1. Title

Equal Access on the Web

2. Organizers and Panelists

Organizer:
      W3C Web Accessibility Initiative

Panelists:
- **Chair:** Daniel Dardailler, W3C Associate Chair
- **Panelist 1:** Shadi Abou-Zahra, W3C Web Accessibility Specialist
        Presentation: Web Accessibility Overview
- **Panelist 2:** Norbert Bollow, SIUG President and Design4All.ch Member
        Presentation: Web Accessibility Certification
- **Panelist 3:** Nikoloas Floratos, e-ISOTIS European Project Coordinator
        Presentation: The Future of the Web is Accessible

3. Discussion

The Web offers the possibility of unprecedented access to information and interaction for many people with disabilities. That is, the accessibility barriers to print, audio, and visual media can be much more easily overcome through Web technologies. More over, the Web is an increasingly important resource in many aspects of life: education, employment, government, commerce, health care, recreation, and more. It is essential that the Web be accessible in order to provide equal access and equal opportunity to people with disabilities. An accessible Web is a key enabler of the participation and inclusion of people with disabilities in the information society.

This Workshop explored issues related to equal access and equal opportunities for people with disabilities as stated in the commitments set out in paragraph 90 of the Tunis Agenda. It examined the needs of people with disabilities in a rapidly growing and evolving Web. The panelists presented some of the user needs, current practices in addressing these needs, and lessons learned from the various approaches. While the adoption and implementation of Web accessibility is an on-going the discussion, the following are the main conclusions from the Workshop:

- Accessibility barriers are denying people with disabilities from equal access on the Web, a key media of the information society;
- Fragmented technical standards for Web accessibility are slowing down the adoption and implementation in content and tools;
- There is a significant lack of awareness and education for Web accessibility amongst developers and decision makers;
- Web accessibility certification is one potential approach for labeling accessible content, and there appears to be a high demand for this from some parties.

4. Inventory of events and actors related to the issue under discussion

The adoption and implementation of Web accessibility requires contribution from key stakeholders including disability organizations, industry, policy makers, researchers, and standardization bodies. Much discussion and collaboration has already taken place in different fora, and many governments and organizations have recognized the need to address the needs of people with disabilities on the Web. There are many resources available that reflect different perspectives and approaches on addressing some of the issues that have been raised and discussed during the workshop.

5. Possible follow-up

More dialogue and exchange with relevant stakeholders is necessary to promote:
- Awareness for the need of equal access on the Web for people with disabilities;
- Common understanding and adoption of harmonized standards for accessibility;
- Further exploration of implementation drivers and conformance mechanisms;
- Development of more educational resources to leverage the overall knowledge.

6. Useful links
World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) http://www.w3.org/
Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) http://www.w3.org/WAI/
Swiss Internet User Group (SUIG) http://www.suig.ch/
Design for All – Switzerland (Design4All.ch) http://www.design4all.ch/
Information Society Open To ImpairmentS (e-ISOTIS) http://www.e-isotis.org/