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Changing the “Face” of Tech Leadership:

Celebrating Women with Disabilities who are Leading the Way in Tech

4 December 2019, 3 - 4.30pm, Conference Room 12
UN Headquarters, New York



International
Day of
**Persons with
Disabilities**

3 DECEMBER

The 2019 theme for International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is ‘Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda’. The theme focuses on the empowerment of persons with disabilities for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development as reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pledges to “leave no one behind”. Persons with disabilities, as both beneficiaries and agents of change, are important actors in the quest for building inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies.

To mark IDPD 2019, ITU, UN DESA, UN OICT and partners are arranging a session highlighting the participation and leadership of women with disabilities in the tech sector. More specifically, this session

will celebrate women entrepreneurs with disabilities in the tech sector and initiatives supporting the participation and leadership of women with disabilities in the sector.

Around the world, women generally and women with disabilities are underrepresented in the sector as a whole and in leadership positions in particular. Nevertheless, there are many women with disabilities making important contributions to the sector as entrepreneurs and employees at all levels who are not currently receiving the recognition and visibility that they deserve. To attract more women to join and want to stay in the tech sector, it is important to increase the visibility of women already in the sector – to literally change the “face” of tech leadership and participation, and to help break stereotypes. The urgency of taking action is building rapidly as the sector continues to grow fast and it is the source of many rewarding jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. Moreover, the positive business impact of greater diversity and inclusion in all sectors has been frequently reported on.

This session will showcase existing initiatives aimed at supporting women with disabilities in their careers in tech and celebrate female technology entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Programme

Opening remarks

- H.E. Ambassador, Ms. Alya bint Ahmed Al Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations
- H.E. Ambassador, Mr. Luis Gallegos Chiriboga, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations

Speakers

- Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, UN DESA
- Margaux Joffe, Director, Accessibility Marketing at Verizon Media & Founder, Kaleidoscope Society for Women with ADHD
- Gamze Sofuoglu, Senior Product Manager, Turkcell
- Mariella Paulino, Disability Advocate + Techie, and Founder, Project Hearing
- Judy Okite, Founder, Association for Accessibility and Equality
- Suzanne Shanahan, Chief of the Enterprise Application Centre, Americas, UN OICT
- Cathy Holloway, Associate Professor, UNCLIC & Academic Director, GDI Hub

Q & A and comments

Session moderated by

- Ursula Wynhoven, ITU Representative to the United Nations, New York