive devices and technologies are not always compatible and the cost of many such technologies limits access for persons with disabilities, particularly in low-income and middle-income countries. Governments should promote and facilitate research, development and mainstreaming of accessible ICT products and services by including accessibility requirements in public procurement exercises for ICT products and services used by public organizations or their customers or staff.
- Many national telecommunication authorities have universal service goals which recognize affordability and access to networks as a right; consideration shall be accorded urgently to accessibility as a third universal service goal.

We appreciate the initiative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and UN-Habitat for convening this long-awaited global consultation on inclusive, accessible and

sustainable urban development and recommend that the work of the United Nations in this area should be further strengthened, including through follow-ups to this forum, to support Member States and other stakeholders for an inclusive New Urban Agenda.

*DESA Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development,
Nairobi, 30 October 2015*

III. Summary of the proceedings

A. Opening session

On the morning of 28 October, 2015, the Forum was officially opened by UNDESA. Official statements were made by Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General of DESA, Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, DSPD/DESA, Mr. Lenín Moreno, Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility and Ms. Aisa Kacyira, Deputy Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

Mr. Wu, USG of DESA, reiterated the United Nations commitment to advancing sustainable, equitable and inclusive development for all, including for the world's one billion persons with disabilities. He discussed the key challenge of being able to translate these commitments into tangible actions that effectively impact on the lives and inclusion of persons with disabilities in development and society. He emphasized that achievement of a truly inclusive development agenda requires a people-centered approach.

Ms. Bas discussed the relevance of recent events leading up to HABITAT III and the processes leading to the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in 2016 as an important opportunity to advance accessibility worldwide. She reminded participants of the importance of looking at the intersection of disability and age, and access to ICTs in particular, as cross-cutting issues for inclusive and sustainable urban development. Ms. Bas also provided some information on the work of DSPD, which seeks to promote effective policymaking and development planning that ensures that persons with disabilities are fully empowered to realize their rights.

Mr. Moreno, the Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility, discussed social inclusion as a central aspect of a global, and increasingly urbanized, form of development and

the relevance of this to the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He discussed the evolving understanding of disability as a lack of accessibility resulting from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation on an equal basis with others in society. The Special Envoy emphasized that as the international community embarks on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, it is important to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. This means actions and measures must ensure universal access to safe, inclusive, accessible and green public spaces, adequate and affordable housing, urban and peri-urban transport and basic services for all urban dwellers, whether or not they live with a disability. It also means that persons with disabilities are included as full and equal participants in the social, political, and economic life of cities and urban dwellings, including representation in civil society and political decision-making and access to employment and income-generating activities on an equal basis with others.

Mrs. Kagira, Deputy Executive Director of UN-Habitat, also made a statement on behalf of the co-organizer UN-Habitat. She discussed the role of the Forum in contributing to the processes leading to Habitat III given it aims to be participatory and must be as inclusive as possible. She discussed some of the challenges of poorly managed urbanization and its role in creating increased inequalities and exclusion and hoped that the Forum would provide an opportunity for learning and exchanging experiences and expertise with one another – towards the ultimate goal of strengthening policies and practices that respect, promote and fulfill the rights of persons living with disabilities in our cities. The Deputy Executive Director also mentioned UN-Habitat’s mandate to promote sustainable urbanization and adequate housing for all. With an emphasis on urban legislation, urban planning and urban economy, UN-Habitat is developing an integrated framework for planned urbanization - the “Three-pronged approach” – designed to better respond to the challenges and harness the opportunities of cities and human settlements. She also discussed the importance of adequate housing and the role of housing in overcoming isolation, poverty and fragmentation in cities and communities and reiterated UN-Habitat’s commitment to advancing inclusive and sustainable urbanization for persons with disabilities.

B. Overview of policy frameworks concerning accessible and disability-inclusive urban development and opportunities and challenges in advancing accessibility and disability inclusion in the context of urban development

This session reviewed existing national and local urban policy frameworks, as well as key issues and trends in the field of urban development from a disability perspective, underscoring the importance of accessibility and disability inclusion for achieving sustainable and inclusive urban development.

Presentations were given by experts on the global normative framework on disability and development, current urban development policy and practices, and Habitat III and national and regional perspectives.

The key findings and conclusions that emerged from this round table include the following: (1) accessibility is a human right that is well established in the CRPD; (2) the potential of the Convention in strengthening urban policy and practices to further accessible and inclusive development need to be further explored as governments and many urban development stakeholders have not fully appreciated the added-value that accessibility brings to sustainable and inclusive urban development for all and do not know how to implement accessible urban development in both policy and practices; and (3) inclusive, safe, resilient, sustainable cities mean that they must be environmentally accessible, in other words, accessibility must be an integral part of the urban policy.

Specific conclusions and recommendations were also reached:

- Accessibility is a fundamental human right.
- Standards of accessibility change throughout the world, as do standards for access to information technology.
- Sustainable Development Goals entail inclusion of people with disabilities, which is encouraging. The challenge is to ensure no one is left behind by ensuring its operationalization.
- Universal access is a smart investment in urban development and benefits all.
- Accessibility means removing barriers to services: it could be alternative but equivalent ways of access, for instance in ICTs. Public policy and regulations play important roles in promoting accessible urban development, for instance in making ICTs more accessible.
- Involvement of end-users, including persons with disabilities, in the development of frameworks for building accessible infrastructure, transportation and ICTs is essential to ensure the responsiveness of policies.
- Poverty and equality: we have to target this in the context of accessibility. Otherwise we only create equality for the rich not the poor.
- There is an urgent need to shift from medical and welfare approaches to disability, to societal and cultural inclusion. It is possible, through government actions, to achieve this and to demonstrate through good monitoring.

- Monitoring methods and information can be shared between countries to improve the situation of people with disabilities everywhere.
- Research in transportation sectors, for example, revealed that travel needs of people with disabilities could not be met due to existing barriers in most of cities in the world. Action is needed to overcome these challenges and promote accessibility.
- It is evident, from examples provided in disaster risk management, that lack of accessibility leads to exclusion of people with disabilities that are left behind in disaster reduction, which in turn impacts negatively on the effectiveness of the disaster reduction strategy and the resilience of entire cities and communities.
- Virtual communities can be a driving force for social change, even when financial resources are in short supply.
- In examining implementation of all internationally agreed development goals (IADGs) and the UN Convention, if civil society is weak, implementation of the IADGs and the Convention is weak
- Disability-inclusive and responsive governments make a significant difference to the pace of change, as do regional bodies such as the African or European Union.
- The cost benefit of inclusive environments needs to be made clear so that governments, developers and development agencies understand it.

Mr. Kumaresh Chandra Mitra from the Habitat III Secretariat discussed the need to ensure that persons with disabilities – all types of disabilities, not just the physical – are acknowledged by presenting an example of the challenges of accessing education and integration for children with disabilities. He emphasized that the challenge of including persons with disabilities is not just in the area of physical accessibility, but also relates to politics and the need to communicate and sensitize governments and stakeholders to the needs of persons with disabilities. There is a need for a mindset change. He noted that there is a wide disparity in promoting inclusive support for persons with disabilities in different countries and that even those institutions and organizations professing high ideals of inclusive support often fail when it comes to assisting the inclusion of persons with disabilities. International commitments need to be implemented by the responsible functionaries, and for this, urban policy makers and developers must have the right mindset, which must be receptive, empathetic and supportive. He concluded by stating that the Habitat III process would be open to concrete and focused suggestions emanating from this Forum and similar initiatives until its culmination in Quito in 2016.

