

Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD)

Annual General Meeting 2025

*June 26, 2025 – Lillestrøm,
Norway (Hybrid)*



Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability

SUMMARY

Overview

The 2025 DCAD Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place during the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Lillestrøm, Norway. The meeting was chaired by **Dr. Muhammad Shabbir (Pakistan)**, co-coordinator of DCAD along with **Judith Hellerstein (USA)**. It gathered both in-person and online participants including members, fellows, and allies such as **Vinton Cerf**, **Gunela Astbrink**, **Deirdre Williams**, **Emmanuel Oruk**, and others. The session reviewed activities since the Riyadh meeting six months earlier, discussed accessibility issues at IGF 2025, fellowship experiences, and future DCAD initiatives.

Introductions and Participation

Muhammad Shabbir

Opened the meeting, highlighting DCAD's mission to ensure Internet governance spaces are accessible for people with disabilities. He noted DCAD's long-standing role as one of the oldest Dynamic Coalitions at the IGF.

Gunela Astbrink

MAG member and founding chair of ISOC's Accessibility Standing Group. Now responsible for accessibility training coordination.

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi

Fellow from Cameroon, with a mobility impairment. Returning participant eager to enhance continuity and sustainability of the fellowship program.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor

First-time DCAD fellow from Ghana, visually impaired, active in Ghana IGF, expressed interest in giving back to DCAD and volunteering in future activities.

Judith Hellerstein

Co-coordinator of DCAD; acknowledged both in-person and online attendees.

Online Participants

- **Deirdre (Dee) Williams**, Caribbean-based long-term DCAD contributor.
- **Emmanuel Oruk**, disability rights advocate and capacity-building trainer from Uganda.
- **Manique Gunaratne**, Sri Lanka, visually impaired digital accessibility advocate.
- **Vinton Cerf**, Internet pioneer, long-time DCAD supporter.
- **Joly MacFie**, DCAD admin, based in Brooklyn, overseeing transition of DCAD's hosting from ITU to the Internet Society New York Chapter.
- **Conrad Harris**, Jamaica Society for the Blind, raised interest in accessibility arrangements at IGF Norway.

Annual Activity Report (Judith Hellerstein)

Judith reported on DCAD's major accomplishments since the Riyadh meeting:

1. Multilingual Accessibility Guidelines

The DCAD Accessibility Guidelines were translated into **Spanish, French, Portuguese, Bosnian, and Italian**, with ongoing work on **Arabic, Dutch, Chinese, and Hindi**. Future additions are planned.

2. Engagement in Dynamic Coalitions' Consultative Group

DCAD contributed actively to the **Dynamic Coalitions Coordination Group (DCCG)** webinar series, focusing on:

- Three webinars on **capacity building**
- One on **multistakeholder governance**
These led to corresponding sessions at IGF 2025, where Dr. Shabbir participated directly.

3. Policy Input and Advocacy

DCAD submitted comments to the **Global Digital Compact (GDC)** and WSIS facilitators' consultation, ensuring disability inclusion was represented.

4. Fellowship Program

The 2025 fellowship cycle was accelerated due to timing. Fellows received individualized support based on their accessibility needs (e.g., interpreters, travel companions). DCAD hopes to replicate this flexible model within ICANN and other forums.

5. Collaboration and Support

Special thanks were extended to the **IGF Secretariat** for assistance with fellow logistics, particularly for providing physical badges and general on-site support.

Fellowship Experiences and Proposals

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi (Cameroon)

Raised two key concerns:

1. **Sustainability and Visibility:** How fellows can continue contributing to IGF activities beyond attendance.
2. **Alumni Network:** Proposed a DCAD Fellows Alumni group to maintain engagement and track post-fellowship impact.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor (Ghana)

Praised the program and pledged to strengthen disability inclusion within Ghana IGF and regional IGFs.

Emmanuel Oruk (Uganda)

Discussed positive online participation due to effective captioning. Stressed the need for:

- Accessibility funding and capacity building for persons with disabilities.
- Accountability frameworks for ISPs and policymakers to provide affordable Internet for special-needs users.
- Sustained follow-up on commitments made during sessions.

Discussion on Alumni Communication

Ngwa Jolenta suggested creating a **WhatsApp group** for former fellows.

Joly MacFie proposed instead a **mailing list**, which offers better archiving and accessibility.

Vinton Cerf expressed concern over too many communication platforms and supported email lists as more manageable and accessible.

Dr. Shabbir concluded that the official **DCAD mailing list** remains the primary formal channel, while an optional WhatsApp group may exist informally for fellows who wish to use it.

Accessibility at IGF 2025

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi

Praised politeness of support staff and accessible restrooms but noted:

- Excessive distances between conference halls, making mobility difficult.
- The need for more wheelchairs and shorter travel paths between rooms.

