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Diversity  
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Internet Governance Forum  
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>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Ladies and gentlemen, hello, good morning. We are going to start this session now, one of our main sessions on access and diversity.

My name is Jonathan Charles. I'm your moderator today. I am a presenter with BBC News, a foreign correspondent with BBC News, and I am also here as part of the EBU delegation, European Broadcasting Union.

Over the next three hours there will be plenty of opportunity for you to have your comments on what we are talking about. I am hoping after each set of speakers to call on some of you from the floor to make your comments, your observations, and perhaps engage in a little debate. Because that's what we are here for, is to move this whole subject forward. It's not just about hearing people's prepared positions. I would like to hear your comments so that we can try to draw some conclusions.

Access and diversity. Well, I suppose it is two sides of the same coin, isn't it. In the case of access, it is about getting some of the hundreds of millions of people who aren't currently online, able to access the Internet, to get them involved in what is this large global conversation.

And diversity, too. We're all aware that the Egyptians have just announced over the past 24 hours they are about to file the first non-Latin domain name. They want dot masr, dot Egypt in Arabic. So there's a non-Latin domain name. They are trying to bring the Internet to many people who are unable to speak one of the Latin languages and want to have it in their own language, Arabic, the 300 million potential Arabic users in the world, very few of whom are currently online.

And the past 24 hours we have been talking a lot as well about access for the disabled. The 10% of the global population who are in one way or another disabled. They have some disability. And they, too, want to take part in what many of us take for granted, the Internet.

Our speakers I will be introducing one by one. I would like to start by asking Markus to make a few comments on behalf of the Secretariat, a few announcements. Silence is golden.

>>MARKUS KUMMER: Now it's on. Thank you, Jonathan. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I have just a few announcements.

First, not all of you were given a conference bag, that is due to the fact that we had more participants than expected. We issued 1800 bags and we have been planning for 1500 participants, so we have a very high attendance, and unfortunately, not every participant was given a bag.

One of the items in the bag was a book we produced reflecting last year's meeting in Hyderabad, the whole preparatory process and also the stock-taking process.

We will make more copies of that book available here in the room, so for those who did not get the book with the bag, please feel free to pick it up.

We also have enough, should people be interested in picking up more than one book. There is no point in leaving many book copies here in Sharm El Sheikh.

The second announcement concerns tomorrow's meeting. You know we said it several times, it is also on our Web site, that we changed the program, as the First Lady of Egypt will have a special session between 10:00 and 11:15.

This means that all workshops will have to start at 8:00 in the morning. The

shuttle arrangements will be adjusted to allow participants to reach the conference tent in time.

All workshops begin at 8:00. They will finish at 9:30 to allow participants to come to the main hall in time.

The doors will be closed at 9:15, and I'm told that mobile phones will be banned from the main session room. My recommendation, therefore, would be leave your mobile phone in the hotel room, if you want to be sure that you have it again at the end of the day, as there might be confusion if everybody deposits it outside the gate.

Again, after the First Lady's session, we will resume our normal program at 11:30 with the stock-taking session, and all the workshops.

We will break for lunch at 1:00. Resume again at 1430 with the second part of the stock-taking session. And then the emerging issues session will be shortened by half an hour, will be between four hours and six hours. And the closing session will be at six hours, half an hour from 6:00, till half past 6:00.

That marks tomorrow's program.

And the last announcement I was told by our host country that IPv6 is now functional in the Congress center. It was not planned to begin with, as part of the network requirements, but in order to accommodate the requests that were also made during yesterday's session on critical Internet resources, the host country network team has now set up an IPv6 network with SSID, IGF underscore IPv6 yesterday evening.

If you prefer to use IPv6, please switch to that network.

Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Markus, thank you very much, indeed.

So our work this morning, the three hours are split into really two distinct sessions. Between now and 11:30 we are going to look at diversity and from 11:30 we are going to change panels, change chairman, change moderator and they are going to look at access.

On diversity, we are also going to split that into two sections, first of all, look at the issues faced by people with disabilities and then we will look at multilingualism.

Our chairman today is Talal Abu-Ghazaleh. He is chairman of the U.N. global alliance for ICT and development. He is also chairman, amongst other thing, of the Talal group, a leading business service provider with 72 offices around the world. I have to say he is also irrepressible and very lively and that's what we want today to be, we want it to be a very lively session. So think of your questions. Think that you, too, are involved in all of this.

Talal.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: All right. Good morning. I want to salute the many good friends here that I have known for many, many years and say hello to the new friends I am making this morning, and I hope I am making this morning, because I would like to be, as usual, candid and direct.

I take objection to the top subject of diversity which I am supposed to chair the meeting on, because as defined, it is in two parts only: Diversity in language and diversity of disability. And I disagree to both.

Diversity is much more than that and is much wider than that. And therefore, I would like to call on our very able leadership in the Internet Governance Forum to produce a list or a table of diversities as far as that is related to ICT and as GAID, as chairman of the global alliance, United Nations Global Alliance on ICT and Development, we would be very happy to work with you on a joint project, since we are both, GAID and the IGF, are the two valued sons of the WSIS. They are the two concrete projects that came out of the WSIS.

So as good brothers, we could work on a list of what can be called as diversities, and in which sense which means disadvantages.

So language first, I don't like to hear that we are very happy that Arabic has been recognized as one of the diversities. Arabic language is a major historically respected language. So are the other languages: Indian, Chinese, every other language.

It is -- The problem is that ICANN started, and we are grateful to ICANN and I have great working relationship with ICANN. ICANN started as a U.S. gift, and we are grateful to the United States of America for making that gift free to the entire world. We recognize that great generosity. And of course it had to start with Latin, what you call Latin, which is the English alphabet. But Arabic alphabet is there, has been there and is not a diversity. It is just another language, just as equal to the English language, English character. In fact, I think we are, and the Indians, the Arabs and Indians take pride in having introduced the characters and having introduced the numbers.

And we invented the zero, which made the Internet operate.

So we do not want to be seen in the Arab world as a diversity. We are not. We are just as equal as anybody on the Internet world.

That's number one.

Number two, disability. Disability is not a diversity. Disability is just another kind of person, another kind of circumstances, another well-being in a different set, like a tall man, a fat man, an idiot, an intelligent person. He is just equal to any of us and is sometimes better than any of us.

Some of my best people in the organization are what you call people with disability. So I don't want to call them -- If we want to call disabilities, then we need to define the term as to mean peculiar. Peculiar, it is in relation to ICT.

Now, having said that, I would say the whole subject cannot be limited to disability and language. How about poverty? If I cannot have the means to learn nor to have access, I am much worse than a person with disability, because a person with disability who has the circumstances in a country with provides respect -- the respect for him which he deserves is in a much better position than the person in a country where he cannot even know what a computer is like.

Then we talk about infrastructure. Education. Education. That's why we are very proud that yesterday we launched our great partnership with UNESCO on education and, among other things, we are looking at ICT indicators on a Web-based transparent basis so that every country knows where they are and what they are doing.

But more than that, we are developing an open platform, and we are also developing an open source program for the entire world, so that we have complete access to content. Content problem.

And I was very proud that His Excellency Minister Tarek Kamel yesterday endorsed this project with great enthusiasm, and he welcomed our partnership with UNESCO. And I will be working with his ministry and under his leadership in pushing this project throughout -- in Egypt, in the Arab world, and in the entire world.

I don't want to talk too long, but I just want to say finally, let us be here very, very, very clear. When we talk of disability, we don't talk of an inferior person. When we talk about the Arabs, and here I don't speak for the U.N. today. I have my business hat. I come from the rat race. I am a business man who is proud to be a business man, because we generate income. We generate -- we create knowledge and we create wealth and we pay for the salaries of the government officers and everybody in the world.