Mr. Guozhong Zhang, UN DESA, presented that there is already a well-developed international normative framework governing the rights of persons with disabilities. This includes accessibility as a precondition to the exercise of rights. He emphasized the

conceptualization of accessibility as being the built environment/physical design of environment that benefits all (not just persons with disabilities). The cost issue and resource implication of accessibility will always be present, but if policy-makers can understand the concept of accessibility as a public good, then the issue is considered a smart investment, which is not only benefitting and tailoring to the needs of a special group, but is something that can be perceived as a benefit for all. In order to achieve the objective of an inclusive agenda, disability and accessibility must be embraced as a cross-cutting development issue and should be mainstreamed in the all international development agendas including urban agendas.

Ms. Susan Schorr from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) discussed the need to better synergize legal frameworks with actual ICT accessibility needs. She discussed the importance of consulting with persons with disabilities in the development of frameworks for ICTs and the removal of barriers to ICT use to ensure policies and services are appropriate and responsive to the needs of the end users. She emphasized the need for clear targets and reporting on implementation of regulatory frameworks that assist in guiding and implementation of accessible ICTs for their effectiveness. The public procurement policies of countries, such as in the United States where only the procurement of accessible ICTs is allowed, sends out a clear signal to the market and effectively fosters a market for promotion and development of accessible ICTs. Those companies trying to respond to a tender develop accessible ICTs and the general public then benefit. This type of policy needs to be seen replicated elsewhere and in other sectors such as physical environment and transportation – governments need to procure only accessible facilities, spaces and services as this will also help foster the market for accessibility technologies, products and services.

Ms. Maria Perrone Navas from the Vice-President's Office of the Republic of Ecuador provided examples of the Ecuadorian and other South American experiences in advancing inclusive urbanization. Cooperation strategies between countries were also explained, including a meeting last December involving an agreement on the virtual learning community website platform to bring together experts in the region to support development of knowledge and a repository for studies on promoting accessibility and participation.

Ms. Goh Siam Imm from the Building and Construction Authority in Singapore provided an example of how Singapore is creating an accessible and user-friendly environment to support the building of an inclusive society. She reported that Singapore now boasts accessibility in 90 per cent of existing buildings at every floor level, and that 100 per cent of trains and 85 per cent

of public buses are wheelchair accessible. Singapore aims to be fully accessible by 2020 by continuing to advance inclusive and universally-designed housing and transportation.

Ms. Ann Frye from the United Kingdom discussed some of the top priorities for urgent action, including the need for capacity building of government staff and service providers, clearer legislation and assistance to countries that have ratified the CRPD to understand how to take action. She focused on accessible pedestrian environments as a necessary first step in building accessible transportation and discussed with concern that accessibility is still a low priority for most governments. Often if budgets are tight, accessibility is ignored. She reiterated the point made by Mr. Zhang that accessibility needs to be conceptualized as a benefit to society by enabling access, participation and economic and social progress for all.

Ms. Judith Heumann from the US Department of State discussed the US experience, and the role of persons with disabilities in advocating for change. The ability for persons with disabilities to participate in political and civic life, and to hold government accountable for regulations and implementation is essential for progress. She emphasized that there is a need to move away from just discussing problems and look at finding solutions. There is a need to bring in people who are knowledgeable in the area of urban development and who speak the same language as urban planners to advocate for change. Some examples of progress made in the US were provided, and she highlighted that major cities around the world show that universal design benefits everyone.

Dr. Adebukola Adebayo from the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities and Human and Organizational Resources Development Centre in Nigeria discussed the challenges faced by persons with disabilities to participate in face-to-face interactions in urban environments due to physical inaccessibility. Drawing on this situation, he discussed the value, as a first step, of ensuring ICT access to persons with disabilities to at least enable virtual participation. However, he noted that many existing ICT services do not follow universal design principles and that there is a need for government policy and institutional frameworks to be put in place to consistently require ICT accessibility. He noted that this was of particular concern in Nigeria.

Mr. Mukhtar Al Shibani, President of the Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments in Saudi Arabia, expressed concern that universal design and independent living has not been a priority for many policy-makers. He discussed the need to strengthen

evidence-based decision making and design and planning, and shared information on a study on accessibility in Islamic countries that will take place in 52 capital cities in the coming months. He also shared information on the work of the international union of architects to incorporate accessibility in world international cities. New trends in urban planning should include universal design perspectives. He mentioned that there are five core elements required in urbanization policy-making: research of local context; development of public policies for cross-agency implementation; development of implementation strategies; specialized consultancy and training services; and participation of persons with disabilities in all stages. He also emphasized the need to take into consideration the role of different stakeholders when designing spatial development frameworks to further the goal of inclusive and sustainable development in urban spaces.

Ms. Immaculada Palcenia Porrero from the European Commission shared the EU's work in fostering accessibility through a design for all approach as well as trying to ensure seamless connectivity and interaction through assistive devices. She shared information about non-discrimination instruments and also a proposal for legislation that will require the EU's public administration to only procure accessible products and services. EU funds for infrastructure also require that expenditure of those funds respect accessibility. She also discussed attempts by the EU to harmonize accessibility standards. Ongoing research on accessibility in the built environment, transport and ICT, and the interaction between these, is also taking place.

Ms. Stefanie Holzwarth and Mr. Christopher Kost from UN-Habitat emphasized that unless governments change the way they are thinking and setting priorities in transportation systems, accessibility will not be adequately addressed. Accessibility needs to be conceptualized as a public good.

C. National and local experiences in addressing the challenges in planning, designing and building accessible and inclusive housing, public spaces and infrastructures

Round table 2 took place in the afternoon of 28 October. Presentations were given on specific examples of national and local experiences in urban planning and building accessible and inclusive cities, especially in the sectors of housing and public spaces, followed by an interactive dialogue among all expert participants. These discussions resulted in a set of conclusions and recommendations on accessible infrastructure, housing and public spaces.

The following conclusions and recommendations were reached:

- Many people with disabilities and their families in urban environments have limited or no access to decent, accessible housing and public services.
- Reasons for this include that persons with disabilities are stigmatized, underestimated in number, and not provided supports to participate in city life.
- The diversity of persons with disabilities needs to be recognized, the concept of intersectionality needs to be understood, and international cooperation needs to be inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- Poverty of persons with disabilities and their families is the major barrier to accessing housing of any kind.
- An integrated approach to housing in general that includes human rights, environmental, diversity (including disability) and finance aspects is required.
- Different interventions are required to make the built environment accessible and to make it mandatory for all new structures based on universal design principles.
- Building standards as well as laws and effective enforcement mechanisms are required to ensure that all new construction is accessible. Mandatory minimum standards are essential for improving accessibility in housing and infrastructure. Voluntary efforts are not sufficient to remove barriers to accessible built environments.
- Persons with disabilities must be consulted and involved in the identification of barriers and ways to remove them.
- There exist already many good examples. Some cities have developed accessibility plans to identify and address barriers. These should be developed with input from Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs), need to be well-funded, monitored, have clear targets, and sanctions for non-compliance.
- Public procurement has been an effective way to ensure that accessibility standards are followed in construction and other infrastructure contracts awarded by government.
- An urban settlement is a ‘system of systems’ – housing, water, sanitation, electricity, communication, transportation, and public services, such as health, education, police, administration, etc., need to be coordinated.
- All efforts to make urban development disability inclusive and accessible must be based on and start from recognition of the human rights of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Christophe Lalande from UN-Habitat presented UN-Habitat’s human rights-based approach to housing and slum upgrading. He discussed a study that analyses the challenges of working on disability in the urban context. This study will inform practitioners to better approach disability at the country level in dialogues on housing.

Ms. Maria D. Perrone Navas from the Vice-President’s Office of the Republic of Ecuador shared the experience in Ecuador, which began with the collection of data on persons with disabilities. She shared information on grants provided for housing accessibility and the importance of this initiative being taken at the level of the Vice-President’s Office, given their

ability to lead other ministries and ensure the cross-cutting nature of disability was addressed across ministries.

Ms. Yetnebersh Nigussie Molla from ECDD in Ethiopia shared information on the accessible Addis Ababa guide that was developed.

