

Introductory Remarks

Ambassador Luis Gallegos of Ecuador, Former Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honor and a distinct pleasure to meet with you this morning at the First Global Forum with G3ict, the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies, a flagship advocacy initiative of the United Nations Global Alliance for Technology and Development. The forum will serve as an inter-active venue for stakeholders and leading experts from around the world to come together to create, cultivate, reach consensus and set a direction for the future of accessible communication and information technologies for persons with disabilities.

This initial forum will be the first in a series of global and regional forums to be scheduled around the world over the next two and a half (2 ½) years. We met at the United Nations in New York at the dawn of a historic week on the 30th of March, wherein the Nations of the World had been invoked to sign the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the first human rights convention of this millennium and the 8th Universal Convention on Human Rights.

A person is born with disability and can acquire it by accident, sickness or war. We must foresee that as the world ages, disability will increase. The 650 million persons with disabilities will become more rather than less.

The UN Convention is an enforceable international instrument that would permit the nations of the world to meet the challenge that history has put before us to become a society in which all the members, including the most vulnerable, can integrate and make a significant contribution. In diversity, we will find ourselves as members of a holistic society. The negotiation of the convention proves that the emergence of a disability movement, which is integrated by the stakeholder, can be a formidable force in civil

society as a development of the universal language can make a significant eloquent rule to change in our society.

Article 9 of the UN Convention is the Guideline for Accessibility and this meeting today will permit us all to challenge present reality in the constant search to make a better world. Thank you for your presence here today and your support for the cause of all those with disabilities and the stakeholders of a movement that will change society and the world. Thank you very much for your presence in New York today.

Concluding Remarks

Ambassador Luis Gallegos, Ecuador, Global Forum Chair

This forum has been a very illustrative, informative procedure. I think that we should look forward to the next meetings, both regionally and globally of this initiative. I have to thank you for sharing your experiences. The motivation here can be of social responsibility of profit, but fundamentally, it should be guided to what we have before which is the service of the disability community and the elderly community. I hope you look at this in your businesses, in your private sector practices and in your public sector practices as the motivation for having the new convention and to make it a reality.