So we are very proud to be businessmen, and I am very proud to say I am here today speaking as a businessman. A businessman has a responsibility, a corporate responsibility and a governmental responsibility. And out of awareness of this I want to call on every business organization in the world to do its duty and not to think of itself as only a wealth creator and knowledge creator. But as a servant to the society. And this is what our agreement with UNESCO is all about.

Now, I will, in closing, say I would like to see out of this meeting some sense of direction on the question of diversity.

Access is diversity. And access is the most important diversity.

The people who do not have access without any disability are at least hundred times more in number than those who are with disability and do not have access because of disability.

Disabled people are great people. They are just as good as me and better than me. But there are people who are unfortunately less than me because of the circumstances of lack of access. Those also have to have our attention. And I thank you for putting up with me as usual.

Thank you.

[ Applause ]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Talal, thank you very much. I would have been very disappointed if you hadn't been provocative.

We take it for granted, don't we? We click on the Internet, we click on a Web page and we are able to navigate it, most of us.

But that's not the case for everyone. And our first pair of speakers are going to show us, sometimes, why it isn't the case. Why people need to think a lot harder about the way they design their Web pages, to make sure they conform with universality.

Let me introduce Shadi Abou-Zahra who is the activity lead on WAI international program, and standing at the podium, Gerry Ellis, accessibility and usability consultant for Feel the Benefit. Both of them work very heavily in this area of making sure that access is improved for people with disabilities.

Over to you gentlemen.

>>SHADI ABOU-ZAHRA: So good morning.

Yeah, thank you for this opportunity to talk to you and to present to you what Web accessibility, as an example of accessibility in ICT, provides.

For those of you who have attended Tim Berners-Lee's keynote on Sunday, I think he showed the vast importance of universality of the Web for people from different cultures, with different languages, with different devices, and with different abilities. So it's really about connecting humanity, as he called it.

And the Web, in particular, really provides unprecedented opportunities for people with disabilities to interact, to access information, and to act as equal peers on the Web by providing content and by using the information and using the Internet.

Gerry is going to be showing an example of one user. He is totally blind. He is going to be showing how he uses his computer and a software that will speak out what's on the screen for him, and show how he can use that to access the Web. What happens when a Web site is developed accessibly, and what happens when a Web site, the same Web site, is not developed accessibly.

Gerry, please go ahead.

>>GERRY ELLIS: Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much.

As Shadi said, what I have here is a standard laptop, the same as any other person would use, with an extra piece of software called assistive technology. And the particular assistive technology that I use is called a screen reader, which is what speaks text on the screen. what I'm going to show you is two versions of the same Web site, and firstly what I'm going to do is just test that the sound is working, so what you will hear is the title of the Web site. So let's see, is it working.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: City limits home, your access to the city.

>>GERRY ELLIS: So it said "access to the city" and you'll hear the voice and just so you can acclimatize, I'll do that just one more time.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: City lights home, your access to the city.

>>GERRY ELLIS: Okay. So what do you do when you go onto a Web site?

Firstly, you normally take a land sight of Web site just to get a feeling of the general overview of the Web site, but I can't do that.

Normally, what I would have to do is read all the way from top to bottom, unless there are proper structures. So the first structure that I want to look at are the headings on the Web site. So what I'm going to do is go through a couple of headings and what you will hear is the heading being spoken and then it will say "Level Heading 1," "Level Heading 2", or "Heading Level 1," "Heading Level 2," so I know which are the important headings.

So I'm just going to flick through a couple of headings and that will see how I get a feel for the structure of this Web site. So let's go to the first one.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Before and after demonstration, Heading Level 1.

>>GERRY ELLIS: So it said "Before and after demonstration, Heading Level 1," so I know that's a major heading.

Next one.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Welcome to city lights, Heading Level 1.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Welcome to city lights," and I know that's still a major heading because it said "Heading Level 1."

Let's try the next one.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Heat wave linked to temperatures. Heading Level 2 link.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Heat wave, Heading Level 2," so I notice that these are lower size headings so I know that these are not big banner headings, and that gives me a tremendous knowledge of the kind of structure.

The next thing that I want to do is what are the tabs on here, or what are the links.

So I don't use a mouse. I can't see, so I can't click on a mouse. So the way that I do it is by clicking "tab."

So I'm going to tab through a couple of links here and you'll hear the word "tab" and then you'll hear the content of the link.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Tab, heat wave, full story, link.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Heat wave, full story," and you heard the word "link," so I now know that that is a link because it's properly structured.

I'm going to go to the next one.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Tab, man gets nine months in violin case, Heading Level 2, link.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Man gets nine months in a violin case." I don't know how he fitted inside a violin case, but that's neither here nor there.

That sounds interesting to me, so what I can now do is I can just arrow down and listen to the text.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Link, graphic, violin case open for inspection, complete with violin.

>>GERRY ELLIS: So what I have here is there's a picture of a violin case and it's open for inspection and it was a simple little explanation attached to that graphic. Even though my software can't read a picture, it can read that description. And, again, I can go linking again.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Tab, violin case, full story, link.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Full story."

So that is basically how I can get around if it's properly and well-structured.

So what I'm going to do now is link to -- jump to an inaccessible version of exactly the same site.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Dot, dot, City lights, dot --

>>GERRY ELLIS: So here we have the same, it looks the same, aesthetically the same. Let's see if it's as functional. Let's try and read the heading.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Dot, dot, city lights, dot, dot.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Dot, dot, city lights, dot, dot." A bit confusing, but not too bad.

If you remember, the first thing I did last time was I went through the headings to get a feeling for the structure, so let's see what the headings are here.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Before and after demonstration, Heading Level 1.

>>GERRY ELLIS: "Before and after demonstration, Heading Level 1." So far, so good. Let's look at the next heading.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Wrapping to top, before and after demonstration.

>>GERRY ELLIS: It wrapped to the top because there are no more headings, so I'm immediately at a major disadvantage because I can't get that general feeling of what the Web site looks like. There is the first major inaccessibility, the major problem for myself.

Let's look at a couple of more so if I go through some of the links, if I look at some of the graphics that are here on this -- on this screen, let's hear one.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Link, graphic, before slash nav home mouse over.

>>GERRY ELLIS: I bet you didn't get that.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Date.

>>GERRY ELLIS: I'm going to read it again.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Link graphic before slash NAF home mouse over.

>>GERRY ELLIS: Before, slash, nav, backslash, something or other. Total gibberish, from my point of view. It probably looks perfect from your point of view because you can see the graphic, but because that graphic isn't properly tagged with the information that I need, it sounds like gibberish. Let's try the next one.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Link graphic before slash nav news on mouse over.

>>GERRY ELLIS: Total gibberish. I haven't a clue what that means. The last time you saw me tabbing, I'm going to establish again to see what sort of tab -- can I tab to some links that I can make sense of.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Tab, dot, dot, city lights, dot, dot, tab.

>>GERRY ELLIS: So I'm tabbing to links which again you can see and you can probably see them highlighted, but the information that I need from my clean reader is not there, so let's establish through a couple more of these.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: Tab.

>>GERRY ELLIS: Tab, blank. I can't access that. So in other words, let me show you that Web site one more time. Have a look at it. That's the accessible version.

>>SCREEN READER VOICE: City lights home.

>>GERRY ELLIS: It looks exactly the same. But the accessible one is just as aesthetically pleasing, just as functional, but much, much, more accessible, and that's the message. It can be just as functional and just as aesthetically pleasing and perfectly accessible.

Thank you.

[ Applause ]

>>SHADI ABOU-ZAHRA: Thank you, Gerry, for that.

So I hope this demonstration shows you really what we are talking about when we are saying accessibility and access for people with disabilities.

What's important is to realize that this improvement in the coding that makes it work for a screen reader or for other types of assistive technologies, so people with different types of disabilities use other types of assistive technologies. But that is essentially the same means that we use to access, for example, with mobile phones, or with other devices.