Joly MacFie

Observed that **IGF session pages and the schedule app** are not properly interlinked, requiring duplicate searches — a potential barrier for users with disabilities.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor

Criticized some sessions for lacking time for questions, especially when disability perspectives were missing in inclusion discussions.

Emmanuel Oruk

Reported positive online accessibility and scheduling experience.

Deirdre Williams

Proposed an **annual informal review process** to report accessibility issues to the Secretariat.

Vinton Cerf

Supported Deirdre's idea and requested detailed, constructive feedback for the Secretariat and local hosts. Emphasized sharing **examples of accessible and inaccessible practices**, such as web designs that support screen readers.

Gunela Astbrink

Reported on the mentoring process: fellows completed a pre-IGF course on disability leadership and Internet governance, which improved preparedness. Encouraged continued mentoring post-event.

Dr. Shabbir's Reflections

Praised the **IGF 2025 organizing team** for accessibility and inclusiveness, and thanked **Anja and Shaline** from the Secretariat for assistance with visas and logistics.

He also highlighted:

- **Visa Application Accessibility:** Online visa forms were not screen-reader friendly; recommended a simpler, more inclusive process like that used for IGF 2024.
- **Scheduling App Accessibility:** Particularly challenging on iOS devices. He committed to sending a **formal feedback letter** (as in 2024) to the Secretariat and IGF Leadership Panel summarizing DCAD's recommendations.

Outstanding Issues and Action Points

1. **Translation of Accessibility Guidelines** – continue expanding language coverage.

2. **Fellowship Alumni Network** – explore creation via WhatsApp or mailing list.
 3. **Accessibility Feedback System** – establish a structured reporting mechanism to the Secretariat.
 4. **Improved Visa and App Accessibility** – advocate for screen-reader-tested forms and event apps.
 5. **Dynamic Coalitions’ Main Sessions** – request parity with Policy Networks for **interpretation, captioning, and sign-language services** in plenary halls.
 6. **Webinar Captioning Funding** – ensure all IGF-related webinars, including Policy Network sessions, have access to human captioning support.
 7. **Integration with ISOC and ICANN** – build pathways for fellows to engage in other governance arenas.
 8. **Documentation and Reporting** – DCAD will send a compiled feedback report to **Vint Cerf** for transmission to the Secretariat.
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Closing

Vinton Cerf thanked DCAD for its proactive work and stressed the importance of forwarding the accessibility report.

Judith Hellerstein and **Dr. Shabbir** concluded by thanking the fellows, Secretariat, captioners, and all participants.

The meeting ended with a group photo connecting online and in-room attendees.

TRANSCRIPT

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I welcome you to the annual general meeting of the Dynamic Coalition on accessibility and disability for 2025. Though it was just about six months before that we met in Riyadh, but this time I welcome you to from Norway, wonderful cold season from where I come, it was very hot. So I am embracing these moments while I sit here. Thank you very much for joining us in this meeting, IGF DC on accessibility and

disability. As we all know is one of the oldest DCs at the Internet Governance Forum. Our objective is to make Internet Governance and the spaces accessible for people with disabilities. In that context we do a number of activities. But before we come down to the activities and the report that my co coordinator Judith Hellerstein will present, let's do a little bit of round of introduction ill start myself. I'm Muhammad Shabbir. I have a PhD in international relations from Pakistan. And I coordinate this Dynamic Coalition on accessibility and disability since 2023 along with Judith Hellerstein. I think we should go from my right side.

Gunela Astbrink: Hello, everyone. I'm Gunela Astbrink, a MAG member this year. I am founding Chair of the ISOC accessibility standing group and now am doing training coordination for the accessibility standing group. Thank you.

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi: Greetings everyone. I'm Jolenta Rose Afanwi, I'm a fellow from Cameroon.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor: Hello. I'm Sarah Kekeli Akunor. I'm a first time DC fellow.

Judith Hellerstein: Hi, I'm Judith Hellerstein, I'm the co coordinator along with Dr. Shabbir for the DCAD. We are glad to have you here. And I see also, we also have people online. So it's great to see everyone here.

Muhammad Shabbir: I think now we have heard from the people from the room. So let's hear who is online. Judith, can you give the cues to everyone.

Judith Hellerstein: Conrad Harris, Deirdre.

Muhammad Shabbir: No. Let the people speak for themselves.

Judith Hellerstein: Let me unmute them. Conrad, can you unmute yourself?

Joly: People should be able to unmute themselves.

Muhammad Shabbir: CONRAD, CAN YOU HEAR US:

Judith Hellerstein: Conrad has a problem with his microphone. Look in the chat.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. While Conrad fixes the problem, Deirdre, welcome and thank you for joining. Can you introduce yourself, though I know you.

