

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASIA PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM (APDF) WORKING COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM (WCAT) HELD ON OCTOBER 31, 2008 AT 12:00NOON AT THE MEETING ROOM OF AGORA GARDEN, TAIPEI

Present (In Alphabetic Order):

Chair	Mr. Robert, Lin	Director General, International Affairs, Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan
Distinguished Guest	Mr. Patrick Ying-Pin, Yeh	Chair, International Affairs Committee, Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan
Committee Member	Mr. Allen Kam-Yuen, Chan	Vice-Chairperson, Board of Directors, Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth, Hong Kong
Committee Member	Mr. Shirinashihama, Hiroyuki	Associate Professor, Dept. of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Social Welfare) Matsumoto University, Japan
Committee Member	Mr. Jacky Chao-Fu, Hsu	Founder and General Manager, Access for All in Taiwan Association, Taiwan
Committee Member	Mr. Puay Tiak (PT), Lim	Honorary Treasurer, APDF, Singapore
Committee Member	Mrs. Ann Kam-Fung, Lo	Accompany person of Mr. Allen Kam-Yuen, Chan, Hong Kong
Committee Member	Mr. Rex Chi Keung, Luk	Director, Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation Hong Kong
Committee Member	Ms. Saowalak. Thongkuay	Regional Development Officer, DPI/AP, Thailand

Observer

1. Mr. Takao Imaura, Representative, Accessible –Research Network Office
2. Student Volunteers of Matsumoto University (Dept. of Tourism and Hospitality Management) -
 - Mr. Watanabe Yosuke
 - Mr. Otsuka Akira
 - Ms. Shimosato Tomoyo
 - Ms. Fujiwara Ayaka

Secretariat

International Affairs Center, Eden Social Welfare Foundation

- Ms. Emma Lee, Executive Secretary
- Ms. Eileen Lu, Secretary
- Ms. Lotus Chen
- Ms. Stella Hsu

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Mr. Robert Lin introduced himself to the Committee, and welcomed all of members to the APDF WCAT Meeting. Robert specially welcomed the new committee member, Mr. Rex Chi Keung, Luk from Hong Kong. All committee members then introduced themselves to the meeting (Saowalak, PT, Jacky, Hiro, Rex, Allen, Ann, Takao).

- 1.2 Robert then explained that the Committee meeting would be a luncheon meeting, and due to time constraints, he suggested starting the meeting with Activity Reports.

2. Activity Reports

(a) Singapore

- 2.1 PT Lim gave a PowerPoint presentation and distributed publicity brochures to introduce the International Conference on Accessible Tourism (ICAT) 2009 which will be held in Singapore from April 22nd to 24th, 2009. During the same period, another important conference i-CREATE focusing on the assistive technology aspect of Accessible Tourism will also take place in Singapore. PT added that the organizing committees of both conferences have been discussing on how best to synergize and cooperate to benefit more participants.

- 2.2 PT added that ICAT 2009 would target a wide range of participants including service providers, service users, advocates, policy makers, etc. with the aim of promoting accessible tourism (AT) in the Asia Pacific region. He urged all present to assist in publicizing ICAT 2009 as well as actively participating in the Conference. He suggested that each country send a group of travelers with disabilities to attend ICAT 2009. Discounted group rates, including customized itineraries would be offered. Please see attached files for more information.

(b) Japan

2.3 Mr. Shirinashihama, Hiroyuki gave an introduction on the latest AT development in Japan. Hiro was concerned that the participation of people with disabilities in AT is poor. However, Tokyo has already created its proper tourism administration this year and it is expected to achieve an increase in the participation of people with disabilities in AT from 30% to 70%. He cited Takayama City as a successful barrier-free model. This was only achieved with the full support of the city government; highlighting the importance of governmental involvement in promoting AT. Hiro emphasized that the establishment of barrier-free built environment should be considered as the development of community environment. He also accentuated the importance of cultivating AT professionals right away, and Japan has already been putting efforts in its development.

2.4 In conclusion, Hiro suggested that the WCAT, as a priority, should also consider the development of AT professionals.

2.5 The observer Mr. Takao Imaura, a graduated student of Hiro then made a presentation on the accessible environment and related activities in Japan. Please see the attached file for more information.

(c) **Thailand**

2.6 Ms. Saowalak. Thongkuay started with a quick update on ICAT 2007 which took place in Thailand in September 2007. She then introduced the progress of AT implementation in Thailand especially in Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA); efforts made by DPI/AP to advocate AT; promoting the AT plan by UNESCAP; and sharing on barrier-free environment in the middle-Asia region and Australia during recent mission trips made by DPI/AP. Please see the attached file for more information.

2.7 In conclusion, Saowalak strongly urged the development of an Asia-Pacific Accessible Guideline with APDF leading this development. According to Saowalak, while DPI/AP focuses mainly on advocacy, APDF should devote to promoting AT.

(d) **Hong Kong**

2.8 Mr. Allen Kam-Yuen, Chan reported on the barrier-free environment of Hong Kong and its recent development. The people in need of AT represented a large group in the world, and accessible transportation is always a key issue. In Hong

Kong, ground transportation from the airport is equipped with accessible features. The Rehab bus, a dedicated transport system for PWDs is provided in Hong Kong. Now various tourist attraction sites, hotels and entertaining places are accessible in Hong Kong, such as the Ocean Park and Disneyland. Allen noted that barrier-free environment in Hong Kong has greatly improved.

2.9 Mr Rex Chi Keung, Luk started by introducing the Easy Access Travel 2008, and suggested that every Asia-Pacific country should get together to help to reduce the expensive cost of accessible transportation, which increased the cost of traveling and realization of AT more difficult. He also agreed with Saowalak that the production of an Accessible Guidelines is a must. At the same time, he reminded that we should also pay much attention to the safety of the tourists.