So it's an improvement that benefits all in the end, regardless which languages, cultures, or technologies that you are using.

For example, digital TV or sooner or later you are going to be browsing the Web through your car radio.

So access for people with disabilities benefits all, and this is precisely what we are talking about. You can have the same visual appearance and same functionality, but with more quality that makes it work on a whole range of devices and for people.

And at the W3C Web accessibility initiative, this is exactly what we developed.

We developed guidelines and solutions and standards and resources to make the Web accessible for people with disabilities. And this is an example of why standards in ICT are so important for people with disabilities and for the inclusion of accessibility requirements.

And if you want to hear more about best practices in Web accessibility, please attend our workshop later today. It's in room 5, I believe, in Suez Canal, at 4:00 p.m.

Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you very much, indeed, Shadi and Gerry. And a very good example there of just how little you need to do to make a big difference if you are designing a Web page. A massive difference. And no disadvantage to anyone who doesn't need that extra built of help, because the Web site looks exactly the same. That's universality.

I would like to call now on Cynthia Waddell who is the executive director of the International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet. Or Andrea, you would like to speak first. We are going to wait for Cynthia.

Andrea Saks I will call on first, who is the convener of the joint coordination activity on accessibility and human factors; the coordinator, of course, on the dynamic coalition on accessibility and disability. For decades has been working on these issues, almost from birth because she was born into a family where her parents were both hard of hearing.

>>ANDREA SAKS: Deaf.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Deaf, and had to take all the responsibility on her own shoulders, a lot of responsibility for making sure that many of the day-to-day existence things that we take for granted were done.

Andrea.

>>ANDREA SAKS: Thank you, Jonathan. The reason I wanted to go first is because I want Cynthia to have the full rest of the time to concentrate on presenting the message.

Actually, I am a little superfluous because I just coordinate things, but my background has taken me to this spot.

It's true what Jonathan says, I was on the phone at two years old. I was the deaf telephone.

My father was one of the founders of the text telephony system that is pretty -- it's still being used throughout the world. We are moving to new technology.

And one of the legacies of that is something that's called real-time text, which we did present in an earlier accessibility workshop which we had yesterday.

One of the most important things I wanted to agree with the chairman, because I am now working in places like Africa and other countries where the actual economic structure does not afford people to get on ICTs in the first place. And one of my favorite people is a wonderful Syrian man at ICT who said to me about 15 years ago, "Andrea, when you talk about accessibility, I am talking about where is the nearest phone and the nearest oasis." So I do understand that.

And this is my third trip to Egypt, and I love this place because no matter what the adversity is, there is a smile on somebody's face. And it suits me very well because that's how I feel about life.

So I have seen some fabulous things here, and I want to give the Egyptian authorities a compliment. This has been the most accessible IGF meeting to date.

We have seen a tremendous progress in the awareness of the administration in developing places and accessibility for people with physical and we have captioning, we have sign language.

Though I want to point out sign language is not the same in every language, you have got sign language.

And I went on an Egypt airplane and they had sign language and they had captioning. It was in Arabic, I couldn't read it, but the prayers were captioned.

So at least somebody who is deaf in Egypt could understand the emergency instructions, they had their prayer, and they had sign language, because not all deaf people sign. When you get older, as I am getting, my hearing is getting worse. My television is getting louder, and the kids are telling me to turn it down. And it's reverse in me telling them to turn it down.

So accessibility affects us all. And it hits us at different times in our lives.

But the main thing I wanted to stress is that the dynamic coalition is made up of people who are or have -- are either related to, have a relationship with, want to see the change or are disabled themselves.

They have written this message themselves over the period of about four months.

I have stuck my nose in, but I have really pretty much stayed out of it other than to put in my comments which deal with things like dyslexia, because I have a hidden disability which was totally ignored, because how could you beat deafness? Dyslexia was not known in my time.

So I have been working in the area of accessibility now -- I guess if I am 62, and I started at 2, for 60 years.

There has been a lot of change but we need convergence. We need to work together.

The western world has -- coming from the western world, always wants to tell the other side that they call the developing world what to do. I don't feel that that is an answer.

I think what we have to do is work with and have the projects originate in the country with the assistance of those experts throughout the world, some of them from different parts of the world, but work with the experts within the country so we can develop programs where people can get education because education is the key to move people out of poverty, move them out of the problem of not being able to have access due to disability, and also bringing the world together so we all can communicate on one level. And employment will occur when people can all communicate on one level, and that will really lift us out of the problems of disability for persons with disabilities. I think you agree with what I am saying, I hope. Great, I got him. It's good.

What I am going to do now is turn it over to Cynthia who is going to present the message.

Now, I just want one more explanation.

We were thinking of reading it out for the people who have sight problems and sight disabilities, but that would take too long. It is going to go on the screen. And we're going to do it section by section. It is two pages. And Jonathan, I think we are going to adopt it at the end?

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Yeah.

>>ANDREA SAKS: We are not going -- I have been just been informed it's four pages and we are not going section by section. But what it is is to raise the awareness and give a view as to what we would like to see.

So Cynthia -- I just did --

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Absolutely. Cynthia, and afterwards, Talal is going to make a comment and call for an acclamation.

>>ANDREA SAKS: But I didn't introduce Cynthia.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Andrea, thank you very much indeed. We have a lot of irrepressible people on the panel here today, which is no bad thing.

Cynthia Waddell, executive director of the International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet, has spent years also working in this area, including being involved with getting justice in the United States, on the panel that ensures there's justice for people with disability.

Cynthia, I will hand it over to you for the message.

>>CYNTHIA WADDELL: Thank you very much. It certainly is an honor to be here today and to discuss a topic very dear to my heart.

This message by the dynamic coalition was put together mindful of the 650 million persons with disabilities around the world as well as the 2 billion members, including their families that are impacted by the challenges of disability.

When we speak of accessibility, I would like to point out it really has three different meanings.

When we talk about accessibility, which respect to disability, we are talking about connectivity with the Internet we are talking about affordability, and we are talking about accessible design.

And when this panel began, we were looking at the Web and we were talking about accessible design. Our chairman, when he opened, we talked about the challenges of what this word "diversity" meant. And even within the global population, persons with disabilities are diverse. And they are found in every social strata, every culture, every country.

And so with that in mind, and knowing that 80% of persons with disabilities live in developing countries, and most, unfortunately, tend to be in the margins, as we referenced earlier.

So now I would like to present to you a summary, and not read a four-page document out loud. I would ask you to please refer to it. And this is the message on accessibility for persons with disabilities by the dynamic coalition on accessibility and disability.

First I want to tell you that this message begins with the introduction that talks about how the dynamic coalition was formed at the Internet Governance Forum to ensure that information and communications technology accessibility is included in the key debates about Internet governance.

The dynamic coalition seeks to build a future where all sectors of the global community have equal access to the Information Society.

The message begins with this introduction.

It goes on to a section regarding rights.

This message supports the United Nations convention on the rights of persons with disabilities whose purpose is to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Now, these rights include equal access to the Internet, to information, communication, and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

Many people are unaware that the ICT, accessibility for persons with disabilities is a significant obligation of the U.N. convention and is supported by the Tunis commitment of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The message moves on to a section on the Internet standards and accessibility support. The message promotes the use of internationally recognized and open standards that support accessibility and result in the benefits that are detailed in this message.

We believe that technical design standards play a critical role in the implementation of accessible ICT.

However, one chief concern is the problem of the prevention of barriers to participation by persons with disability, where these barriers are created by a proprietary protocols.

The message goes on to discuss other issues regarding Internet standards and accessibility support.

We move on to the benefits section, which discusses tangible and measurable benefits that come from implementation standards and accessibility support. There are many listed there but I'd like to point out that the benefits for assisting persons with disabilities also benefits older adults and actually improves access for everyone around the world.

