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Advancing the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities worldwide

[November Newsletter: Post-Congress Work](#)[View this email in your browser](#)

RI Global has returned from its World Congress with a packed schedule for 2017 kicking it all off with the UN's International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) on 2 December!

November 2016 Newsletter: Celebrating Disability and Diversity!

RI Global at International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Thanks to the success of the **Rehabilitation International World Congress**, RI Global just recharged its mandate to continue campaigning around the world for disability rights. And we have come back to the states with a packed schedule to do just that, kicking it all off with the UN's International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) on 2 December!

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floor for a high-level meeting convened by the the President of the General Assembly to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The meeting, aimed at promoting the CRPD's universalization, allows for three-minute interventions following a presentation.

The theme for IDPD 2016 is [Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want](#), which draws attention to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how these goals can create a more inclusive and equitable world for persons with disabilities. The IDPD will also feature the [UN Enable Photo Exhibition](#), entitled the *The CRPD and You*, which express the ways people interact daily with the CRPD, as well as the [UN Enable Film Festival](#), which presents short films about the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society. Finally, the UN will premiere One billion voices: "I am... 1 of 1 billion voices", a digital exhibit that enables "the voices of persons with disabilities from around the world" to be "heard" through virtual means.

Events for the 2016 IDPD celebration at UN Headquarters in New York

Heidi Latsky Dance Installation: Heidi Latsky Dance will stage a movement installation of 20-30 performers who together form a living gallery. The installation features different and unexpected bodies in white clothing (signifying all the colours of the rainbow and a metaphor for inclusion) moving as reverent sculptures in the space. Similar installations will take place simultaneously around the world that will be showcased at UN Headquarters.

9.30 to 10 a.m., UN Visitors' Lobby

High-Level Panel Discussion on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: The Opening of the International Day will include the Day's message from the UN Secretary-General, as well as statements from Member States and other stakeholders. The President of the General Assembly, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/145, will organize a panel discussion to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the adoption of the CRPD and its universalization. ***10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Conference Room 4***

Global award for Good Practices in the Employment of Persons with Disabilities: The Government of the State of Sao Paulo has organised an [event](#) recognizing good practices in the employment of persons with disabilities. The event has been co-organised by DSPD/DESA and sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Brazil. ***1:15 to 2:30 p.m., Conference Room 6***

CRPD Mobile App Launch: Organised by Institute on Disability and Public Policy, American University, this event will celebrate the soft launch of a beta version of an iOS 10 mobile application on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the CRPD. This will be

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rights. **1:15 to 2:30 p.m., Conference Room 8**

Disability Inclusive Development in Africa – Building Capacity for Inclusive Development: While presenting the main challenges persons with disabilities face in the Africa region, such as exclusion, discrimination and challenges to the enjoyment of their fundamental rights and inclusion in development, UN DESA will showcase its Toolkit on Disability for Africa to build the capacity of Government officials and DPOs in the region, with a view to implement solutions in line with the CRPD. **3 to 4:30p.m., Conference Room 12**

10 years of CRPD Implementation – Metrics and Global Scorecard: A measure of progress through a detailed survey of 106 states parties. Organized by G3ict **3 to 4:30 p.m., Conference Room E/4**

Accessible Cities for All Organized by DSPD/DESA and NYC Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) in partnership with Permanent Missions, this event will bring together city leaders, celebrities, practitioners and decision makers to celebrate their successes in reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive development through improving accessibility in cities. The event is a call to action for leaders at all levels, and in all sectors of society, to make universal accessibility a priority and a reality.

6:30 to 8 p.m., ECOSOC Chamber

[RI GLOBAL at the UN and Across the World](#)

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During Habitat III, more than 300 diverse people formed the word “INCLUSION” with umbrellas. The project, directed by artist John Quigley, was designed to elevate the way in which people think about inclusion around the world.

RI Global participates in High-level forum on accessible urban development/UN Habitat III

“We need to engage persons with disabilities as both agents and beneficiaries of change, and as leaders in the new urban development agenda,” said UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo, as he addressed the opening of the High Level Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development, which took place on the eve of the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Human Settlements (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 16 October.

Bringing together more than 100 global urban planning and disability experts, the event focused on finding solutions to make urban development inclusive of the world’s one billion persons with disabilities, many of whom live in cities. RI Global’s Treasurer, Susan Parker, and Chair of the International Committee on Technology and Accessibility, Joseph Kwan, flew to Quito before the World Congress to attend the Forum. “Universal design is a way of thinking that can be applied in any design activity, business practice, program or service involving the interaction of people with

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Aimed at supporting States in advancing accessible urban development, Habitat III resulted in a set of key recommendations to implement the New Urban Agenda for all, including persons with disabilities. Prior to the High Level Forum, UN DESA released “Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development” to illustrate concrete actions both developing and developed countries could take in advancing accessible urban development. For more information, see the [Habitat III website](#).