Ms. Sela Brotherton from the Zambia Federation of the Disabled shared experiences from over 35 unplanned settlements in Zambia. Zambia has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing a disability-inclusive development agenda, emphasizing among other issues, the importance of accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities in urban development. However, she discussed the role of CSOs in pushing for a review of the Act to the Urban and Regional Planning Bill that is yet to be enacted to ensure accessible infrastructure. The new Act will put into consideration the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in all public and private physical infrastructure. Zambian CSOs have been engaging with the Ministry of Local Government and Housing and the Zambia Construction Council to improve policies and practices for urban housing and infrastructure.

Mr. Joseph Kwan from Hong Kong, China presented on the relevance of ISO standards for accessible buildings. He shared the experience of Hong Kong from 2011-2017 in identifying and retrofitting 2000 government buildings to improve accessibility. This involved a task force including DPOs. He emphasized the need to take a holistic approach and ensure that people involved are not generalists but technical experts when doing retrofitting and access audits to ensure they are fully aware of what is needed.

Mr. Mohammed Gabbow from the National Council for Persons with Disabilities shared experiences from Kenya. Currently, according to the laws, no building in Kenya can be erected without the national council reviewing the accessibility of the planned construction. The national council is new and its role is to advise the Kenyan Government on any treatment relating to the welfare of persons with disabilities. As such, it has limited capacity to fulfill its full mandate, including inspection of new building plans.

Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda from the University of California and Director of Inclusive Cities Lab discussed the need for budgets to match political will and rhetoric. He shared information on a tool for assessing frameworks that Inclusive Cities Lab has developed. He also discussed that institutional capacity relies on executive support, budgetary support and

administrative capacities as well as social acceptance or social engagement of both people with disabilities and attitudes of people without disabilities.

Mr. Michael Szporluk, UN-Habitat consultant on urban planning, highlighted that governments chronically underestimate the numbers of persons with disabilities in their countries because they are unregistered, or people are institutionalized or censuses miss persons with disabilities in their collection methods. He discussed the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by persons with disabilities, persistent stigma and the weak institutional systems for involving persons with disabilities in consultation in the design of cities. He called for a dual track approach – on one hand constitutionalism to ensure equality before the law and revising public procurement laws and universal design, as well as a ‘reimagining’, which in this context means appreciating persons with disabilities as part of the community and not as some other category of people.

Mr. Mohammed Al-Tarawneh from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities discussed international standardization for inclusive development and the necessity to make sure there is obligatory implementation of standards. He highlighted that best practice is also to involve DPOs in the preparation and design of buildings and infrastructure. He shared three recommendations: (1) local authorities must adopt an action plan on accessibility with allocated funds, personnel and set time for identifying existing barriers and removal lines, including list priorities to be determined in consultation with persons with disabilities; (2) local authorities must implement accessibility standards and ensure universal design is applied to all new buildings; and (3) monitoring mechanisms and sanctions must be set up.

Mr. Ondoua Abah Gabriel from CAFOD in Cameroon discussed the challenge of implementing legislation and auctioning commitments. Despite laws on environment and accessibility adopted in 2013 in Cameroon, there is very little accessibility in the built environment. He suggested that there is a need for greater participation of persons with disabilities, who can lobby for tangible changes.

D. Building inclusive and smart cities: accessible information and communication technologies (ICTs) and basic public services for all

Accessible ICTs in urban environments covers a broad range of design and supply of ICT products and services. ICT is an increasingly complex and rapidly growing industry. People

more and more rely on the internet and automated services to convey and receive information on health, transport, education, public services and to participate in virtual and physical environments. ICTs and ICT-powered services, including internet based services, therefore can be particularly important in empowering those with hearing or visual impairments or autistic spectrum conditions because they overcome barriers experienced in daily contact. These also provide innovative solutions to building inclusive and sustainable development of cities and communities.

This round table examined the role of ICTs and basic public services in the context of building inclusive, resilient and sustainable smart cities and communities. During this round table, experts provided presentations on ICT and public services. Following the discussion, a set of conclusions and way forward for advancing accessible ICT and public services were formulated.

A series of steps to improve development of and access to accessible ICTs were discussed. It was recommended that up-scaling of the many existing innovative projects and practices, including open platforms for Assistive Technology (AT), public procurement of accessible ICTs and stakeholder interventions (such as accessible communication in tourism and energy in Ireland) need to be pursued. It was identified that there is a need for knowledge sharing on accessible solutions with support from the international community and UN agencies.

The following conclusions and recommendations were reached:

Laws, regulators and public policies have important roles in promoting accessible and inclusive urban development

- ICTs is an example area where ICT regulators and policy makers can ensure persons with disabilities have access to accessible mobile handsets. This can be done by implementing policies and regulations that require mobile operators and retailers to include accessible handsets in their line-up of handsets sold to customers, train their staff to demonstrate accessible features and serve customers with disabilities, adopt text and data-only plans for the deaf and hard of hearing, use universal service funds to subsidize accessible handsets for persons with disabilities and ensure real-time text for emergency communications. This would contribute to the building of a resilient and stronger urban community.
- Build the capacity of national ICT regulatory authorities so that they can adopt accessible ICT policies and regulatory frameworks that ensure accessible mobile and web communications.

- Laws and policies that require government to procure accessible ICTs for their staff and customers, which comply with defined technical standards concerning accessibility, have created a market for commercially available accessible ICTs and fostered the development of accessible features currently available on mobile phones and computers.

Use standards to promote accessibility

- Standards can be used to encourage better practice in an area (e.g. tourism) and in an area that is heavily regulated (e.g. the energy sector). Standards can describe what accessibility is and be used to certify that service providers or businesses are accessible.
- Apply international standards to ensure that all e-government web sites are accessible.
- Adopting public procurement frameworks that require the government to purchase accessible ICTs addresses gaps in supply and demand and can inform Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda.
- Accessible mobile communications should be included in smart city implementation due to their widespread availability and processing power.

Employ inclusive and participatory strategies

- There is a need for persons with disabilities to be involved in the process of designing our cities, roads and transport and to be consulted on their needs for housing.
- Adopt participative planning for urban access, including e-participation such as e-forums, e-polls, e-consultations and e-town hall meetings and disruptive technologies that improve the lives of persons with disabilities.
- Use participatory and collective development of AT to foster innovation, democratization, aggregate demand and mainstream inclusive design, including through the use of new technologies like crowdsourcing, crowdfunding, the Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud computing, including on mobile phones.
- Develop centers of excellence, including government centers of excellence, so that more people understand the accessible solutions that can be available.
- Use accessible mobile communications for smart cities, such as accessible mobile apps for bus schedules and real time text messages for emergency communications for deaf callers.
- When cities develop mobile apps they should ensure that they are accessible, use the embedded accessibility features of the main mobile operating systems (iOS, Android, Windows) and are developed with the input of persons with disabilities.
- Crowdfund the mapping of accessible services and data such as mapping accessible toilets and accessibility data to support personal and municipal decision making.

Be strategic

- Where national accessibility frameworks have not yet been developed, a bottom-up approach can be taken where state and local laws can be used as models for national laws.

- The ‘ownership’ model of AT can be moved to a model of ‘access’ to AT through cloud computing that fosters a move away from a ‘push system’ of manufacturers persuading consumers to purchase their products to a ‘pull system’ where what’s produced is driven by customer demand.
- Enable DPOs to engage decision makers on issues of increased tourism revenues and plans to attract more tourists while addressing the human rights issues of accessibility.
- Accessible technology can have very broad applications, be used by all and become a global public good.
- Use tourism to engage government decision makers in promoting accessible transportation.
- Urban planners need to plan for the next 10 years and take into consideration emerging technologies such as automated voice recognition, robotics and facial recognition.

Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura from the DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) Consortium in Japan discussed the purpose and functions of his consortium. He mentioned the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal, cultural, organizational and private sector barriers to ensuring accessibility and that the biggest challenge in ensuring accessibility is either because there is currently no policy direction, regulations and guidelines to compel compliance on accessibility or no implementation of existing legislation or plans of action. As a result countries are very far from where persons with disabilities would like them to be. He discussed how the lack of legal frameworks can be caused by the lack of capacity of government stakeholders, the lack of political will or both. These causes need to be addressed and governments held accountable for their CRPD obligations. He also noted that accessibility is not universal and is only provided in pockets due to lack of data to inform decision-making and due to accessibility being an evolving concept, and is less related to reasonable accommodation and more about proactive solutions. AT developers are fragmented and struggling to ensure interoperability with operating systems that are constantly updated.

Mr. Axel Leblois from G3ICT, discussed the role of city governments to ensure that all existing apps and services are accessible for all. He suggested compliance with WWC mobile and accessibility guidelines. He also suggested that when governments develop mobile applications, they need to make sure all are accessible and especially that the accessibility feature of the main operating systems include free leverage for voiceover and text to speech. Another area that city governments need to pay attention to is making sure public transportation have online schedules that are accessible, for example, to the blind.

Mr. David Banes from MADA, Qatar, discussed the endless opportunities and

possibilities offered by ICTs. He emphasized that at the heart of the approach is looking at what we do now and how we can do it better or differently using technology. Text to speech and vice versa is just the beginning of research and technology. Planning for access must be participatory for a future inclusive world. This is difficult in itself due to inaccessibility of the physical environment and weak history of civil society in certain countries, including Doha.

Ms. Susan Schorr, from ITU, discussed how the policy framework of ITU can work with telecom regulators in countries such as those in Africa, to ensure that mobile operators are actually stocking accessible mobile phones in lineup of mobile phones – about making these products available. She emphasized that these are available on the commercial market place, but there are also many handsets that do not have accessible features in the marketplace. There is also a need to do things to address affordability, e.g., by only providing the types of accessibility services that people actually need, for example, deaf persons do not need voice based services. She also discussed how universal service goals recognize affordability and access to networks. Accessibility should be added as a third goal to universal service frameworks.

Ms. Amanda Gibberd raised the point that there is a need to move ‘push systems’ to ‘pull systems’ where what we produce in the market is driven by the consumer rather than the innovator who is telling us what we need. Nonetheless, risks to the technology demands are that minority needs may be unpopular and disappear. To create a virtuous cycle, there is a need for diverse participation, for inclusive design and can lead to greater innovation and can facilitate diverse demand that is then matched by diverse products and services. Platforms to support virtuous cycles are through an ‘access for all’ standard.

Mr. Donal Rice, from the National University of Ireland at Galway, provided information on the Irish experience and EU developments. He provided two examples – of both the tourism industry and the energy industry. The approach in tourism, was to gather stakeholders in the industry to develop a standard called universal design for customer engagement in the tourism sector, which covers, face-to-face, online and web communications. The standard got wide buy-in from the tourism sector because they were actively involved when the standard was adopted, in conjunction with the national standards body. As a sector, they were more interested in learning resources than a standard. Each operator who applied the advice in the learning resources showed returns in terms of revenue/sales. The energy sector, on the other hand, is heavily regulated. Here, the standard was developed by the regulator and national standards body to describe good communication with persons with disabilities. The standard is now used to

certify providers are meeting legal obligations. He also shared the experience in Europe that will include accessibility as a requirement in all procurement exercises for any ICT goods and services to be used by staff or clients of a public organization. This standard was developed, learning from their Section 508 federal procurement guidelines of the USA.

Mr. Samuel Kabue from EDAN, Kenya, discussed some of the major persistent challenges in accessing public transportation in Kenya, including lack of audio for pedestrians at crossings, poor walking paths, meaning wheelchair users must rely on private transportation. He also discussed the lack of basic services in informal settlements.

Ms. Venus Ilagan from Rehabilitation International shared information on travel and tourism as one of the world's fastest growing industries and the opportunities that accessible tourism offer to governments to spur economic growth. Transportation is a crucial issue to be considered. Accessible transportation provides a lifeline for persons with disabilities to access employment, participate in community life, first step to living independently. When governments invest in the development of transport infrastructure, they must take into account those who need to rely on public transport for whatever reasons, including for reason of disability and economic need.

There was discussion on the mention of accessibility guidelines in the US and effect of product dumping of inaccessible phones (and other products) on the rest of the world who bear a higher cost for accessible devices. It was suggested that a solution to dumping is to have regulators in countries to begin to require telecommunication companies procure accessible products for resale in that country. The issue regarding willingness and capacity of governments to facilitate accessibility was also explored. Mr. Rapley raised the point that accessibility is a defined benefit – a benefit defined by law or otherwise. However we find that a number of facilities are investments in the collective welfare for everyone. An emerging trend in the accessibility field is that benefits and attributes of accessibility functions are not exclusively for persons with disabilities. These are global public goods. We must approach accessibility as an emerging member of a global set of public goods that we have in effect, a gain. It costs a lot to retrofit. It was agreed that accessibility in the New Urban Agenda should be identified as a criterion of good design policy. In the context of disasters and emergency, there is a need to consider both opportunities and risks of technologies so that urban development strategy is resilient and inclusive and sustainable.

E. Roles of standards and national legislation in promoting accessible and disability-inclusive urban development: transport and other urban infrastructure sectors

Round table 4 involved an overview of the experiences and strategies on how to overcome challenges and to promote accessibility and disability inclusion within the context of urban development in the transportation sector and access to basic public services. There were discussions on the strategies that the major stakeholders – decision-makers, knowledge and service providers and civil society– could take to achieve universally accessible communities, be in urban, suburban, or rural areas.

The following conclusions and recommendations were reached:

- Best implementations are found in countries with strong lobby movements of and by persons with disabilities.
- Transportation is the lifeline of livable and sustainable communities/cities. From the supply side of the equation: there needs to be a family of accessible transport services at the intracity and intercity levels to serve neighborhoods (trip origins) and activity centers (trip destinations) which is continuous and connected (unbroken and accessible trip chain). From the demand side of the equation, the concepts of ‘Door-thru Door’ and ‘Visitability’ were developed in the US. These two requirements integrate the mobility aspect of transport systems with the built environment.
- ICT, assistive and adaptive technologies play important roles in a trouble-free and accessible journey for all travelers, especially in the transformation of data e.g. text to speech, text to Braille and all forms of e-participation, etc.
- The respective roles played by policy, regulation and standards in promoting accessible built environment and transport systems need to be better understood and promoted.
- Accessible transportation should be a pre-requisite to building inclusive communities.
- Each city should have a comprehensive disability inclusive and accessible urban plan integrating landuse and transportation.
- Governments should address the gaps between policy and practice in accessible transportation implementation. There is a need to establish a timeframe for transport systems and services to become accessible.
- Governments need strong enforcement of policies and standards: to develop performance indicators, perform accessibility audits, use the ‘carrot and stick’ (incentives and penalties) approach.
- Government agencies and transport service providers should include persons with disabilities in transport planning and implementation process.
- Better data and research is needed, especially regarding the travel needs and the impact of ICT on persons with multiple disabilities.

- Establish visitability criteria for those with mobility, sensory and cognitive disabilities.
- Governments should allocate resources to achieve transport accessibility.
- There is a need to address transportation issues of older adults in view of driving cessation, the rapid increase in the use of motorized three-wheelers and scooters etc.
- There is a need to increase public awareness and training of family members, front line staff of transport carriers and the public on the mobility needs of those with invisible disabilities (cognitive, mental, developmental disabilities, and those with alcohol/dug dependencies).