The message also takes a look at and points out the benefits of universality, of universal design. This message adopts the definition of "universal design" as found in Article II of the United Nations convention on rights of persons with disabilities.

I'm going to, at this point, mention what -- say what that definition is, so we're clear. "Universal design means the design of products, environments, programs, and services to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed."

Universal design and the discussion in the convention and reference in the message points out to Article IX of the convention which seeks -- which announces that the obligation of the signatories are to promote the design, development, production, and distribution of accessible ICT and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.

The last two sections of the message address training. It provides recommendations for your consideration and points to resources on what we feel are helpful for training regarding these issues, and the last section is practical steps.

We submit before you a list of practical steps to enable the global community to benefit from an accessible ICT world. Thank you.

[Applause]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Cynthia, thank you very much. And at the very end of our first half of proceedings, at about 11:30, Talal is going to -- as our chairman is going to give a summary of where we are but also call on all of us to back

that message on accessibility for persons with disabilities by the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability.

Before we move on to our next section, which is multilingualism, this is the time where I want to take a little bit of a break to allow you to have your say on the speakers that we've heard so far. I want to hear from your comments from the audience, comments that you might like to make.

I'd ask you to wait for the microphone to come to you or to go to one of the microphones. There are people roving around with microphones. If you put up your hand if you want to make a comment, and announce who you are, so that we know exactly who you are. Then that will be great. I'm going to come down here to -- so please ask your questions. Who would like to start? David Wood, I can see your hand over there. If you could just say who you are, sir, we'll just get a working microphone to you, hopefully.

>>DAVID WOOD: Yes, this is the broadcasting world, Jonathan, waiting for a working microphone as you know.

Yes, I'm David Wood, from the professional media community, from the European Broadcasting Union. A couple of quick points, if I may.

First of all, very strongly support to this piece of paper. The statement. Please make that the one that you don't throw away when you leave here. Put it in your bag, and one of the reasons is that when you go back home, you will need this because you'll have to interpret nationally what the U.N. convention on persons with disabilities means for things like the Internet and this is going to be an invaluable aid to that.

So we're very much behind this document. We very much support it.

But when you read it, please also remember that it is just a first step. It is an important and critical step but it is only a first one and there are two reasons for this. First of all, it's talking about tools for multimedia Web sites, and in fact, the technology of Web sites is moving on. It's including a lot more videos, a lot more effectively television programs, and the new world is one of combining Web and television content.

So there's still a job to be done to find out these tools in these new evolving environments.

And the second issue is also about broadening the thinking in the future, because access doesn't just mean mechanic access. We have to understand what's on the page. It means access to society. It means the content of the Web site is important, too. And we do have to look beyond the tools and the mechanics of accessing to find out which content people with disabilities need and that we can provide.

So that's my message, essentially. Please bear in mind this is a very fine start. Take the paper away from you, but it is a start and there is more to do in terms of advanced types of content and advanced types of Web sites. Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: David, if I can just ask you, with a lot of these issues, it often comes down to money, doesn't it, particularly in terms of subtitling, for example, on the Internet.

How is that going to be resolved, do you think, by broadcasters?

>>DAVID WOOD: Well, the -- the issue -- yeah. Subtitling, of course, as more and more television programs get shown on the Web, we have to find a way of transferring the subtitles, the video and audio descriptors that were used with television programs onto the Web and we absolutely need the technical tools for that, so we'd very much call upon bodies like the ITU to work on the standards for doing that.

But the cost, of course, is a factor, and somehow or other we have to decide that this community, this 10%, as you said, which incidentally can be enlarged to include a lot of other people who find these facilities useful. We have to find some way of convincing management that this is certainly money well spent.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: David, thank you very much. Who else would like to make a comment? Yes. Arun, a microphone will head in your direction.

>>ARUN MEHTA: Thank you. I'm Arun Mehta from New Delhi. I'm delighted that we have a chairperson who is so frank and I would, therefore, help -- I would be,

therefore, grateful if he and others on the panel would help me understand how the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations and all the indicators for progress under the Millennium Development Goals make absolutely no mention of disability. How did that happen?

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: That's quite a good point. I don't know whether anyone on the panel -- I think I can see Talal certainly would like to make a comment on that. Yeah.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: I thank you for raising this subject because we are having -- we've been working very actively on this issue at this time. We know that the Millennium Development Goals were resolved by the summit in the year 2000, and the target was 2015, and we are now two-thirds through the way, with very little accomplishment, and we have practically not delivered as a global community, as a global community, on the achievement of the millennium goals. So the U.N. GAID, the global alliance, is undertaking a project now, under the leadership of the Secretary-General and his deputy, Mr. Sha, and I am on top of this project, for a practical approach to the achievement of the development can goals.

We will be submitting to the next summit in 2010, which will be the third global Millennium Development Goals summit, a program -- a matrix with clear indicators of how ICT can be used for development in every sector of development, and that includes business, health, education, disability, everything.

So we will be developing a comprehensive matrix how to put ICT for the purpose of achieving the development and, hence, the Millennium Development Goals.

This is a target and I have promised the Secretary-General of the United Nations that we will submit this matrix by April 2010, so that it will be ready for the third global summit on the Millennium Development Goals.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Talal, thank you very much.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: Thank you.

[Applause]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Shadi Abou-Zahra.

>>SHADI ABOU-ZAHRA: Yeah, I wanted just to very briefly respond on the question of costs.

Especially on captioning.

I think this is much more beyond the 10% who need captioning in order to understand the content, but it helps so many more. Especially here at the IGF. I mean, looking around the room, I will just say that probably most of us are nonnative English speakers, yet we are speaking English to be able to communicate with each other.

My mother tongue be is Arabic. I very often miss words because of pronunciation because I don't know the words, and I use the captioning even though I can hear. So it helps me a lot, and I'm sure it helps many of you in the room.

So the cost/benefits are very often inside, and many business cases have shown that on the long run, you will save costs by implementing accessibility.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Shadi, thank you. We keep coming back, don't we, to the idea of universality. It's at the heart of everything. Yes, Fernando Botelho. I will just give you a microphone, so...

>>FERNANDO BOTELHO: Hello. It's on?

Hello, I'm Fernando Botelho. I specialize in low-cost solutions for persons with disabilities and scalable projects.

I just want to give an example. There are -- there's a huge challenge in making sure that persons with disabilities have employment opportunities around the world, and there is -- there are companies such as a captioning company in Argentina I discovered that the blind are actually even more productive than the average person when doing transcription. So that's one more example of employment opportunity and one that helps people with different disabilities. Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Fernando, thank you very much, indeed. Okay. Some questions over here. Yes. Yeah. If you could just introduce yourself.

>>FRANK LA RUE: Thank you. My name is Frank La Rue, and I am the special rapporteur of United Nations for freedom of opinion of expression in the world but I also happen to be legally blind, and very proud of it.

And I was fascinated with the question of accessibility, because obviously I understand when you're talking about accessibility to ITCs, you're also talking not only to the ability of receiving information and access to information, but also the ability to express through ITC your opinions and your thoughts and I think people with disabilities should have -- we should all have the possibility of this double way of communication, receiving and expressing freely.

But I also wanted to say that I agree, as rapporteur, one of my concerns is accessibility, precisely to new technology and new communication, and I agree with the chairman when he said at the beginning that probably even beyond the question of disability, the worst limitation is poverty and I do think we have to put -- and the economic cost applies to people with disabilities as well, because technologies for people with disabilities will tend to be more expensive. So I believe and I wanted to ask the panel and the audience whether, within for instance the millennium goals or as a matter of fact a recommendation to the U.N., whether in order to reach economic development, we should actually make all communities and all sectors, including people with disabilities, fully accessible to electronic communication to ITCs, and in that sense, should there be sort of a world campaign to create a fund -- first of all, each state to be able to subsidize access to poor people or people with diversities like disability and, secondly, whether there should be a worldwide fund for the exchange of technology, the high technology to the developing world. Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Interesting point. So let me just ask -- Talal.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: With your permission, because the point raised is also very extremely important, and I want to tell you that I put again my hat as chair of GAID.