Deirdre Williams: I'm Deirdre Williams. Most people know me as Dee. I am based in the Caribbean. I've been involved with DCAD for what feels a very long time going way back. Congratulations to the fellowship winners. And I hope you're having a great IGF. Thanks.

Judith Hellerstein: Thanks, Dee. Next on my list is Emmanuel.

Muhammad Shabbir: Emmanuel, can you unmute yourself.

Judith Hellerstein: He's coming. Okay. Emmanuel.

Emmanuel Oruk: (Audio breaking up).

Judith Hellerstein: We have too much static. You can paste it in the chat and Joly can read it out to us.

Judith Hellerstein: Okay. So go to Manique. Manique?

Manique Gunaratne: Hi, everyone. I'm Manique from Sri Lanka. I'm a vision impaired person advocating for digital accessibility and nice to meet all of you. Thank you.

Judith Hellerstein: Great. Joly, can you read the chat out for Emmanuel?

Muhammad Shabbir: We can go to the chat.

Judith Hellerstein: I can't open it.

Joly: There is nothing on the chat.

Judith Hellerstein: Okay.

Muhammad Shabbir: Let's finish speakers. Vint Cerf, we all know you. I want to hear from you, what do you say about yourself?

Vinton Cerf: Well, look, I've been in this Internet game for over 50 years. As many of you know, I wear hearing aids and have done since I was 13. That was a very long time ago. I care a great deal about the accessibility of the Internet and digital systems for everyone. So I've been a great in favor of DCAD. I've done what I can to support its work. That's why I'm on this call because I'm very interested in continuing that effort and improving its influence not only the accessibility of our

IGF meetings but the accessibility of the Internet and its applications as well as other digital applications. So your work is very important to me.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you we thank you for your continuous effort not only in monetary terms but also your time that you participate in DCAD's meetings. Joly, do you want to introduce yourself.

Joly: I'm Joly, I'm here in Brooklyn, New York. It's my job to admin the Dynamic Coalition, and we successfully transferred it out from the ITU to be now under the auspices of the Internet Society, New York chapter. And that's it.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you very much, Joly. If there is any chat, those who could not speak have they put anything in the chat? Joly, if you can see and read that. If there's nothing, let us know there's nothing.

Joly: There is nothing.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. Perfect. So the people who were online but could not speak due to the connectivity issues, I invite them to put their introductions in the chat and Joly can read those introductions for all of us. Moving forward with the agenda, I would now request Judith Hellerstein, my co coordinator at the Dynamic Coalition.

Joly: Emmanuel with disability rights advocate and capacity building trainer on digital literacy for special needs people in Uganda.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you, Emmanuel. And now I give the floor to Judith Hellerstein for the annual report, though it's not a full yearly report. It would just be a report of activities since we had last in real. These have been a roller coaster ride doing in hurry in speed. We did do a number of mistakes as well, for which I apologize. I will try to fix those mistakes in the years to come. But I would request Judith Hellerstein to give us a brief overview of what we have been up to in these six months.

Judith Hellerstein: So basically what we're working on, we had gotten the accessibility guidelines translated into multiple languages. So far we have Spanish, French, Portuguese, Bosnian, Italian. We're working on Arabic. And we're going to have Dutch, Chinese, Hindi, and then we're working on some other languages as

well. Also, what we've been doing is we've been very active on the Dynamic Coalition's consulting group. Dr. Shabbir has this year the dynamic consulting group decided to do a webinar series. So, we participated in doing it in four, three on capacity building and four was on multistakeholder governance. Then each of these webinars led to another session at the IGF. Dr. Shabbir just finished off the capacity building sessions just today. He was a participant in it. And then tomorrow is going to be on multistakeholder governance. But we've also been involved in a lot of the work in responding to different comments that the GDC and will be responding to comments from the WSIS facilitators that will be reporting on the elements report. So we've been working to put up comments in on the feedback to make sure that persons with disabilities are represented in them. We've also expanded our work to try to get fellows active at the IGF. We met with the Internet Society folks for the Foundation and also for ICANN in trying to get similar explain about the uniqueness of our fellowship and see if we can get a similar type of fellowship in ICANN. Because ICANN has their own fellowship, but its what makes ours unique is we meet the fellows where they are. We don't set an amount or a set protocols. We ask the fellows what they need to participate and become fully active. And then we meet them there with what they need, whether it's sign language, whether it's additional aid to come with them travelling or others. So we're working to take that model and hopefully introduce it in the other ICANN and other ones so they can be also have fellows that can be really working in all those areas. So that's in a snapshot what so far the first six months. We also, besides that, we ran the fellowship and we chose the fellows, and we had a great committee this year to do it. So that's also was helpful. We had someone from Norway on our committee here this time, Kato. Dr. Shabbir.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you very much, Judith, for this overview. I just would want to say a few words.