Mr. Shuaib Chalklen, former UN special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, shared his observation based on lessons learned from implementation of the Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. He highlighted that countries that have made the greatest advancement in realizing the rights of persons with disabilities have always had a strong movement of persons with disabilities. There is a need for strong DPOs to inspire strong government responses; where weak ones exist, typically there is a weak government response.

Ms. Ling Suen from Intelligent Computers and Systems Applications in Canada discussed the role of universal and accessible transportation and in community development and disability inclusion. Attributes of ideal accessible communities include being livable and sustainable (economically, ecologically and socially and culturally vibrant). Full mobility is required for maximization of use of resources in cities. She discussed the need for entire travel journeys from the outset to the destination to be fully accessible and that one broken link in this travel chain will render the rest of the initiatives useless. She listed four stages for the implementation of inclusive transportation: 1) stakeholder cooperation; 2) legislation, policies and research are formed; 3) funding, trained personnel and research and development; and 4) affordable, accessible, acceptable and adoptable transportation for the public.

Ms. Karim Del Rocío Garzón Díaz from the Universidad del Rosario in Colombia discussed tourism and persistent cultural barriers to accessible transportation. She provided an example of taxis being reluctant to provide services to wheelchair users given the time required to assist in transferring persons in wheelchairs to the car. She mentioned some cars are also sometimes unable to accommodate the wheelchair. She suggested that if Colombia, which is in the process of negotiations for civil peace, puts disability as a priority for the nation, the mission of peace building can be promoted to the extent that it could make it possible all people to participate and interact in all environments.

Mr. Sunarman Sukamto, from CBR DTC of Solo City, Indonesia, shared his experiences from Indonesia. Through the example of Solo, he emphasized the need for reasonable accommodation and budget allocation for this. The main successful strategy he has seen in securing a government budget and dialogue for accessible transport have been through the involvement of persons with disabilities. Once leaders of DPOs are involved in the system and structure of local government, local resources are provided, standards are developed and accessibility is implemented in public facilities.

Ms. Amanda Gibberd from the Department of Transportation in South Africa discussed gaps between policy and practice in transportation. The goal of the South African transportation authority is to have an accessible transport system throughout the country. This policy and programme began with 13 regions. She highlighted the need to change government authorities' mindset about disability – that it is not a minority group, but a part of the human condition and life-cycle of people. She also stressed the inter-linkages of transportation with urban design and development. A city cannot make a transportation system without a travel chain, and communication, information and infrastructure of the built environment. Access to transportation comes down to participation in life. At some point, people of all abilities must be able to move and travel to participate in life. For accessible transportation to be implemented effectively there is a need not just for national government standards and political will, but also local government involvement, capacity and buy-in. The problem of public space being the meeting point of private boundaries was also raised in terms of needing to ensure that planning policies take into consideration the links between each built environment to another.

Dr. Michael Fembek from the Zero Project in Austria discussed challenges faced in low-income countries of mass transportation not being accessible. He also mentioned that newly built buildings tend to be accessible these days but that the reworking existing buildings to make them accessible is generally not happening.

Ms. Clare Pelham from Leonard Cheshire Disability highlighted that no city is yet entirely accessible. No city is good enough yet. She emphasized that policies without implementation are the answer to nothing. She also noted that sustainable and inclusive transportation is a fundamental human right, a precondition to freedom of movement, economic independence and education – among other rights. She indicated that governments need to understand sustainable and inclusive transport as drivers of economic growth and that cities

cannot achieve economic growth if you leave out people with disabilities. Governments that are succeeding are the ones who have realized that it is in their economic self-interest to do so.

Mr. Guy Davies from Disability Solutions in South Africa reiterated that accessible transport is a prerequisite for all other human rights. Without this everything else will fail. Accessible transportation relies on proper recognition of pedestrians and how they interact with transportation systems, roads and environment. He also emphasized the importance of the entire travel chain in ensuring accessibility.

Mr. Michael Replogle and Mr. Quemuel Arroyo from New York City Department of Transportation provided information on the situation in New York. Persons with disabilities in New York also tend to experience high levels of poverty, which contributes to general exclusion of this group. They discussed the need for transportation subsidies, designing for universal access and transit-oriented development. Examples of sidewalk upgrades to repair defects in pedestrian walkways were provided as an example of continuous improvements to the accessibility of pedestrian networks.

F. Special Session: Promoting accessibility and disability inclusion in urban development: an African perspective

The Special Session was the final round table discussion that was co-facilitated by the African Disability Forum and DESA. This session focused on discussing the African perspective for promoting disability inclusion and accessibility in the context of urban development.

The conclusions and recommendations from this round table include:

- 45 African Union States had ratified the CRPD, but limited progress has been made in terms of realizing accessibility on the ground in urban development areas.
- Many African countries have developed national laws, however, the lack of clear guidelines and standards for the implementation of national laws present challenges and barriers to their implementation.
- There continues to be an ad hoc approach to disability and accessibility in urban development areas in Africa. There are examples of isolated good practices in countries, however these are not being done in a coordinated or systematic way. There is a need to mainstream these initiatives to further accessible and disability-inclusive development.

- DPOs have played a key role to advocate for implementation of the CRPD at the national and regional levels.
- The establishment of the African Disability Forum (ADF) provides a new and valuable opportunity to strengthen the disability movement and capacity of DPOs in Africa.
- DPOs in Africa need to develop digital strategies to better inform and engage constituencies and the populations they represent.
- While strengthening the capacity of DPOs, there is a need to ensure there are opportunities to integrate the disability perspective in other forums, so as to properly mainstream and address disability in other sectors and areas.
- Landmark cases to strengthen the implementation of accessibility and realization of rights of persons with disabilities have taken place in a number of countries. However, many national laws and duties are not known or understood by the duty-bearers.
- Support structures to aid implementation of commitments to disability inclusion and accessibility are needed. This involves cooperation and connection between the disability community and sectors specialists. Disability should not be addressed through a siloed approach.

Mr. Lefhoko Kesamang of the African Union (AU) discussed the three pillars of the AU's work on disability. First he discussed the programme and plan of action for the decade of persons with disabilities. He mentioned that there is also a draft AU Protocol for the human rights of persons with disabilities in Africa that is still under development. Thirdly, the African Disability Institute has been developed. The AU is also working to create a one-stop information hub on the internet to support the implementation of rights of persons with disabilities in Africa. The AU is looking forward to the formation and work of the African Disability Forum (ADF), as this will provide a focal point for discussions on disability at the regional level. He stressed that DPOs can play a key role in promoting accessible and inclusive development as well as realizing the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa. Implementation of the CRPD relies on DPOs to support progress moving forward.

Ms. Judith Heumann from the US Department of State reminded participants that accessibility and inclusive urbanization is a matter of human rights, and these are non-negotiable. The key objective is to ensure that all built environments support the realization of fundamental rights and the ability of persons with disabilities to participate in all environments. The CRPD provides the legal standards for States Parties in this regard. While the treaty has been ratified, the enforcement of obligations is not occurring in many places. She emphasized that it is important that government agencies and other CSOs work to ensure they are also engaging with DPOs. There is an urgent need to bring disability into mainstream development and address disability issues in non-traditional sectors and areas.

Ms. Saba Lishan from the African Child Policy Forum discussed a number of good practices in Africa on accessibility, including legislation with specific provisions for accessibility in countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe . She also mentioned that various landmark cases in a number of countries have also taken place, setting precedents to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. However, she emphasized that the persistent problem in most African countries is that many laws and duties are not known or understood by the duty-bearers. She reported that the main trend in Africa tends to be an ad hoc approach to disability. There is a need to mainstream isolated disability initiatives. She also suggested that creating awareness around accessibility and building the capacity of DPOs is critical. Collaboration between different sectors and stakeholders also needs to take place.