We are working now on a statement on rights of every individual in the world to access and to be part of the knowledge society of the world. And that is a statement which we are working very carefully on, and we hope to produce it for the summit as well, to act on it and make it a right like any other human right.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Talal, thank you. Andrea, do you want to comment on that at all.

>>ANDREA SAKS: Well, one of the things that I had to learn when I got into this was that deafness wasn't the only problem, even though that's where I started and I totally agree with the -- with what the speaker -- I'm sorry, I couldn't hear your name properly -- said about poverty. Otherwise, if you can't feed a person, they're not going to be terribly interested in getting on computer.

So I'm very glad to hear that that's going to be coming about. I hope to work with you, Mr. Chairman, in the future, about accessibility from the dynamic coalition and also from the joint coordination activity of accessibility and human factors in the ITU, which I also chair, because it's much more complex.

We have to have convergence in standards and we also have to work hard to work with people in different groups and the U.N., and unfortunately sometimes it is all talk and no "do" which is kind of what I always worry about. We need projects. We need projects in the countries to be able to accomplish accessibility for everyone.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Andrea, thank you very much. Cynthia, a quick comment from you.

>>CYNTHIA WADDELL: We are on a topic that is an obligation already in the convention that's signed by many people, countries. In Article XXXII of the U.N. convention and rights of persons with disabilities, it calls for international cooperation to facilitate research and access to scientific and technical knowledge, to provide technical and economic assistance, and as well as to enable that technology transfer.

So accessible Web implementation and accessible ICT assistance and international cooperation is already an obligation by many signatories to the convention.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: All right, Cynthia. Thank you. We don't have much time, but 30 seconds each to make your points. The blonde lady there and then the gentleman here just very quickly. Yes, sir.

>>GUNELA ASTBRINK: Gunela Astbrink, Internet Society of Australia. The issue about poverty keeps on coming back.

We had a workshop yesterday on capacity-building on Internet accessibility policy development, and this is, as Andrea Saks was talking about, helping people in their own countries to develop skills to lobby governments and industry to improve accessibility in a variety of ways.

So we had a great discussion. We're going to continue that discussion from our workshop about various strategies. But hearing what the chairman says, I'd like to make a challenge that how can business be more proactive in supporting people with disabilities to improve accessibility? Could there be some way of working with disability NGOs to assist? It might be I.T. induction programs for staff. It might be making sure their products are accessible, or at least their Web sites. So I -- I present that challenge.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: All right. We'll get an answer from Talal in a second. Just very quickly, the gentleman here.

>>ROHAN SAMARAJIVA: I'm Rohan Samarajiva. I represent a research organization called LIRNEasia.

I think the -- the discussion has been very positive in terms of universalizing or mainstreaming disability access, but suddenly -- and we are hearing a conversation about more funds, more subsidies. I think when you mainstream something, it must be part of the business model because we have a real good example today of half the world's population being connected to electronic networks without subsidies. That's the most important thing. We've had universal service funds, where the money has not been expended, and where it has been expended, it has not been expended wisely and efficiently. Instead, the people who have been paying for the universal funds, the mobile networks, have been connecting the world's poor at extraordinarily low prices and without the support of universal service funds, for the most part.

So I am somewhat disheartened to hear again a failed public policy solution being proposed, because I think it is much better, and you have much better mainstreaming, when the business model that is being currently developed, that is currently being implemented in the developing countries, where for very low outputs of below five dollars U.S., people are being connected and companies are making profits. Set standards for accessibility, for mobile networks, and for the mobile broadband. If you do that, it will be a sustainable solution unlike something where there are government bureaucrats in the middle and who are putting inefficiency and delay into the entire system.

[Applause]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you. Very interesting and just very swiftly, the gentleman there, yes. here. A moment. Hold on a second. Let's make sure the microphone of works. We'll get you another microphone. There we go. Okay. We have a choice of microphones now. And that one doesn't work either. Okay. That one is not working either. Can we get another microphone?

>>ABDOULAYE DIARRA: Okay.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Yes, now we can hear you.

>>ABDOULAYE DIARRA: Thank you very much. I'm from Mali. I am -- reported on Question 2 to UIT. The issue is a very real one, the Question 20 to UIT. The problem of access is a very real one at all levels, because there are many people with handicaps. As was presented just now, we saw how someone who has poor sight is able to use software and that it can be awkward if that software does not exist.

In our developing countries, these situations are far worse. We do not have the means to confront these very real problems for persons with disabilities. The UIT -- the ITU has set up many activities for persons with disabilities. We should look into these discussions so that there be standards relating to persons with disabilities to see how developing countries might be able to give access to persons with disabilities. The government finds this very difficult

to have financial resources for this.

We have many persons with disabilities, physical disabilities, those who are blind, and we must recognize that everyone -- disability is not inability. Even as we get older.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Okay. We --

>> Thank you very much, thank you very much.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: We've taken your point.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: I'll just respond to that. One statement to every concern which has been laced which, of course, is correct. The approach -- and this is the philosophy of the global alliance on ICT for development -- is a multistakeholder approach. I cannot say that the service providers are doing their job wonderfully so don't mess it up. I cannot say that bureaucracy is a problem, so keep bureaucracy out. I cannot say that business is only profit-oriented so let's not talk about business.

No, sir.

In this world, we are one society, and this society is made up of stakeholders.

All these stakeholders have their responsibilities and they should together work in harmony in a public/private NGO spirit in order to produce solutions for the world.

No single solution by one stakeholder will work, and is not advisable, and I should not at all tolerate it in this -- in my own domain. Thank you, sir.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: thank you, thank you. Quick 15 seconds from Andrea.

>>ANDREA SAKS: I'm very glad that that other speaker brought up the Universal Fund. We are attempting at the ITU to work with three specific companies, one of them -- we just came back from Mali, the speaker's home, Abdoulaye, who just spoke about accessibility and disability. The idea is to use that Universal Fund to set up training, and to be able to get people within the country to be able to use ICTs, so we are thinking about using that Universal Fund, not just for nothing. It's -- that's the place where we're going to try and get the funding but we'll bring the expertise too. It is just not off the ground yet but we are thinking along those lines and please see me afterwards. I'd like to talk to you. Because I do agree with a lot of what you said and thank you for bringing that particular issue up. Thank you very much.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Shadi, 10 seconds. Then we're moving on to multilingualism.

>>SHADI ABOU-ZAHRA: Yeah, just very briefly, on the level of standards, to respond to that last gentleman from Mali, one of the key aspects for people with disabilities is royalty-free standards that are available that allow affordable and low-cost technologies to be produced, and this is lately essential to providing the access and to lowering the costs.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you. Let's move on to the other section that we're looking at today, which is multilingualism. A whole new world is about to open up with the change in domain names. Hundreds of millions of people, perhaps billions of people, who were unable to enjoy the Internet before may now have that opportunity, but it's not without challenges, of course.

Let me introduce our first speaker, Abdul Waheed Khan is the Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information at UNESCO. He has taken the lead on many of these issues at UNESCO. He's been heavily involved in this for the past decade or so. Over to you.

>>ABDUL WAHEED KHAN: (Speaking in a non-English language).

This was just 10 minutes in my own language. How many of you really understood this? Please raise your hand.

[Show of hands]

>>ABDUL WAHEED KHAN: So just to make the point that language ability or disability can be a major factor. In such a large audience -- and I know that there was many Indians who participated that may not be in -- I spoke in Hindi language, very briefly.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a barrier, no question. The chairman talked about many other barriers: Disability, language issue. Clearly the question was raised about poverty and many -- there are so many other barriers to

communication.