Joly: Some comments in the chat. First Conrad Harris introduced himself and Conrad Harris from Jamaica I work with Jamaica society for the blind. I'm trying to change device so I can speak. I would be interested to know how accessibility needs have been handled at the Norway IGF. Deirdre says, I've been happy to see there's growing information exchange using the DCAD mailing list.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. Thank you very much for these comments, everyone. We will come to those comments. I just wanted to say a word on the fellowship program. This year with IGF happening in the Norwegian region for WIOA we had to rush the fellowship program. And I really appreciate people who served on the fellowship committee, Judith Hellerstein, deer re Williams and Kay toe. I cannot pronounce his last name from Norway. All of them did a wonderful job of selecting fellows. Now we have two in person fellows. I'll come to their introduction in a bit. And Vint, I have that question on the agenda. We will be discussing the accessibility issues at the IGF 2025 in a bit. This was a learning experience for us. And moving forward what we plan to do is we plan to draw out some basic outlines for the fellowship program and lay out in a draft document so that we in a succession program, if there is one, the leadership knows why is it happening and where we go from here. And I am going to do an agenda shuffle a little bit. I'm going to move up the introduction of fellows before we start discussing the issues at IGF, because I would want to listen from them that what issues did they face while participating in IGF. Because they come with a fresh minds. And we have, as they say, some older ideas and fixations as well that they would not have. But before we go to that part, I would want the fellows to introduce themselves and share a little bit, not just the accessibility or inaccessibilities that you find in these spaces, but what do you feel about these idea and what are your thoughts.

Judith Hellerstein: Before that, we want to give a huge thank you to the Secretariat for their help in the process, not only do they help us get this year people didn't have badges. And they used digital badges, but they were able to give us physical badges, which were very helpful. And then also thank you to the Secretariat for helping out a lot of our fellows in every capacity.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. So who wants to go first? Jolenta?

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi: Thank you. I'm Jolenta rose Afanwi. This is my second time as a this fellow from Cameroon. I have a mobility impairment. So far it's been great. But I have two preoccupations. Coming back for the second timethe first I'm asking myself. I don't know if it's bit too much of a question. It's not just about coming and attending the IGF. I'm going back to work back in the country. But what legacy do we leave with IGF? How do we continue the IGF? How do we continue to make our presence felt inside the IGF, even inside the other stakeholders? We

cannot just say we've attended and go back to continue and empowering persons with disabilities in digital inclusion, but how do we keep that running inside the IGF? It's not just participating only in DCAD but how DCAD push us in the order of Dynamic Coalitions to talk about inclusion within the coalitions? That's the first preoccupation I had. My second preoccupation was, how do we keep the fellows we don't just have them and then go. We should have an alumni where we bring them together so that we know what they are doing, how what works that can grow or empowered from that. And the network keeps growing and we don't lose the network. What happens when the people come and go and we don't connect back with them? We lose them. That legacy that DCAD is trying to keep is no longer there. That's my two preoccupations. So far, it's been beautiful.

Muhammad Shabbir: Sarah.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor: I'm Sarah Kekeli Akunor. I'm visually impaired. I'm from Ghana. This is my first time being a fellow of DCAD.

Judith Hellerstein: Louder.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor: This is my first time of being a fellow of DCAD. I must say so far I love this feeling. I'm thinking of how to give back to DCAD given the opportunities that they have given me. One of the things that I want to do when I go back is to continue what I have started, because I have been very active in the Ghana IGF. I want to go back to Ghana and get more involved in the regional IGF. And also to say giving back, if there are any other roles we can volunteer for.

Muhammad Shabbir: Yes. Thank you very much, Sarah and Jolenta. Does anyone have any questions for our fellows?

Judith Hellerstein: We should ask Emmanuel online?

Muhammad Shabbir: Sorry, Emmanuel. Are you able to speak?

Emmanuel Oruk: Can you hear me well now?

Muhammad Shabbir: Loud and clear.

Vinton Cerf: It's working.

Muhammad Shabbir: Introduce yourself and also tell us about your experiences of attending IGF online and if there were any issues that you faced during your participation in online spaces.