Ms. Winnie Chepkemboi Kalya of the Kenya National Construction Authority shared information and experience on advancing accessibility in urban development areas and the rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya. She discussed the constitutional right to ‘access’ and a 2003 Act on disability, which also created a national council of persons with disabilities to support enforcement of the Act. She discussed the challenge of enforcing time-bound provisions in relation to transportation and public buildings as well as the challenges faced by the Council in working with government ministries due to its lack of a mandate to enforce the law, and the volume of government bodies that the Council needs to engage with (20 government bodies). She suggested that greater collaboration between line ministries and the Council was needed. She also raised concerns about the lack of capacity among transportation authority officials to enforce the disability law.

Mr. Richard Mwathi and Ms. Hannah Wanja, youth representatives of Leonard Cheshire Disability, shared a youth perspective. They discussed the desire of young persons with disabilities to be able to move around, socialize, seek friendships, and gain employment. They called for greater reasonable accommodation, including in use of new media for sharing of information. They highlighted that there is a need to bring concepts and policies to the level of youth through communications on platforms that are accessible to youth with disabilities.

Mr. Paul Mbatia, from Light for the World, discussed accessibility as a fundamental human right. He mentioned that he has seen so many innovative experiences that can be replicated in both developed and developing world. He suggested that there is a need to move beyond policies and procedures now, but that this relies on strong political will and leadership. He

suggested three areas that need greater focus in Kenya, 1) building institutional commitment. In Kenya, the law and institutions responsible for implementation of the law exist, but institutional commitment to support effective rollout is lacking; 2) building institutional capacity, in terms of developing support structures that allow institutions to help live up to the commitment of disability inclusion; 3) cooperation and connection with industry specialists. The disability community needs to engage with those who are involved in the sector they want to influence.

Mr. Bob Ransom, representing the African Disability Forum, explained that ADF involves membership of 44 DPOs from all regions of Africa. He explained the objectives of the ADF are to amplify voices of persons with disabilities and their organizations in Africa, particularly at the level of the AU, United Nations and African Governments. He expressed hope that the Habitat III agenda would properly take into consideration the situation in Africa and involvement of persons with disabilities as agents and beneficiaries of urban development. Accessibility must be promoted as it is rights of persons with disabilities and reflected in the Habitat III agenda. Recommendations for specific mechanisms for governments and entities involved in urban planning should also be included for DPO involvement and consultation. He stressed that the inclusion of persons with disabilities should not be the sole responsibility of ministries of social affairs, but that higher level and more broad-based responsibility for disability-inclusion is necessary.

Mr. Christophe Lalande emphasized the importance of including persons with disabilities in dialogues with governments when discussing housing policies. Governments tend to be overwhelmed with a great deal of challenges related to urban poverty, that persons with disabilities are rarely considered a priority. This is something that needs to change.

Honorable Ben Njoroge from the Kenyan Senate discussed some of the discrimination persons with disabilities face due to prejudices and ignorance. He drew attention to the lack of access to education and limited opportunities for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in Africa. He stressed that persons with disabilities need to be included in all sectors, not just those that traditionally deal with social welfare.

Participants noted that in order to build consensus on the new urban agenda, it is important to have mutual sharing of knowledge that is accessible to persons with disabilities. A suggestion was made that ADF and other DPOs should use digital platforms to systematically inform, engage and involve their constituencies and populations represented.

Participants noted with great appreciation, UN DESA and UN-Habitat's initiatives in organizing the Forum. They also appealed to UN-Habitat to increase their visibility and work on disability internally.

G. Closing of the Forum

The sixth meeting began with the rapporteur presentations on their summaries of the key findings and conclusions from the roundtables and special session.

The meeting then reviewed and adopted the Forum Outcome, consisting of a set of recommendations based on the rapporteur summaries of all roundtable discussions over the three days.

At the closing session of the Forum, remarks were made by Mr. Guozhong Zhang on behalf of UNDESA, Mr. Lefhoko Kesamang of African Union Commission, Mr. Shuiab Chaklen of the African Disability Forum and Mr. Raf Tuts of UN-Habitat.

The meeting was officially closed by Mr. Raf Tuts at 3.30pm.

Annexes

I. Programme

UNDESA/DSPD FORUM
DISABILITY INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT
In collaboration with UN-Habitat | UN Office Nairobi | 28-30 Oct 2015

Day 1 - 28 October 2015

9-9:30am

Opening

Welcome and opening addresses by

- *UN DESA (Video Messages from Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General, DESA and Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, DESA)*
- *Mr. Lennin Moreno, Secretary General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility (video message)*
- *Mrs Aisa Kacyira, Deputy Executive Director of UN-Habitat*

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Round table 1: Accessibility and disability inclusion in the context of urban development: Where do we stand?

This session aims to review current national and local urban policy frameworks, key issues and trends in the field of urban development from a disability perspective, underscoring the importance of accessibility and disability inclusion for achieving sustainable and inclusive urban development.

Brief presentations by experts will be given on global normative framework on disability and development, current urban development policy and practices and Habitat III and national and regional perspectives. This will be followed by an interactive dialogue among all expert participants. At the end of the round table, a set of overarching conclusions and recommendations on the current status of accessibility and disability inclusion in urban development will be formulated by experts.

10:45-11:00am: Coffee Break

	Experts	Expected topic / role
01	Mr. Clinton Rapley International Management Services (Thailand/USA)	<i>Facilitator</i>
02	Mr. Kumaresh Chandra Misra Habitat III Secretariat	Global overview on policy and practices in urban development and progress towards Habitat III
03	Mr. Guozhong Zhang UNDESA	International normative framework on disability and development
04	Ms. Susan Schorr International Telecommunication Union	Global policy framework and standards on ICT accessibility
05	Ms. Maria D. Perrone Navas Inclusive Management on Disabilities of the Vice-Presidency (Republic of Ecuador)	Accessibility and disability inclusion in urban development (a perspective from Ecuador and Latin America)
06	Mr. Mukhtar Al Shibani Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (Saudi Arabia)	Universal design and built accessibility (perspective of Saudi Arabia)
07	Ms. Goh Siam Imm (remotely) Building and Construction Authority (Singapore)	Inclusive, and universally designed housing and transportation in Singapore
08	Ms. Judith Heumann State Department (United States)	Accessible urban development and disability inclusion in urban development (a perspective of USA)
09	Dr. Adebukola S Adebayo Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities and Human and Organizational Resources Development Centre (Nigeria)	Accessibility and E-inclusion in urban development contexts (a perspective of Nigeria)
10	Ms. Inmaculada Placenia Porrero (remotely) European Commission	Accessibility policy and practices in EU

11	Ms. Ann Frye (remotely) Ann Frye Ltd., (United Kingdom)	Accessible transportation in : key issue and trends
12	Ms. Stafanie Holzwarth, UN-Habitat/ Mr Christopher Kost, Africa Programme Director, Institute for Transport and Development Policy	Sustainable urban mobility and disability: Mainstreaming universal access
13	Ms. Amanda Gibberd Department of Transportation (South Africa)	<i>Rapporteur of session</i>

1:30 to 4:30pm

Round table 2: Exchange of national and local experiences on planning and building accessible and inclusive cities: Infrastructure, housing and public spaces

Brief presentations by experts will be given on urban on planning and building accessible and inclusive cities, especially in the sectors of infrastructure, housing and public spaces, followed by an interactive dialogue among all expert participants. At the end of the round table, a set of conclusions and recommendations on accessible infrastructure, housing and public spaces will be developed.