RI Global Secretary-General Venus Ilagan recently attended the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) Advancing the rights and perspectives of women and girls with disabilities in development and society in Santiago, Chile.

Other UN Happenings

Third Committee negotiates resolution on disability in SDGs; UN Experts meet to discuss women and girls with disabilities

The Third Committee of the General Assembly this session had before it a draft resolution encouraging Governments and other stakeholders to take measures to implement all aspects of the 2030 development agenda for persons with disabilities. The resolution was also expected to strengthen data collection and statistics on disability. The Committee also reviewed the following key reports on disability including the report of the Secretary-General on internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities and progress made after the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development ([A/71/214](#)), as well as the

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also reviewed the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities ([A/71/314](#)) and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health ([A/71/304](#)).

UN Expert Group Meeting on women and girls with disabilities

RI Global sent Secretary-General Venus Ilgan to the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) *Advancing the rights and perspectives of women and girls with disabilities in development and society* in Santiago, Chile, from 15 to 17 November 2016.

Organized by DESA and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) the [meeting](#) resulted in a set of recommendations to guide implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities. The outcome of the meeting is also expected to contribute towards a forthcoming General Assembly report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women and girls with disabilities.



RI Europe Vice-President Roy O'Shaughnessy and President Zhang Haidi meet in China for a discussion on future RI Global activities.

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Mark Your iCal: UN Events and Conferences

28 November: [Developing partnerships for the SDGs – Asia & Pacific, Bangkok](#)

28 to 29 November: [3rd Meeting of the Global Network on Monitoring and Evaluation for Disability-inclusive Development](#)

10 December: [Human Rights Day](#)

2017

15 to 18 January 2017: [UN World Data Forum](#), Cape Town, South Africa

1 to 10 February: [55th Commission for Social Development](#), UNHQ, NY

9 to 11 March: [Third Symposium Franco-Latin American Research on Disability](#), Porto Alegre, Brazil

22 to 26 May: [UNISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction](#), Cancun, Mexico

13 to 15 June: [10th Conference of States Parties to the CRPD](#), UNHQ, NY

10 to 19 July: [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#), UNHQ, New York

8 to 10 November: [3rd International Conference of the World Federation of the Deaf](#), Budapest, Hungary

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RI President Zhang Haidi meets one of the contestants in the annual Global ICT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities (GITC).

RI GLOBAL NEWS TO USE

***Let Me Listen* advances sign-free communication**

A new iPhone application now allows deaf people to communicate without using sign language. ***Let Me Listen***, which debuted last month, acts like a pair of ears and a mouth: all words it hears are shown on the user's phone screen and all users' written words receive translation from a voice synthesizer allowing: Deaf persons can now literally "speak" to others. The application is already available in the PlayStore in several languages including Spanish, English, French, Italian, Japanese and Chinese. For more information or to support, check out the [LetMeListenApp Facebook](#) page, or download it through the [PlayStore](#).

Chicago disability rights group sues Uber over lack of accessible rides

Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago has filed a claim in federal court against **Uber Technologies, Inc.**, for violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The complaint (*Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago, et al v. Uber Technologies, Inc., et al*) alleges that Uber violates the ADA's clause against discrimination in travel and transportation services by operating a service that is unusable by people who use motorized wheelchairs and other mobility devices. According to data released to the city, Uber provided a total of 1,935,253 rides in Chicago in June 2015, yet, from September 2011 – when it started operating in Chicago – to August 2015, Uber give

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people with disabilities. “Transportation is key to the independence of people with disabilities, providing a link to education, employment and social activities. As a growing player in our transportation system, Uber is responsible for delivering its part of that link,” said Steven P. Blonder of the firm Much Shelist, co-lead counsel in the lawsuit against Uber. Follow the progress of the suit [here](#).

Half of world's children with disabilities kept out of schools, report states

At least half of the world’s 65 million school-age children with disabilities are kept out of the classroom because little to no money is budgeted for their needs, disability rights groups recently reported. The report by the **International Disability and Development Consortium** said the exclusion of children with disabilities was, among other things, a major obstacle to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030. **Light for the World**, a charity which supported the research, said stigma and misinformation surrounding disability as well as a lack of data on the numbers of disabled children contributed to the problem. “People don’t see children with disabilities as a worthy investment,” said Nafisa Baboo, adviser for inclusive education at Light for the World. The rights groups said billions of dollars of potential income from the world’s poorest countries are being lost through lack of schooling and employment for people who have disabilities. “The SDGs give governments an opportunity to up their game,” said Baboo. Follow progress of the implementation [here](#).