Emmanuel Oruk: Thank you so much, Dr. Shabbir. Well, my experience online has been great because of the captioning and also ensuring that my participation has been very candid in many sessions. I have been able to participate in a number of sessions and asked a bit of tough questions with some great responses and others I don't get responses. We will continue asking the tough questions especially on mindset in one of the sessions we had earlier on in the day. There was a mindset question that was talked about on how funders can also improve their mindset. For example, getting them to accessibility funding and also improve the capacity of persons with disabilities so that they can have more trainings and more support and also more visibility for which can improve accessibility on the Internet but also going forward with DCAD funding. It is going to help a lot of many multiple get access to the IGF and also how that capacity to participate with policymakers and governments but also make sure that we participate in a level where we are holding these governments accountable to some of their actions. For example, I remember yesterday in one of the sessions I had. I raised the questions for example what digital or data packages network operators and also, for example, Internet service providers how that can allow accessibility to special needs persons, for example, if they need to have access to the Internet. It was surprising that most of these discussions not being held. Usually when they're held, there's no proper feedback given and literally nothing done about them because they end up leaving the discussions and workshops so when they go back, that's the end of the discussion. I really want to have that follow up. For example, having a framework that guides most of these international agencies that compare network operators and also Internet service providers, not only to focus on the profit side of the business but also focus on having more accessibility for special needs persons to have Internet access at affordable rates but also make it in such a way that it helps multiple get access to information and not deny them the to access to information. So my participation and contribution has been very candid and I really love the experience. And I thank all the people who contributed to the DCAD support. I really appreciate you guys. Vint, you're here. I really convey my appreciations to

you. And I would love to go forward one of the fellows mentioned, Jolenta, I think we need a fellowship we can contribute and volunteer in different roles with DCAD and have our voices heard in DCAD and expand the work to other stakeholders and other governments so we can have more representation and have a number of people working in the space of disability and also ensure that we empower them, not only the leaders but special needs persons who need access to Internet Governance, that was a mindset change I talked about earlier. For me, it's an exciting experience. I would love to do more in my community. Thank you so much.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you, Emmanuel, for this wonderful discussion and enlightenment but you forgot to introduce yourself. Please introduce yourself. Tell us a little bit about who you are, where you come from and what are your interests and what disabilities if you face any?

Emmanuel Oruk: (Audio breaking up).

Muhammad Shabbir: Emmanuel, there is static in your voice.

Joly: I think there was something in the chat.

Joly: I did read it out earlier on.

Muhammad Shabbir: Yes, I thought he would be able to do it by himself so it would be better. So we heard from the fellows what they think and I do take the point that Jolenta brought up and then Emmanuel echoed it. I do hear that it's a wonderful thing that fellows are coming with initiatives and thoughts that there needs to be an alumni network. Yes, there should be one. Why not? We have had three years of fellowships and about eight or nine of total fellows. So we can have a fellowship alumni network. How it comes together, that could be discussed. On the second part that Jolenta rose with regard to sustainability, it's also a wonderful suggestion. As we all DCAD members are connected through the DCAD mailing list, so the activities, the efforts, initiatives, all of those, that's an open list. Anyone can join and anyone can contribute on that list. So I would be more than welcome if anyone from the membership from our fellow alumnis comes forward with an initiative that they want to run or lead, I would be looking forward to any thoughts that they come up with.

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi: We get the names of all the fellows and put it inside. Then I try to talk with them to know what they have done so far since they went back, where they have had challenges and how they think they can also come back to share back to DCAD to see how we can improve and also if they have challenges get back also to explain if at all, this is what they're lacking, where to push them through. We don't know what they're doing. You just come to IGF and go back. So I will do it through the workshop group so we keep that connectivity. And then we see it's not just a process of bringing persons with disabilities come on board but let them be present inside the IGF.

Judith Hellerstein: You want an email list?

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi: WhatsApp numbers.

Judith Hellerstein: Joly can also create an email list.

Muhammad Shabbir: I think I hear what Jolenta is saying. What we can do is, Jolenta, you can start the WhatsApp group. And we can help you send the links out to the formal fellows.

Joly: Shabbir.

Muhammad Shabbir: Yes, Joly.

Joly: A WhatsApp group or a proper mailing list? It would be trivial to set up a mailing list and just give you something that is more has a record, has an archive and is arguably more accessible than a WhatsApp group.

Muhammad Shabbir: Yes, but I think what I was going to say, Joly, that we do have all of the fellows, because you know one of the core requirement of this fellowship is that you have to be the member of DCAD. And joining DCAD means that you are subscribed to the mailing list. It could be an informal network of WhatsApp group. Those can come join and discuss. If they want, the coordinators or the leadership in that WhatsApp group, they can invite us or if they don't want us in there, they can discuss this amongst themselves. Because we also have to be very conscious of the different laws that are there. We do collect data of the people, email addresses, telephone numbers. And we have to be conscious of their wishes. That's why I was suggesting that Jolenta will set up the WhatsApp group. And we will send the links

out to the former fellows. If they want to join that group, we'll let them know that this is the group that has been created for this purpose. And if they want to join, they will join that group. Secondly, we also have to be conscious of the fact that this IGF and participation in it is a volunteer effort. And volunteerism can be motivated, but it cannot be enforced. So that's why I am a little bit hesitant of creating a formal group where some people may not want to participate. Vint wants to speak.