If you recall in my opening statement, the opening session, I talked about the UNESCO advancing the notion of knowledge societies based on, number one, human needs and human rights, and then on four fundamental principles of universal access to information and knowledge, on freedom of expression, on cultural and linguistic diversity and then quality education for all.

If you look at those four principles of building inclusive knowledge societies, when you talk about human needs, is communication a fundamental human need?

The answer is obviously yes. Otherwise, Jonathan Charles will not have a job in BBC.

Is that a -- is freedom of expression a fundamental human right? Indeed, it is.

Can you ensure cultural diversity? What is culture, if you take out language? I'm not saying language is the only aspect of culture, and my organization, of course, is known for celebrating cultural diversity. It -- the world will be a very dull and boring place if we had just one culture, one language, one form of human beings. The societies would be so homogenized that it would be not a very interesting place to live, really.

When you talk about quality education for all, we know based on empirical studies that the children who receive education in their mother tongue do much better than those who are forced to learn in the language which is not their mother tongue.

So language clearly can be abling and disabling. The acquisition of it can be -- now, clearly English is not my language, but I had to -- in order to do things in life, I had to acquire this language.

Still, there are times when I look for words. I think in my own language and look for an English word to express myself.

So language is part of my identity, who I am. It's part of everyone's identity.

Needless to say, for education, for culture, for dissemination of scientific information, the fundamental tool -- the tools come next but the means of communication is the language to begin with.

But when we talk of access, the first images that come to mind are these devices (indicating). But what is flowing through these devices, the other side of the coin, what is it that people are accessing once you have? Yes, of course, it is a necessary condition to have access to means of communication, but when you try to link the -- the question was raised about what -- the linkage between the language and disability issues with the Millennium Development Goals. Whether it is universalization of primary education, gender equity, health issues, environmental issues, all those eight Millennium Development Goals, what is the common denominator for those development goals?

Flow of information and knowledge. Without flow of information and knowledge, none of these, as Mr. Chairman very eloquently pointed out, we are very close to say two-thirds of the 15-year -- of the 2015 mark and yet even official reports compiled by the people who know better clearly suggest that many of these goals are not going to be met.

Have we -- from two different examples of education and agriculture, can you share with a farmer scientific innovations if that information is not available to him in -- or her in the language that they can understand?

Can they apply that information to increase productivity? Can you educate the -- even as we speak about 900 million people, adults, still are illiterate.

More than a hundred million children do not still receive education in schools. So there are -- and the barrier, of course, one of the barriers, would be the language.

And when the language has failed, and as we know that in the -- in the last 500 years, half of the world's languages have disappeared. And -- but what is more disturbing is that it is estimated that in the next hundred years, nearly 90% of the world's 7,000 languages will become extinct. Is it not disturbing, really? Is it not that you are -- if we do not take steps.

I have very strong faith in the ability of the human being to preserve, to

still work towards preserving these languages, but the fact is that according to current estimates, 90% of the existing 7,000 languages will disappear now.

Is that loss in opportunities, in traditions, in memory, in unique modes of thinking and expression? These are valuable resources that will be lost if these languages are lost, so it is important, therefore, that action collectively, as a global community, which is what this -- this forum is all about, for us to create an enabling environment through policies and strategies at the national level, at the regional level, and indeed at the international level, so that the languages will flourish in the new cyberspace. If cyberspace is the fastest growing space -- and we all know that that is indeed the case -- in cyberspace today, there are less than 100 languages available. And Mr. Chairman, you pointed out that some of the oldest civilizations, you cannot call them as diverse because they contributed to the -- to the knowledge and wisdom that the societies benefit from. Some people are convinced that knowledge was created in the last 200 years or 300 years.

Not necessarily.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Some people think it was the last ten years, I think.

>>ABDUL WAHEED KHAN: So the thing is if you do not preserve the indigenous knowledge of so many societies, and if that knowledge is available in local languages only, what do you do if do you not -- would that not be lost if you do not have the means?

Fortunately, we have the means. Digital preservation is now available; can be applied and used.

So my organization, UNESCO, celebrates cultural and linguistic diversity. And it has taken several steps. Of course we, as an intergovernmental international agency, we have adopted UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity which talks about -- which recognizes cultural diversity as part of common heritage of humanity, and an endless source of new ideas and creative development.

I think we must recognize that that is -- that is -- Languages need to be safeguarded for the sake of present and for future generation. Again, clearly not a very profound statement but a very relevant one, indeed.

A strong correlation between cultural diversity and linguistic diversity.

As I said earlier, you take out language, and what is the means of cultural self-expression?

And many problems in society today, especially conflicts in societies, is primarily because some people believe that their voices are not heard, that they don't have means of self-expression.

Now, if that self-expression is not in the language, could you call that cultural self-expression? Obviously not.

People who do not have voices, if they do not have voices to express themselves in the language that they feel comfortable that they are at ease with, is that not a barrier? Of course it is.

And is that -- Can that be a potential source of conflict? Of course it can be.

So it is important, therefore, for us, as a global community, to take steps. To -- Not only to preserve the knowledge available in so many languages of the world and promote, as we have now taken some steps in terms of technological development, to ensure that the languages flourish and that we are able to communicate in the language that people feel comfortable with.

Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Abdul Waheed Khan, thank you very much, indeed. Very, very important points.

[ Applause ]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Abdulaziz Al-Zoman, I am going to call on you next, from the Saudi Network Information Center. Very heavily involved in domain name issues and also what is going to be part of the big explosion, one hopes, online of Arabic language availability on the Internet.

Over to you.

Can we make sure the microphone is working there at the podium, please.

>>ABDULAZIZ AL-ZOMAN: I will be talking about domain names and what we have

done so far in that part. And what are the challenges in front of us.

We know that just recently ICANN announced the opening of accepting top-level domains on other languages than just ASCII.

Are we there to really deal with Arabic languages or Arab script-based languages? So this presentation is about that case.

So I will start with a little bit with the question.

I know now this question is we are behind that question. Everyone knows the importance of IDN to our, like, regions and our communities.

So to understand that question, we have to look to some of the statistics.

We have about 17% Internet penetration in the Arab world. And our region is the fastest growth with respect to the number of users and the Internet. We are the fastest number of users of Internet because the Internet was a little bit late on our regions.

And back home in Saudi Arabia, when we did a study about the usage or top of operating system used by the users, we found that 80% of operating system used in education are only in Arabic. And 73% are used by individuals in the household. So that means really the language is very important to the user.

The Web site they are visiting are mainly -- you could see like from the contents, it's in Arabic. 65% of the Web site, like, visited has 75 and more Arabic content.

Now, in our region, what we have done with respect to Arabic domain names?

First, we listed a number of the linguistic issues regarding the domain names, and we discussed and we reached conclusions. And through a long process, a number of committees has been created and discussed these issues.

We did some surveys on the Internet, collect like feedback from the users. And we consulted a number of experts from linguist point of view. And all these results have been handed to an Arabic team for Arabic domain names and the Arab League who have published these recommendations and the language table for Arabic language on RFC 5564.

So we have now working documents that reference all the language table for our domain names.

Other things that we have done. Since 2005, we had a pilot project for Arabic domain names in which that we really tested the usage of Arabic domain names on the Internet, in which that we also developed a number of tools that help us to work with Arabic domain names, like, for example, IDN registry symbol, IDN registry, DNS checker, Web-based WHOIS and so on.

Therefore, we were able to test the usage of Arabic domain names on the Internet.

But are we there? Do we have, still, challenges on this front? Yes, we have a lot of challenges to really overcome these things to provide a very good like working domain -- Arabic domain names to the users.