3 -3:15 pm: Coffee Break

	Experts	Expected topic / role
1	Mr. Clinton Rapley International Management Services (Thailand/USA)	<i>Co-facilitator</i>
2	Mr. Christophe Lalande UN-Habitat	Accessible housing and disability inclusion <i>Co-Facilitator</i>
3	Ms. Maria D. Perrone Navas Inclusive Management on Disabilities of the Vice-Presidency (Republic of Ecuador)	Accessibility and disability inclusion practices in Ecuador
4	Mr. Joseph Kwan (remotely) UDA Consultants Ltd. (Hong Kong, China)	Disability inclusion and accessibility - experience and lessons learnt from Hong Kong, China
5	Mr. Mohammed Gabbow National Council for Persons with Disabilities, (Kenya)	Disability and accessibility promotion the role of public policy including public procurement: experience from Kenya

6	Mr. Mohammed Al Tarawneh Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Jordan)	Universal design and accessibility
7	Ms. Yetnebersh Nigussie Molla ECDD (Ethiopia)	Disability and accessibility in urban contexts: some observations from Ethiopia
8	Ms. Sela Brotherton Zambia Federation of the Disabled (Zambia)	Housing and physical accessibility
9	Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda (remotely) University of California and Director of Inclusive Cities Lab (USA)	Accessibility and urban planning : current status and policy responses for the next phase towards an Inclusive New Urban Agenda
10	Mr. Ondoua Abah Gabriel (remotely) CAFOD (Cameron)	Accessible housing and disability inclusion
11	Mr. Michael Szporluk UN Habitat consultant on urban planning	Accessibility and right to housing <i>Co-rapporteur</i>
12	Mr. Bob Ransom Working Group of the ADF	<i>Co-rapporteur</i>

Day 2 - 29 October

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Round table 3: Access to information, ICTs and basic public services

Exchange of experiences, practical expertise and solutions in regard to access to information and communications technologies and basic public services in the context of building inclusive, resilient and sustainable Smart cities and communities

During this round table, experts will provide brief presentations on ICT and public services. Following discussion, a set of conclusions and way forward for advancing accessible ICT and public services will be formulated.

10:45-11:00am: Coffee Break

	Experts	Expected topic / role
1	Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) Consortium (Japan)	Accessibility in ICTs <i>Facilitator</i>
2	Ms. Susan Schorr	Roles of ICT accessibility legislations

	International Telecommunication Union	and standards work for disability inclusion in development <i>Rapporteur</i>
3	Mr. Axel Leblois (remotely) G3ICT (California)	ICT Accessibility and smart city development: promising practices and solutions
4	Ms. Jutta Trevinarus Inclusive Design Research Centre, OCAD University Toronto (Canada)	ICT accessibility and universal design: roles of technical standards
5	Dr. Adebukola S Adebayo Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities and Human and Organizational Resources Development Centre (Nigeria)	e-inclusion /e-Government and public services
6	Mr. David Banes (remotely) MADA (Qatar)	ICT accessibility
7	Mr. James Rwampigi Aniyamuzaala Federation of the Hard of Hearing (UFHOH) (Uganda)	Access to information, ICTs and basic public service: a perspective from a youth and deaf community
8	Mr. Donal Rice (remotely) National University of Ireland at Galway (Ireland)	Experience/lessons on planning and building accessible and inclusive cities from the perspective of the EU and Ireland in promoting participation and accessible ICTs
9	Mr. Samuel Kabue EDAN (Kenya)	Accessibility and disability inclusion in urban development
10	Ms. Venus Ilagan Rehabilitation International (Philippines)	Disability inclusion and accessibility

1:30 to 4:30pm

Round table 4: Planning and building accessible and inclusive cities, and the roles of standards and national legislation in urban development, such as in transportation and urban infrastructure

Discussants from international organizations, national and local governmental urban planning, disability focal points, DPOs, and development partners to discuss how to overcome challenges and to further the promotion of accessibility and disability inclusion in the context of urban development in sectors such as transportation, including discussions on the roles of standards

and legislation This round table discussion will focus on sharing experiences in planning and building accessible inclusive cities with the view to developing actionable conclusions and recommendations.

3 -3:15 pm: Coffee Break

	Experts	Expected topic / role
1	Mr. Shuaib Chalklen Former UN special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development (South Africa)	<i>Co-Facilitator</i> : Lessons from the implementation of Standard Rules
2	Ms. Ling Suen ICSA (Intelligent Computers and Systems Applications) Inc. (Canada)	Universally Accessible Communities: the North American Experience <i>Co-rapporteur</i>
3	Ms. Karim Del Rocío Garzón Díaz Universidad del Rosario (Colombia)	Accessible transportation and tourism: some learning points from Colombia
4	Mr. Sunarman Sukamto CBR DTC Solo (Indonesia)	Legally binding accessible transportation regulation in Solo City of Indonesia
5	Ms. Amanda Gibberd Department of Transportation (South Africa)	Accessible transportation: addressing the gaps between policy and practices <i>Co-Rapporteur</i>
6	Dr. Michael Fembek Essl Foundation/Zero Project (Austria)	Accessible transportation : some promising case studies
7	Ms. Clare Pelham Leonard Cheshire Disability (United Kingdom)	Accessible transportation and disability inclusion
8	Mr. Guy Davies Disability Solutions (Pty) Ltd (South Africa)	Universally designed approach to improve accessibility to transportation
9	Ms. Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo (remotely) World Bank	Perspective from a development bank
10	Mr. Derrick Cogburn (remotely) Institute on Disability and Public Policy for the ASEAN Region	Role of legislation and standard in promoting accessible urban development with focus on ICT
11	Mr. Michael Replogle (remotely)	Accessible transportation how current

	Deputy Commissioner of Policy at New York City Department of Transportation (USA)	policy and practices work for disability inclusion
12	Mr. Quemuel Arroyo (remotely) Department of Transportation, Government of New York City (USA)	Accessible transportation how current policy and practices work for disability inclusion

Day 3 - 30 Oct

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Special Session: Multi-stakeholders partnership to promote Disability Inclusion and Accessibility in Urban Development in Africa.

Round table consultation focused on an African perspective for promoting disability inclusion and accessibility in the context of urban development.

Co-facilitated by UNDESA and the former UN Special Rapporteur on Disability/African Disability Forum

1. Presentations of messages and interactive discussion

- UNDESA/UN Habitat (global issues and trends)
- Mr. Lefhoko Kesamang (African Union)
- Ms. Winnie Chepkemboi Kalya (National Construction Authority)
- Honorable Isaac Mwaura (Kenya Disability Paliamentary Association, KeDiPa)
- Honorable Ben Njoroge (Senate, Kenya)
- Mr. Bob Ransom (African Disability Forum)
- Ms Saba Lishan (African Child Policy Forum)
- Mr. Richard Mwathi and Ms Hannah Wanja (Young Voices of Leonard Cheshire Disability)
- Ms. Judith Heumann (USA)
- Mr. Paul Mbatia (Light for the World)
- Marianne Frederiksen (Danske Handicaporganisationer,DH)

10 am: Coffee Break

1:30 to 4:30pm

Sixth meeting

1. Summaries of round-table discussions and presentation of key findings and recommendations on furthering promotion of accessible and inclusive urban development

- *Round table one*
- *Round table two*
- *Round table three*
- *Round table four*
- *Special session*

3 -3:15 pm: Coffee Break

2. Closing remarks:

- *Mr Raf Tuts (UN-Habitat)*
- *Mr. Lefhoko Kesamang (African Union)*
- *Mr. Shuaib Chalklen (African Disability Forum)*
- *Mr. Guozhong Zhang (UNDESA)*

II. List of participants

United Nations

Mr. Guozhong Zhang, UNDESA

Ms. Miranda Fajerman, UNDESA

Mr. Kumaresh Chandra Misra, Habitat III Secretariat

Mr. Christophe Lalande, UN-Habitat

Ms. Channe Lindstrøm Oğuzhan, UN-Habitat

Ms. Sonja Ghaderi, UN-Habitat

Mr. Brian Osundwa, UN-Habitat

Ms. Stafanie Holzwarth, UN-Habitat

Participants

Dr. Adebukola S Adebayo

Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (Nigeria)

Mr. Mukhtar Al Shibani

Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (Saudi Arab)

Mr. Mohammed Al-Tarawneh

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Jordan)