Muhammad Shabbir: Vint, please.

Vinton Cerf: There we go. Sorry, I was thrashing around trying to finding the unmute button. I'm not a WhatsApp user. So my comment should be taken in that context. But I'm finding it very difficult to deal with multiple communication channels. There's messenger there are too many. So I don't know if other people have the same reaction, but setting up a WhatsApp group in addition to an email list means I have to be in a different app in order to keep track of the communication. It's just a personal reaction. But I do want to emphasize that no one needs to be forced into this informal thing. I just believe that it's kind of a bonding experience to have been to an IGF, especially if you happen to have a disability, and that the people who have had that experience might want to stay in touch with each other and discuss their experiences. While I'm talking, though, I wanted to bring up one other desirable thing to the extent that you have specific recommendations for making things more accessible or examples of things that are accessible and have worked, that would be really helpful to feedback. I'm finding a lot of people who prepare websites don't understand and don't have good intuition about how to do that. If they've never used a screen reader they may have no clue how to organize a web page to be friendly to the screen reader. Those examples that work and don't work would be very helpful feedback for those trying to build accessible websites. One last point, Shabbir, I've been looking at the large language model chatbot interactions. I'm noticing that for some people having a discussion instead of trying to use a screen reader to figure out what's going on a web page could turn out to be more accessible than using a screen reader, because it's purely either an oral or typed interaction. So it may be that AI tools, the large language model tools may make Internet based applications more accessible than they historically have been. Just a thought.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you very much, Vint, for these wonderful thoughts. There is quite a lot to unpack in this. While I put the discussion on the multiple channels or WhatsApp groups or formal channels to create or what to do, I would just emphasize that for the formal communication, for the DCAD, the mailing list would remain a priority communication channel. Because this is what we agreed to that we would maintain an open list of the members and open mailing list which would be which would be the conversation of this mailing list would remain open. And there is any other channel that fellows so each person has different communication preferences, that's why I am giving them a sort of an option if someone wants to create such a channel, they would be more than welcome to join it. With regards to sorry?

Joly: I would just mention that one of those options is just to request a set up a separate list which would be easily done.

Muhammad Shabbir: So we can do that. But I think one of the things that I want to move towards that Vint raised was what was successful and what not worked in this case of IGF. And this is also one of our agenda points, accessibility issues at the IGF 2025, online or in person. Is there anyone who wants to raise hand or say something about that?

Judith Hellerstein: Jolenta.

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi: Okay. I think the (?) were too long from one hall, from one conference hall to the next workshop, the areas were too long. The expanses were too long for someone who with a mobility disability to go around or ask for request for a wheelchair. The expanses were too long. Maybe they were smooth, but the interface movement was really, really long. Positively, I must say there was a lot of politeness. When you meet somebody to ask for assistance, there was a lot of politeness. They will always show you where you're going to. Then the toilets were good. At least it was spacey. You could come inside with your crutch and feel comfortable using them. I think it was good. Except for the distances, it was good.

Muhammad Shabbir: Any other points that anyone wants to raise before I start speaking? Because when I start

Joly: I have one briefly.

Muhammad Shabbir: Yes, Joly.

Joly: The actual session pages on the IGF website do not link to the actual sessions on the schedule. So you have to look everything up twice. You have a link to a session on the IGF website. You then have to go back and then look through the schedule. If I had difficulty, someone who is has some impairment, it must be pretty much impossible to get from one place to the other.

Judith Hellerstein: Joly, were you using the interactive schedule?

Joly: Yes.

Judith Hellerstein: Because whenever I use the interactive schedule, I click on it, and it pops up the schedule and the program. And then I go back to the schedule. It seemed to work for me very well. I don't know if grew ny La.

Joly: The schedule itself works fine. A lot of times I have links to the actual session description that is on the IGF website which is a separate thing. And that does not link through to where the actual session eventually happens.

Muhammad Shabbir: I think what Joly is saying makes sense. I have not used that. If this is the case, it should not be happening in the scheduling app where you see the sessions listed and the times listed, you should also be able to see the session description in there instead of going to a second page.

Judith Hellerstein: I see that. I don't use the app. I use the actual web page on the IGF website. It says interactive schedule. I don't use the sked app. I use the IGF website page. When I click on it, I see the whole schedule. I see the description. I see all the panelists and outline thing. I see everything. Perhaps it's an issue of the app.

Joly: If you go to the IGF website and you do the dropdown, there's a thing with sessions. If you go to those sessions, those sessions do not link through to the schedule.

Judith Hellerstein: Okay.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. It could be sorry for the interruption, Judith, but it could be that the schedule page links the session into the but the session links which are on the session list they do not link to the schedule.

Judith Hellerstein: Okay.

(Overlapping Speakers)

Joly: Correct.