Where ICANN opened test for the IDN TLD test example, dot test and the equivalent in Arabic called (speaking in Arabic), we did extensive test on this one for ten applications, mainly on Web browser and e-mail applications, and for four different operating systems as well as a number of web-based e-mail.

And on this test, we listed all the test cases. We have 13, like, test cases to all these applications. And we find most of them failed the test. They have a lot of problem to deal with the Arabic language.

And we published the report.

When we expand our look not only to the Arabic language but to the whole Arabic script to work, because a number of registries, a number of Web services will provide their registration in Arabic script rather than just only one language. So there are a number of issues we have to face and have to look at. And some of these issues have not been dealt at the protocol. They have been left to the registry to look after it. And this is really a worry for us because the registry might deal with these issues differently so that we will have different registration systems which deal with different issues in different ways. And then the user will have different experiences with domain name registration in Arabic script-based domain names.

I will just show you some of the examples.

One of them is what is called zero width nonjoiner control character. This control character is not visible. You cannot see it on the screen by itself, but it has some effects on how the characters get connected together. In this example, you can see the effect is there, I could see it because when I said that character after the letter heh in Arabic, I could see there is something that forced the heh not to connect to the next character. But unfortunately, you can't see it in other locations. I have already inserted it there. It cannot be seen. So this could be a good ground for phishing. And that has not been solved at the protocol level. They just left it to the registry to look at it.

Other problems is the digits. We have a number of digits being used in the Arabic script. One is the Arabic-Indic and one is the eastern Arabic-Indic digits. And they almost look alike on all digits except for three or four. So if you type these numbers, you could -- the user could get confused because they have different codes, but the look are similar.

So this is really another problem from security point of view. So it had to be addressed. And also this is left from the protocol. It says it has to be handled at the registry level.

Another dimension with respect to Arabic, in the screen you should have seen actually the digits in Arabic, written in Arabic and digits written in Latin, but you have seen the same format. You have seen little difference just because the laptop I am using does not support Arabic letters. So you could see the problem.

Microsoft operating system deal with the digit differently from other operating system. Regardless what you type, it will be displayed based on the system -- the language you define in the system. So you can't really -- you can't sometimes type the digits you want. So this is another dimension.

Users using Linux or Macs will have different ways of writing the digits than the users on Microsoft.

The biggest problems also is the confusing similar characters. In the Arabic scripts there are a number of letters that are used in different languages -- for example in Farsi or Urdu or something -- they have the same shape, but they have different codes. So for example, in this screen you have the word kela (phonetic) in Arabic. I wrote that one on two different keyboards, one the Arabic keyboard and the other one is in other keyboard. So the little kaf which is the red color is -- has been typed in different codes.

So this is really also a security problem.

It's not only one letter. If you look to the whole Unicode tables, there are a number of, like, you know, letters that have similarity on the look, on the shape. And they are differently used on -- in different languages. And sometimes you can't even type it in certain languages, because keyboards are language based. It's not like script based.

So if I have domain names called (saying names), then like our friends in Pakistan or India or Malaysia, they will not be able to type that domain name because the keyboard they have, they have the letter kaf with different codes.

So the solution of that one is to have the variants. And we actually propose a solution for that one which will allow you to, like, you know, to have all the variants. Like all the confusingly similar characters to be combined together in one master key for the domain names.

And when you register that one, you will block all, and allow like all the other forms of the variants to that domain names.

I will not go in details on this solution. This solution will be presented in our workshop about the Arabic script IDNs that will be done tomorrow, and I invite anyone who is interested in the solution to attend this workshop.

Thank you very much.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you, Abdulaziz. Thank you very much, indeed. Obviously some of the challenges that lie ahead in expanding domain names.

Dwayne Bailey, I think you will probably look at some of those challenges as well, linguistic challenges.

Dwayne is from ANLoc, the African Network for Localization.

>>DWAYNE BAILEY: (No audio)

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: We aren't hear the microphone here.

>>DWAYNE BAILEY: Is this better? Okay. Let's use this one.

What I said was there are numbers for the lottery, so if you got them, you are a winner. No.

So I am Dwayne Bailey. I am from South Africa. The vision of ANLoc is to empower Africans to participate in the digital age by removing barriers imposed on language by the limitations of technology. And it's a group of us all around Africa addressing these various things.

In South Africa, we have 11 official languages. So I think in trying to implement and seeing how governments can implement multilingual -- a multilingual dispensation, shall we call it, I am acutely aware of the problems and the benefits of it.

But I wanted to start with an example of the importance of language. And I'd ask you to pay attention because this could save your life. So I will say it quite slowly.

(speaking in non-English language.)

So did everyone get that? No? I will say it a bit louder and slower so that it's easier for you to track.

(speaking in non-English language.)

Okay. So you have just lost a bit of information that could save you from dying from HIV/AIDS. But it was inaccessible to you. And I think you can understand from that example the inverse of publishing information in English and hoping that people who don't speak English could assimilate and use that information.

So the lack of information -- The lack of access to information, and I mean access as in actually being able to use it, not that you have got a computer on your desk. The lack of access to information is life threatening. It threatens your ability to stay healthy. It threatens your ability to access government services. It affects whether your children will have a good education and a good job so it affects your socioeconomics, your health, and your general welfare. So it's an important thing.

And when we look at an audience like this, it's clear that at some level, we all care about multilingualism. So we are either are multilingual or we know people that are multilingual. So some of our best friends are multilingual. We can express it like that.

And it's on the WSIS agenda. We talk about linguistic and cultural diversity. UNESCO talks about it a lot. In a lot of the sessions I have been to, issues of language have come up, how to do IDNs, et cetera.

But my concern is that it's not at the forefront of our agenda. And there are two aspects I want to look at with that. I will call it the last billion and the fact that everything that we are doing rests on this issue of multilingualism.

So the last billion or more, because there are a lot of people who have no access to the Internet, looking at it from an African context, I have that there are 6,000 languages in the world, UNESCO tells us there are 7,000 but we will not argue about those languages. There are lots of languages in the world. There are 2,000 spoken by a billion people in Africa.

And about 200 of those languages in Africa have more than half a million speakers. So a significant population will speak at least one of 200 languages in Africa.

There are 15 languages in Africa that have more than 10 million speakers each. And almost none of those are present in any significant way in the information age.

So that people who need multilingualism the most are the people that we haven't reached yet, and the people that can benefit so much from the kind of information we talk about.

If we look at the use of the Internet in Africa, and I don't have data for all the other places, all the other continents, but the predominance of languages that people are browsing are English and French. So it seems to indicate that

the people that are accessing this information are people that are already enabled through access to a language like English and French and Arabic to be part of this. But the rest are ignored.

So clearly for the last billion, it's not an option for multilingualism. It's imperative that we address it.

On the aspect of everything resting on top of multilingualism, the words and phrases I have heard over the last few days include things like this: inclusive, knowledge societies, pluralistic, equitable, create, share, diffuse, preserve, linguistic diversity, flow of ideas, increasing knowledge. And all of these things are possible in a mono culture, in a mono lingual environment. But it seems in all the sessions I have been to, it's implied that all these benefits are meant for all of humanity. And it's impossible without multilingualism being a first priority. It's not going to benefit all of humanity if we don't make it a priority.

And there's a lot in terms of the sessions I have been to, there's a lot assumed about what we can do. There's assumptions that all languages can actually be typed, and there are languages that you can't type and capture at the moment.

The software is predominantly not available in these languages, so there is the assumption that it is or people haven't thought down that road of thinking you have people who don't speak a certain language having to capture on digital equipment that they can't use.

There is an assumption we actually can store these languages. And I would like to address just one thing. Multilingualism is not IDNs. IDNs are one aspect of multilingualism. And there is the danger which I think we need to think about, is that IDNs could create silos of mono lingualism. A multilingual world of mono lingualism. And we need to think quite seriously about how we address that and prevent that from happening and ensure the free flow of ideas.

