

**CITEL-ITU COOPERATION FOR THE HOLDING OF INTERNATIONAL FORUMS ON
SOCIAL INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH ACCESS TO
TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

The XXVII Meeting of Permanent Consultative Committee I: Telecommunications / Information and Communication Technologies (PCC.I),

CONSIDERING:

- a) That according to the World Health Organization, it is estimated that over approximately one billion persons worldwide live with some form of disability, 80% in developing countries, and face obstacles that limit or restrict their access to information, transportation, education, employment, or healthcare;
- b) That Resolution 175 (Rev. Busan, 2014) of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference recommended intensifying the call to action to encourage cooperation with regional and global organizations and institutions working toward accessibility for persons with disabilities, in order to add access to Telecommunications / ICTs to their programs, and to consider their relation to other issues;
- c) That the aforementioned resolution invites Member States to consider the possibility of incorporating guidelines or other mechanisms into their national legislation to enhance accessible, compatible, user-friendly Telecommunication / ICT services, products and terminals; and to consider introducing appropriate telecommunication / ICT services and encourage application development for telecommunication terminals and products that enable persons with disabilities and special needs to use those services on equal terms;
- d) That in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which came into effect on May 3, 2008, Article 9 on Access requires that States Parties take appropriate measures to ensure access for persons with disabilities to information and communications, among others, including information and communication technologies and systems, in both urban and rural areas;
- e) That said Article further provides that States Parties shall take the necessary steps to “Promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communication technologies and systems, including the Internet;”
- f) That accordingly, since access to telecommunications plays a significant role in the social, economic and cultural inclusion of persons with disabilities, CITEL Member Countries should seek opportunities to address the measures being implemented in this regard in their national legislation and to discuss taking action to improve telecommunication access policies to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities,

RECOGNIZING:

- a) That CITEL's Strategic Plan for 2014-2018 includes “*Fostering inclusiveness and affordability of telecommunication/ICTs and reducing the digital divide in the Americas*” as a strategic goal;

¹ CCP.I-TIC/doc. 3665/15 rev. 2

b) That while access to Telecommunications / ICTs enhances and helps persons with disabilities to live independently and participate in society, major challenges remain to be addressed, such as reducing the cost of assistive technologies, lack of access to ICTs for persons with disabilities, limited availability and use of Telecommunications / ICTs in general, among others;

c) That it also is important to note that reducing the digital divide is essentially a matter of establishing Telecommunications / ICTs and promoting and expanding their accessibility, affordability and use by all persons, including vulnerable populations such as women, children, indigenous peoples, the elderly, and persons with disabilities;

d) That the exchanges and presentations on experiences, measures and actions implemented by CITEL Member States for effective social inclusion of persons with disabilities to telecommunications will enable the Working Group on Development to design and promote access policies and projects aimed to contribute to the digital development and literacy of persons with disabilities to facilitate their access, use and social inclusion,

RESOLVES:

1. To establish communications channels with the ITU Regional Office for the holding of International Forums on policies and strategies implemented for the social inclusion of people with disabilities through access to telecommunications.
2. To appoint the administrations of Peru and Colombia as those with responsibility for the coordination and/or cooperation activities with the ITU Regional Office in the framework of the activities of the Rapporteurship on broadband and social inclusion of the Working Group on Development.
3. To consider as part of the content of the International Forums aspects such as:
 - Access to telecommunications and information technologies as a fundamental right of persons with disabilities.
 - Policies and regulations on access to telecommunications for persons with disabilities
 - Achievements, difficulties and challenges for persons with disabilities to gain access to new technologies
 - Needs, expectations and contributions of persons with disabilities vis-à-vis access to telecommunications and information technologies
 - Experience with regulatory best practices access to telecommunications for persons with disabilities.
4. In holding the International Forums, to include participation by experts so that, through the presentation of their experiences, dialogue and information sharing among the Member States of CITEL is promoted, as well as debate on an effective policy for access to telecommunications for persons with disabilities as part of social inclusion.

5. To urge all Member States of CITEI to participate actively in the International Forums.