Muhammad Shabbir: If there is Judith and Joly can talk and let us know if there is an issue with the Secretariat, we can raise it. Any other accessibility related issues.

Sarah Kekeli Akunor: I realized that during the sessions I attended did not have room for questioning or contribution. Because being in a session then some of them don't have a disability, so you want to understand it from the disability perspective, so maybe you might want to ask a question, because I've attended a session where I was totally lost, because I heard them talking about inclusion. But then they mentioned older people, children, rural areas, and disabilities. I'm wondering where is the disability perspective to it? Then the session ends hoping I'm going to get to ask a question or make a contribution, and there is none.

Judith Hellerstein: That's good. These are good points at the end. That's an excellent point at the end for the sessions.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay.

(Overlapping Speakers)

Muhammad Shabbir: Point well taken, Sarah. I'm sorry but I have to move the discussion forward. If there is any other accessibility related discussion that someone wants to take? Emmanuel, you were attending sessions online and you were participating in all these sessions online using websites, scheduling app, Zoom links, all the stuff. So any issues that you may have faced or you want fixed?

Emmanuel Oruk: Well, on my side, the scheduling was perfect. I didn't have any challenge having access to the different Zoom links, because I added everything I needed on my personal schedule. Any time I needed access to a meeting and all was fine. I don't think I have any problem from all the tools I used online. It was really perfect on my side. There was no challenge on my side. Thank you so much.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. Thank you. Any other points that someone wants to raise regarding this.

Judith Hellerstein: Deirdre has a question.

Muhammad Shabbir: Deirdre, please.

Judith Hellerstein: Deirdre.

Deirdre Williams: The contribution in the chat, I suggested that perhaps we could create some sort of informal review process to report to the Secretariat any extra accessibility issues that come up each year the IGF is held. I think Joly agreed with me.

(Overlapping Speakers)

Muhammad Shabbir: Please.

Vinton Cerf: It's Vint. I want to reinforce that idea. It's important to have concrete responses positive and negative to go to the Secretariat so they can convey that to the next host. So anything you can do to help us make things more accessible is very helpful. I will pass along the nice words that we heard about polite assistance and things that.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you. Before I start speaking on the topic, I give one more chance for people present here in the hall and online, because when I start speaking, I'm told that I speak too much. Grewny La, please.

Gunela Astbrink: Thanks very much. As a mentor to fellows, I have had a very positive experience with Sarah and Jolenta and Emmanuel online. The requirements firstly was to do an online course on disability leadership and Internet Governance and digital rights. And then that equipped people a little bit to be ready for the sessions here. And we've had a lot of meetings, a lot of discussions, and it's been a very positive experience and I'm looking forward to you going back and continue the Internet Governance activities as you go along. Thank you very much.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you. I'll take a couple of minutes to highlight a few of the points that I have in mind. First start with positivities, I think IGF 2025 did a wonderful job of organizing and trying to make the event accessible for all perspectives and make it as inclusive as possible. To a large extent they have been successful in their efforts. So, appreciations and hats off to the organizing

committee. I would ask Vint serve to give those appreciations to the local host particularly with regards to Visa applications. Though I have another side to talk about Visa application as well. But when the Secretariat, particularly the IGF Secretariat, and if I would not name them, it would be very unfair particularly Anja and Shaline. They were very wonderful in coming through for DCAD. Whenever whether my own Visa or Sarah'sso thank you very much for that. Of course, I understand for the people who come from developing countries and try to get Visas for the developed countries USA or (?) territories, they know the difficulties. But whenever we email them, we receive the response promptly. They did really work with us to make it happen that our fellows, both of them, they were able to come to the IGF in person. Now, having said that

Judith Hellerstein: One minute. Joly, did we lose the captioner?

Joly: No, captions are going.

Judith Hellerstein: Because it's prosen here.

Joly: That must be a fault with you because we're seeing them on Zoom.

Muhammad Shabbir: Perfect. Having said that, there were some issues and that caused some of the anxieties in me as well so much so I started travelling on Saturday until Thursday morning I was not sure where is my passport line. I had to see if the communication one week prior that my Visa was approved but there was certain miscommunications that could have been much better. Also, with regards to the accessibility of the online forms, Visa online forms could have been made accessible or screen reader tested. I did try to send an email to IGF Norway, but by the time I had received a response, though it was not an online form or a copy of the form that I had requested, but some other options, but at that time I had already filled my form. So filling the form independently of the Visa application was a little bit difficult. In that context I would want to mention the Visa process for the last year IGF. It was a wonderful experience of feeling just small form that's in the registration IGF registration card and sending an email along with a picture and passport copy to the designated email address and getting the Visa in a few days. So this could have been improved. With regards to the schedule, I tried to use the scheduling app and this is what I raised last year as well. On the iPhone, I'm not sure about other iOS apps but for iOS apps I had certain difficulties in marking my

own schedule. So marking the sessions in my schedule, scheduling the sessions in my schedule and the list of sessions I had added in my schedule. So I think the IGF Secretariat moving forward either can talk to the event app which is shed to make, so they can make their app acceptable or find other event apps to connect to so that the schedule is uploaded there which is more accessible. These are my thoughts. We have about six minutes before we end our session. And we also have an agenda item on the list which we did not debate in very much detail. I would want to remind you, which is the translation of the DCAD accessibility guidelines. So if you want to say something about that point or if you want to raise any other point in the business.