But I think it's quite important to also show and to talk about what is happening and what people are doing in the space that is lead to go multilingual Internet.

Firstly ourselves at ANLoc, we have developed keyboards that allow people to type African languages that they couldn't type before. We have developed extended fonts that people can actually see what they wrote. And we are translating the Firefox Web browser into ten languages, which opens up the opportunity for people who are not literate in French to capture information in wallup (phonetic). We are looking at a hundred locales across Africa which allows people to store documents and information in languages.

We are training people on how to translate and localize content, make it relevant for their environment.

We are building tools that allow people to create content and translate content. We are making spell checkers, because there is nothing as negative for a language as seeing it all underlined in red, and basically your computer communicating to you that your language is irrelevant in the communication age.

It is important is what I would call this broad swath of multilingualism.

The consortium is working really hard at making sure we can store all of these languages. Machine translation from the likes of Google and Microsoft, making sure that people can actually access information in other languages. Microsoft is translating their operating system into African and other languages. And Firefox's efforts to have 80 versions of Firefox in different languages.

Groups like Global Voices who are ensuring that blogs are translated and that there is a cross-pollination between communities. Organizations like Medan (phonetic) helping to ensure there is dialogue between the Arabic and the English speaking world. And I'm sure you are tell me and remind me of many others I have forgotten. If you are interested in this I would invite you to the workshop at 2:30 which is equality and access to the knowledge society through language and cultural diversity and it's in room 9.

So just in closing, from me, multilingualism I feel should be our first priority, as the fulfillment of the things that we envision rests on multilingualism. And without that, the phrase, "You have the right to remain

silent" might take on a very different meaning.

[ Applause ]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Dwayne, thank you very much. Thank you. Is that what you say in Afrikaans? I don't know what you say in Afrikaans.

We are going to close this in a couple of minutes but before we have the chairman's closing remarks, I want to ask you for your comments on what we just heard on multilingualism.

Again, put up your hand. I will take two or three questions from the floor, if there are questions from the floor on this.

Gentleman at the back, yes. I think a microphone is on its way to you.

If you could say who you are, that would be great.

>>TAREK KHALIL: Thank you very much. Tarek Khalil, president of Nile University.

I would like to address a couple of issues that seem to be missing in the discussion. And I'm going to actually speak as a professor of human factors engineering.

People are talking about you disabilities a lot. And there is no absolute disabilities. There are functional abilities, and essentially they relate to the demands placed by the task required.

So what's being addressed to a great extent are certain abilities. In a sense, all of us are disabled if we are not relating to what is being presented to us.

So I'd like to pose the proposal that we have to put some pressure on the designers and on the technology. It's really a human technology interaction that we are talking about.

And if so, then we are talking about human-centered designs, where the designers of the Web itself as well as of the information and the pages and everything that goes along with it, we have to put pressure on them to actually design and bring information in an easy way that it can be used by everyone.

So the issue of multilingualism or the issues of disability or the issues of any of the ones that we have talked about in here are really related to what we present.

So the pressure has to come on the other end, not only on issues of accessibility, and accessibility will have to be defined by the technology.

So it's a technology issue more than anything else, where we can solve most of these problems. And I would like to see some sort of pressure put on the technologies that is designed --

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: All right. Okay. Thank you very much. I got that point. Thank you. And the gentleman there, yes.

>>REINHARD SCHFLER: My name is Reinhard Schfler. I'm director of the Localisation Research Centre in Ireland.

We just set up a foundation called the Rosetta Foundation that will allow volunteer translators to -- and technologists to come together to offer translation services to digital publishers. And I really liked the point that Dwayne Bailey made, and I want to re-emphasize that.

You know, translation, or lack of localization is not just a "nice to have." It's not something that, you know, we would like to express ourselves in our own words, in our own culture, but it's something that is a question of life and death, and as such, it should really be elevated to a much higher level. You know, it should be at the same level as, you know, the fight against AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis and I think that in a sense, the industry has given a lead there. There is a localization industry that is worth 16 billion U.S. dollars. The pity is that, you know, that industry works for the people who have the money. They do it for commercial purposes. So we need an initiative that does localization, not for commercial purposes but for political, cultural, social, and developmental services.

And lastly, localization translation, and lack of it, is not just a matter of the developing world. It's also a matter for the developed world. It's a matter for the global south and the global north and the distinction between the two should really be, you know, done away with. Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you very much. Yes, the gentleman here halfway down

on the right-hand side.

>>JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT: Good morning. My name is Jean-Jacques Subrenat and I'm a member of the ICANN directorate and I have two comments.

The first one has to do with the use of the expression "multilingualism," the term itself. It's partially accurate. We should be talking about linguistic diversity instead, because multilingualism is the capacity of a person, a single person, or an entity to speak several languages. So I do prefer the term "linguistic diversity."

Now, the second point is as follows: I think that we are living in a new world with the introduction of IDNs, international domain names, and I simply wanted to point out here that of course we have to make further progress, and I'm grateful to the representative of Saudi Arabia for having showed very clearly, using examples, what difficulties are still outstanding, and they will have to be overcome.

But I wanted to underscore how important it is for the communities such as represented here at the IGF to express their view, their opinion, their advice. If the introduction of IDNs became possible -- it became largely thanks to your insistence on this, and thanks to your advice. It's thanks to that that ICANN managed to put that through. Thank you.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you for that. I'm sorry we don't have time for anymore comments from the floor. I'd like to thank our panel and to bring this first part of the debate to an end, I'd like to call on our chairman, Talal, to make a few closing comments. His observations, and also to call for acclamation for the message from (inaudible).

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: Thank you. I would like, with your permission, before I submit what I would like you to adopt as a conclusion of this session, I would like to respond to the point on multilingualism. Yes, we indeed are talking about multilingualism because we want the Internet to be multilingual. Exactly like you said when you talk about multilingualism of a person, you want them to talk many languages. So it is that, and this is why we want the language -- the Internet to become multilingual, so that we don't have a fragmentation of the Internet because I will then go for my Arabic Internet, my Chinese Internet, and so on.

So my drive for multilingualism -- and I've been a very ardent spokesman of multilingualism for the last 30 years -- is because we need to have one Internet which can speak many languages.

So having said that, let me come to the concluding remarks.

[Applause]

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: I move that -- I move that with your permission, and if you agree, I would like an expression of applause at the end in support of what I would like to say.

I move we endorse, by acclamation, and request that what we approve be included in the conference proceedings:

One, to applaud with great admiration the Egyptian efforts towards the development of an Egyptian knowledge society led by the most able minister of ICT, His Excellency Tarek Kamel, and we want that to be --

[Applause]

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: -- minuted and conveyed into the -- in the proceedings to express how we all, I think unanimously, agree is a great model of development in a knowledge society that we are seeing in Egypt.

Number two, to adopt the excellent message on accessibility of persons with disabilities presented by the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability.

It is a very clear, candid, and well-studied document which addresses one of the diversities or one of the barriers, but also addresses, exactly as I said, the many other barriers in disability.

Number three, to encourage ICANN to accelerate its process on multilingualization and to make it a priority in order to ensure the continued coherence of the Internet.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

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>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you very much, Talal.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: In closing, in closing, I would like, with your permission, to not only thank our great moderator for an excellent job, but also to thank him personally because it gave me the privilege of sitting on the podium next to a media celebrity. Thank you.

[Laughter]

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: I had the privilege of sitting next to you. That was much nicer for me, actually.

>>TALAL ABU-GHAZALEH: Thank you very much.

>>JONATHAN CHARLES: Thank you. And thank you to you for taking part. Thank you to our distinguished panel. Stay where you are. The next section is on access and the panel will be coming up and the moderator and chairman right now. Thank you.

[Applause]