Mr. James Rwampigi Aniyamuzaala

Uganda Federation of the Hard of Hearing (Uganda)

Mr. Quemuel Arroyo (remotely)

Department of Transportation, Government of New York City (USA)

Mr. David Banes (remotely)

MADA (Qatar)

Ms. Sela Brotherton

Zambia Federation of the Disabled (Zambia)

Mr. Shuaib Chalklen

African Disability Forum and Former UN Special Rapporteur on Disability (South Africa)

Mr. Derrick Cogburn (remotely)

Institute on Disability and Public Policy for the ASEAN Region (USA)

Mr. Guy Davies

Disability Solutions (Pty) Ltd, Cape Town (South Africa)

Ms. Karim Del Rocío Garzón Díaz

Escuela de Medicina y Ciencias de la Salud, Universidad del Rosario (Colombia)

Dr. Michael Fembek

Essl Foundation (Austria)

Ms. Ann Frye (remotely)

Ann Frye Ltd. (United Kingdom)

Mr. Mohammed Gabbow

National Council for Persons with Disabilities (Kenya)

Mr. Ondoua Abah Gabriel (remotely)

National Union of Association and Institutions of disabled People (Cameroon)

Ms. Amanda Gibberd

Department of Transportation (South Africa)

Ms. Omondi Godliver

Senate (Kenya)

Ms. Judith Heumann

State Department (United States)

Ms. Goh Siam Imm (remotely)

Building and Construction Authority (Singapore)

Ms. Venus Ilagan

Rehabilitation International (Philippines)

Mr. Samuel Kabue

Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (Kenya)

Ms. Jeannette Kah Le Guil

Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura

DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) Consortium (Japan)

Ms. Winnie Chepkemboi Kalya

National Construction Authority

Mr. Lefhoko Kesamang
African Union Commission for Social Development

Mr. Christopher Kost
Africa Programme Director, Institute for Transport and Development Policy

Mr. Joseph Kwan (remotely)
Universal Design Institute (Hong Kong, China)

Mr. Axel Leblois (remotely)
G3ICT (France)

Ms Saba Lishan
Senior Programme Officer, African Child Policy Forum

Honorable Isaac Mwaura
Chair of the Kenya Disability Paliamentary Association, KeDiPa

Commissioner Simon J. Ndubai
Deputy Chair, National Gender and Equality Commission of Kenya

Nyoike Mathu
Independent expert

Ms. Yetnebersh Nigussie Molla
ECDD (Ethiopia)

Ms. Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo (remotely)
World Bank

Mr. Ben Njoroge
Senate (Kenya)

Ms. Clare Pelham
Leonard Cheshire Disability (United Kingdom)

Ms. Maria Daniela Navas Perrone
Inclusive Management on Disabilities of the Vice-Presidency of the Republic of Ecuador

Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda (remotely)
University of California and Director of Inclusive Cities Lab (United States)

Ms. Inmaculada Placenia Porrero (remotely)
European Commission

Mr. Bob Ransom

Working Group of the African Disability Forum (United States)

Mr. Clinton Rapley

International Management Services (Thailand/USA)

Mr. Michael Replogle (remotely)

Department of Transportation, Government of New York City (USA)

Mr. Donal Rice (remotely)

National University of Ireland at Galway (Ireland)

Ms. Susan Schorr

International Telecommunication Union

Ms. Ling Suen

ICSA (Intelligent Computers and Systems Applications) Inc. (Canada)

Mr. Sunarman Sukamto

CBR DTC Solo (Indonesia)

Mr. Michael Szporluk

Independent expert

Mr. Berhanu Tefera

African Disability Forum (Ethiopia)

Ms. Jutta Trevinarus

Inclusive Design Research Centre, OCAD University Toronto (Canada)

Others

Ms. Rosa Farga

Institut Municipal de Persones amb Discapacitat

Ms. Marianne Frederiksen

Danske Handicaporganisationer (Danmark)

Ms. Katherine Guernsey

State Department (United States)

Mr. Jerry Gule

TOTAL South Africa

Ms. Lizzie Kiama

This-Ability Consulting

Mr. David Masika

Chair of the Cheshire Disability Services Kenya, CDSK

Mr. Paul Mbatia

Light for the World

Ms. Breeann M. McCusker

United States Embassy to Kenya (USA)

Ms. Renaldah Mjomba

Leonard Cheshire Disability (Kenya)

Ms. Tiziana Oliva

International Director, Leonard Cheshire Disability (UK)

Ms. Edwina Orowe

SightSavers

Mr. Fredrick Ouko

Action Network for the Disabled

Youth representatives

Mr. Richard Mbugua Mwathi

Leonard Cheshire Disability Eastern and North Africa Region

Ms. Nicole Mulavu

Kenya Methodist University

Ms. Hannah Wanja Maina

Leonard Cheshire Disability Eastern and North Africa Region

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Mr. Rofiat Olabisi Adebayo

Ms. Allison Colburn

Ms. Mastawesha Shegu Feleke

Ms. Syovata Kilonzo

IV. Reference resources

- *Accessibility and Development: Mainstreaming disability in the post-2015 development agenda* (UNDESA Publication, ST/EST/350)
- *The Right to Adequate Housing for Persons with Disabilities Living in Cities*, UN Habitat
- *Disability, Accessibility and Sustainable Urban Development*, UNDESA
- *Accessibility and Development: Mainstreaming disability in the post-2015 development agenda*, UNDESA
- *Report of the DESA/DSPD Forum on Accessible and Inclusive Urban Development* (UNDESA, New York, 11 June 2015)
- *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*
- Habitat III Preparatory Process
- World Habitat Day (observed each year on the first Monday of October)
- World Cities Day (celebrated on 31 October 2014)

V. Press release

UN to promote more accessible and inclusive cities for persons with disabilities

Nairobi 28 October 2015-- A global United Nations meeting bringing together more than 60 urban planning and disability experts opens today at the UN Office in Nairobi. Over the next three days, the experts will discuss solutions to make urban development inclusive of and accessible to the world's one billion persons with disabilities, many of whom live in cities.

The three-day 'DESA Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development' aims to support States and related stakeholders in jointly advancing accessible and inclusive urban development. It will result in a set of key recommendations to build an inclusive and accessible New Urban Agenda for all, including persons with disabilities.

The recommendations will expect to highlight in particular the need for proper urban policy, regulatory norms and standards, "design for all" approach to planning and necessary mobilisation/ allocation of resources through broad-based partnership.

Outcome of the Forum would contribute to the 3rd UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III), which will take place in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016 and result in a New Urban Agenda that will guide global urban development for the next two decades.

"The achievement of truly inclusive development where no one is left behind requires a holistic and people-centered approach", said Mr. Hongbo Wu, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. "Development policies and programming must fully take account of the aspirations, needs and concerns of all people, and involve and engage all members of society, regardless of their status, disability or non-disability."

For one billion persons living currently with disabilities, most cities and towns present significant barriers to inclusion and participation, ranging from inaccessible built and virtual infrastructures to lack of user-sensitive designed facilities or limited access to basic public services.

"We need to find local solutions for global problems", said Dr. Aisa Kayira Kirabo Deputy Executive Director for UN-Habitat and former Mayor of Kigali. "Innovative housing, transportation and buildings programmes that make our cities accessible to all are urgently needed."

Mr. Lennin Moreno UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility, in his message to the Forum, urges all Governments including local authorities, United Nations entities, development partners and other major stakeholders to engage and work with persons with disabilities and their organizations and work together in a more proactive way to make cities better place for all.

The Forum is organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), and UN-Habitat, and is supported by the African Union as well as the African Disability Forum and other civil society organizations and development partner organizations from five continents.

The Forum is convened just prior to World Cities Day (31st October), which will be marked this year under the theme "Designed to Live Together".

For more information about the Forum please visit: <http://www.un.org/disabilities>

