**Global Disability Summit 2022 Side Events**

**How to include people with disabilities through access to information laws**

**Date: 16 or 17 February 2022, 11.00 AM - 12.00 PM CET (Geneva time)**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls upon countries to ensure the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). As acknowledged by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicator 16.10.2, ensuring public access to information is a critical aspect of sustainable development.

Access to information (ATI) also facilitates the realization of other human rights. According to the former UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas-Aguilar, “when accessible information and communications are not available, a range of persons with different disabilities cannot effectively benefit from public policies and programmes”.

UNESCO is the UN custodian agency for the global monitoring of SDG Indicator 16.10.2: “Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information”. UNESCO has included in its monitoring and reporting instrument for SDG Indicator 16.10.2, under the ‘Institutional Questionnaire’, a specific question related to accessibility for persons with disabilities. Accordingly, the panel will shed light on some of the data collected for the report, which is to be finalized later this year.

Panelists will also discuss the inclusion of persons with disabilities in ATI legislations across the globe, based on the existing ATI laws in 132 countries. The speakers will reflect on possible recommendations to advance the rights of persons with disabilities within the scope of the right to information and will discuss why and how it is essential to integrate the disability rights in the different international instruments, which promote ATI, in particular such as the Universal Periodic Review.

Points to ponder:

* The importance of access to information (ATI) as an internationally recognized human right for all, including for persons with disabilities;
* Law and technology: focusing on the additional measures specific to people with disabilities;
* Conformity of provisions on disability rights vis-à-vis Access to Information with international normative instruments;
* Challenges in the implementation of ATI guarantees for persons with disabilities;
* Universal Periodic Review recommendations addresses the rights of persons with disabilities in the field of access information;

Possible composition of the panel:

* Moderator – Representative of the UNESCO Communication and Information sector;
* Dr Lida Ayoubi - Senior Lecturer in Law at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Law School in New Zealand;
* Zahid Abdullah - a Federal Information Commissioner, Pakistan;
* Elizabeth Tydd, CEO, Information Commissioner, Information and Privacy Commission New South Wales, Australia (TBC);
* Jaco du Toit, Chief of Section of Universal Access to Information, UNESCO.