

Open letter to

- the Secretary-General of the United Nations – **H.E. Ban Ki-moon**
- the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations – **Mr. Vuk Jeremić**
- the participants in the “High-level meeting of the **General Assembly of the United Nations** on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities”, September 23rd 2013.

Subject: Disability, Development & Technology

This open letter is to express our support to the work of the General Assembly of the United Nations during the High-level meeting on Disability and Development scheduled for September 23rd 2013.

The undersigned fully share the view that disability issues should as soon as possible be mainstreamed in the international development agenda.

As international umbrella organisations located in various continents and countries representing a large number of stakeholders in the fields of Assistive and Rehabilitation Technology, (e-)Accessibility, and Universal Design, we:

- Are committed to the worldwide implementation of the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**;
- Share the recommendations of the Secretary General, as presented in his report *The way forward: a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond (A/68/95)*, in particular recommendation 74 on the central role of **Accessibility and Universal Design** in the emerging post-2015 development agenda;
- Highlight the role of **enabling technologies** in enhancing human potential and citizenship, in order for people with disabilities not only to have access to, but to fully contribute to the development of their communities and societies;
- Stress the need, in order to make the above mentioned points reality, of appropriate **policies** at all levels and **investments** in programmes that:
 - *increase awareness* and provide correct and up to date *information* on all aspects of technology and disability (products, services, etc.);
 - *develop Assistive Technology competences* among people with disabilities, carers, and professionals;
 - *increase the knowledge base* on the impact of Assistive Technology in development processes;
 - *increase the understanding of political, socio-economic and cultural factors* that impact the diffusion and acceptance of Assistive Technology;
 - *provide access to products and community based services*;
 - *facilitate knowledge and expertise sharing and promote global collaboration* to address Assistive Technology related challenges;
 - *support research, development, and innovation* towards reliable and affordable Assistive Technology and Accessibility solutions.
- Respond to **Article 32 of the Convention** that calls for global collaboration, by offering our availability and support to this cause as networks and organizations representing key stakeholders and constituents in the fields of assistive and rehabilitation technologies.

September 18th, 2013, signed:



AAATE

RESNA



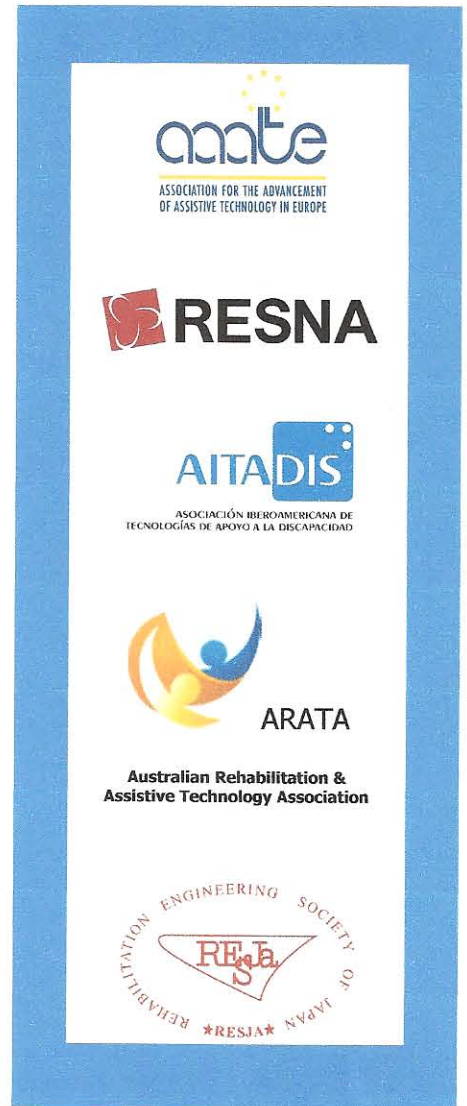
AITADIS



ARATA



RESJA



AAATE – Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe
RESNA – Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America
AITADIS – Asociación Iberoamericana de Tecnologías de Apoyo a la Discapacidad
ARATA – Australian Rehabilitation & Assistive Technology Association
RESJA – Rehabilitation Engineering Society of Japan