RI Global president launches 2016 Global IT Challenge for youth with disabilities

On 22 November, Zhang Haidi kicked-off the 25th Global ICT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities (GITC), a capacity-building project that helps youth with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region overcome the digital divide. A total of 104 contestants with hearing, visual, physical and intellectual disabilities from 16 countries are competing in such activities as information searching, making story books and creating games through Scratch programmes in the city of Yangzhou in east China's Jiangsu Province. "After many years of self-teaching in the sickbed and on the wheelchair, I believe more firmly that whether a person is in good health or impairment, knowledge provides him or her with a pair of wings and let them fly in broad sky," Zhang said in her speech opening the event. “Impairment is not dreadful. It’s never giving up on making efforts that matters.” The event was jointly organized by the China Disabled Persons' Federation, Rehabilitation International, the Korean Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities in cooperation with UNESCO and China Internet Development Foundation.

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An intern with USICD's summer program for disabled youth in international relations and development.

EVENTS/AWARDS/CONFERENCES

Side events applications wanted for 55th Session of Commission for Social Development

The UN is now taking applications for side-events for CSocD55, whose theme is *Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all*. All side-events held at UN Headquarters MUST be organized by, or in collaboration with, a Member State or a UN entity or an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC. Due to space limitations priority will be given to multi-stakeholder events that include Governments, UN agencies and civil society organizations. The deadline for submission of online application forms for side-events is **2 December 2016 by 11:30 p.m, EST**. DSPD-DESA will post a of list all confirmed side-events by **16 December 2016** on the website of [CSocD55](#).

Call for submissions for the CSocD55 photo exhibition

As part of its activities for CSocD55, the UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) is hosting a photo exhibition at United Nations Headquarters in New York City from **1-10 February 2017**. Photos selected for the exhibition will also be included in an online exhibition brochure distributed to key partners and

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interest story associated with the photo that details how the innovative strategy/policy/practice eradicated poverty and achieved inclusive sustainable development; and meet other requirements. Photographers can submit up to three photos online [here](#), or send photos as an attachment or as a Google Drive or Dropbox file link to DSPD Civil Society and Outreach Unit, at ngo@un.org with the subject: *CsocD55 Photo Exhibition*. The deadline for submissions is **5 December 2016**.

U.S. International Council on Disabilities honors Al Franken, among others

USICD will host its third annual gala on 1 December honoring American policymakers Senator Al Franken of Minnesota, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers of Washington State, and Guatemalan Disability Rights Advocate Silvia Quan with the Dole-Harkin Award for distinction in public service to the global disability community. The Gala will be held at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hall of Flags in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit the [USICD webpage](#).

Youth in international development and foreign affairs internships

The United States International Council on Disabilities (USICD) is calling on applicants to its annual internship program, which focuses on U.S. youth with disabilities from across the country who intend to pursue careers in international development or foreign affairs. The summer 2017 internship program will bring a group of talented graduate students, recent graduates, and rising juniors and seniors with disabilities to Washington, D.C., for nine weeks to work at an international organization. USICD will cover the cost of accessible housing during the program, reimburse travel expenses to and from D.C. and provide a limited stipend. To learn more about the Youth in International Development and Foreign Affairs internship program, eligibility criteria, and the application process, please visit the [website](#). **The application deadline is January 10, 2017**

EASPD General Assembly elects new president

In October, the European Association of Service Providers for People with Disabilities (EASPD), following its General Assembly, announced the appointment of **James Crowe** as new president for the next years. Crowe currently serves as the the Director of Learning for Disability Wales in the United Kingdom. Following his election, he declared the following: "We must secure a social Europe that delivers the individual support that people require, as and when they need it as part of life in the community. We shall continue to strive with our members and the other key European disability networks to achieve these outcomes."

RI Global's Joachim Breuer elected new president of ISSA

The members of the Board of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) voted Joachim Breuer as the new President of the Association at their meeting on 18

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“This honour is a testimony to Dr. Breuer’s leadership in the world’s social security circles,” said RI Global Secretary-General Venus Ilagan. “He has brought great credit to Germany’s good work and Rehabilitation International and we look forward to working with him in the coming years.”



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