Judith Hellerstein: The other point we might want to raise, the DCAD, the Dynamic Coalition's main session. The point is every group, the Policy Network, I have two points to make. The Policy Network for meaningful access and other all the other Policy Networks and the best practices have a main session that's in the plenary hall and is translated into multiple languages and then international sign. But if you're not for instance, our Dynamic Coalition's main session was not in was in the conference room and not in the plenary as a result, we didn't get language translation or sign language translation. And that was a very sore point among people. My other question I have is I brought it to the Secretariat. After our Dynamic Coalition started doing the webinars, other Policy Networks did the idea and wanted to do webinars, but they didn't seem to have access to the captioning fund that the Dynamic Coalitions use. So those webinars could not be captioned, human captioned. So possibly the Policy Networks, even though they're part of the Secretariat, they don't know about the they don't know how to access this and what the procedures are. So that's my comment not on the IGF but on the run up to the IGF when we're doing these webinars, which I think is a good idea. Because they couldn't they tried to make I asked them. And they said, we can't. We don't have the funds.

Vinton Cerf: Okay. We would need to scope what the requirements would be. I don't know what the arrangements were for webinars. Are the webinars considered part of the IGF activity?

Judith Hellerstein: Yes. They're done by the Secretariat.

Vinton Cerf: Okay. In that case, I'll bring up the case of functioning of captioning for the webinars. We'll see what we can do about them.

Judith Hellerstein: The Policy Networks are run by the Secretariat.

Vinton Cerf: Yes, understood.

Gunela Astbrink: I just wanted to also raise during this week with the fellows, we have been doing smaller meetings, bilaterals with ISOC, ICANN representatives, and JDLP. And tomorrow we'll also be having some further meetings maybe with Africa IGF to embed the various different organisations and what our fellows this time can maybe involved with. I've had further discussions with the Internet Society Foundation based on a survey that the ASG did in regard to involving chapters in more accessibility activities and maybe how the foundation can assist with that. Certainly we would connect fellows with certain chapter activities as well.

Joly: Joly here. I would just say that ISOC live as funded I am I have an archiving and transcribing those IGF webinars.

Muhammad Shabbir: Any other points? We do have

Vinton Cerf: I just wanted to say thank you for arranging for me to join you. I'm glad that we had this meeting. But it's very important I took as many notes as I could. Anything you can put together in a more coherent form to relay to the Secretariat would be super helpful.

Muhammad Shabbir: Yes, sure. Vint, what I will do is I'll try to draft a letter as I've been doing for the last year or so I did in 2024 I remember. So we'll draft a small letter and send it your way to forward it to the leadership panel and the Secretariat.

Vinton Cerf: Thank you. That will be very helpful.

Muhammad Shabbir: Perfect. Any last comments from anyone?

Ngwa Jolenta Rose Afanwi: I would wish to say it's a pleasure. I've been attending the IGF on two years. For DCAD I want to say thank you very much, Vint.

Judith Hellerstein: We should get a photo with Vint online and the fellows in the room.

Muhammad Shabbir: All of the people online.

Judith Hellerstein: They may not have they're all coming on. Okay. Erica, you're going to be in charge for the photograph. We're going to stand around the screen.

Judith Hellerstein: We'll stand around the screen so we don't have

Muhammad Shabbir: For the photo, I want to thank everyone for coming up to the session for the fellows for applying and meeting us.

Judith Hellerstein: You're blocking the camera.

Vinton Cerf: Wait, wait. Before you take the picture. Conrad, is there any way, you could get a little more light on your face. It's very hard to see you.

Muhammad Shabbir: Okay. All.

Vinton Cerf: Also, you need to tilt your camera a little bit.

Conrad Harris: Let me see if I can find.

Vinton Cerf: We're only seeing the lower half of your face.

Vinton Cerf: There we go. Much better. Thank you.

Muhammad Shabbir: Thanks, everyone for Judith, captionist and everyone else for joining us this evening.

Judith Hellerstein: Thank you for the room. This room actually has the camera and everything. The bilateral rooms don't have any of that.

Muhammad Shabbir: We got this room. We see you some other time. Bye bye.