2.10 Rex also introduced the Transed 2010 which will be held in Hong Kong, and informed that they will be working with the government, legislative counselors and monitors them in enhancing the accessibility of cities. Rex then suggested the setting up of networks among member countries/cities regarding accessible transport and travel information. He accentuated that AT travel service must start up immediately. Please see the attached file for more information.

(e) **Taiwan**

2.11 Mr. Jacky Chao-Fu, Hsu firstly expressed his happiness in knowing that Taiwan is not alone in the road of promoting AT. Then he started with making an introduction on the association that he founded “Access for All in Taiwan” and the difficulties of developing barrier-free environment in Taiwan. According to Jacky, Taiwan’s government focuses mostly on the accessibility of public buildings and engineering matters, rarely on the leisure life of people with disabilities (PWD). Therefore, there was not much support from the government in this sector.

2.12 Nevertheless, Taiwan’s NGOs put much effort in improving the leisure life for PWDs, for example, Eden Social Welfare Foundation and Access for All in Taiwan. Jacky also shared the experience of advocating AT and barrier-free concept through internet. For example, Access for All in Taiwan website started an activity of reporting inaccessible places all around Taiwan, and as a result, over 70% inaccessible places were modified; also an accessible map made by his association has been putted on the commercial area of Google, he then suggested that WCAT members should make an accessible Google map together in the

future.

- 2.13 In conclusion, Jacky further introduced the recreational activities for PWDs organized by his association, which is an excellent idea of cooperating with non-DPO organizations and a new opportunity for both DPOs and non-DPOs.

3. Conclusion

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm due to a prior appointment to attend the media activity on the ITF Taipei at World Trade Centre.

The meeting would continue the next day on 1 Nov 08 at 9:30am.

MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED MEETING OF ASIA PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM (APDF) WORKING COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM (WCAT) HELD ON NOVEMBER 1ST, 2008 AT 10:30AM AT THE MEETING ROOM OF AGORA GARDEN, TAIPEI

Present (In Alphabetic Order):

Mr. Allen Kam-Yuen, Chan	Vice-Chairperson, Board of Directors, Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth, Hong Kong
Mr. Jacob Chun-Liang, Chen	Advisor, International Development Division, Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan
Mr. Shirinashihama, Hiroyuki	Associate Professor, Dept. of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Social Welfare) Matsumoto University, Japan
Mr. Jacky Chao-Fu, Hsu	Founder and General Manager, Access for All in Taiwan Association, Taiwan
Mr. Puay Tiak (PT), Lim	Honorary Treasurer, APDF, Singapore
Mr. Robert, Lin	Director General, International Affairs, Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan
Mrs. Ann Kam-Fung, Lo	Accompany person of Mr. Allen Kam-Yuen, Chan, Hong Kong
Mr. Rex Chi Keung, Luk	Director, Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation Hong Kong
Ms. Saowalak. Thongkuay	Regional Development Officer, DPI/AP, Thailand
Mr. Patrick Ying-Pin, Yeh	Chair, International Affairs Committee, Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan

Observer:

Ms. Aiko Akiyama

Mr. Takao Imaura

Secretariat:

Ms. Emma Lee

Ms. Eileen Lu

Ms. Lotus Chen

Ms. Stella Hsu

Ms. Naomi Chen

4. WCAT Secretariat Report, Emma Lee

4.1 Ms. Emma Lee first apologized for the limitation of time which prevents her from presenting a complete report on 2006-2008 Action Plans. However, it could be found in the meeting handbook.

4.2 Consequently, Emma began directly with a report of 2008-2010 Action Plans and welcomed everyone to participate in the following events:

- 3rd ICAT in Singapore in 2009
- International Seminar on Accessible Tourism in Takayama City, Japan.
- The 4th APDF General Assembly and Conference in Hu-Chi-Ming City, Vietnam, 2010

5. Discussion

(a) 2008-2010 Action Plan of WCAT

- Accessible Guidebook with DVD and website for the AP region was putted into 2008-2010 Action Plan.

5.1 According to PT, Singapore is already making a video called “Outbound Singapore” in a marketing perspective to introduce Asia countries. Aiko suggested that the information should be shared and the message should be gave out to both people with and without disabilities; also more people should be invited from business sectors to participate in PWD related activities. Saowalak added that consultation of people without disabilities will be needed, such as accompany person of PWDs, the opinion of people from tourist sectors is also important. Rex suggested that action should be taken at the same time. With PWDs traveling around, the tour operator will then face the actual scenario. Also,

the airlines should be rated and let everyone know this is a business case.

(b) The participation of WCAT in 2009 international activities

• **ICAT 09/22-25 April 2009/Singapore**

5.2 PT informed that the venue of ICAT 2009 will be close to YWCA Fort Canning in Singapore. i-CREATE will also be held at the same time. He welcomed everyone to participate in the event.

• **The International Seminar on Accessible Tourism in Takayama City by UNESCAP, mid November 2009, Japan**

5.3 Ms. Aiko Akiyama introduced the International Seminar on Accessible Tourism in Takayama City 2009 to the committee members. Its main theme will be Accessible Asia and Pacific for all. According to Aiko, an executive committee will be formed and a meeting will be held in Japan next year. WCAT committee members will be invited to the meeting. Transportation, connectivity of different places, communication, and information will all be discussed during the seminar.

5.4 Aiko stressed that discussion between UNESCAP and WCAT (APDF) on the conference program should start now. As AT video making is suggested, contents will be Takayama City which will be taken as a model for introduction. The video will be made in the beginning of 2009 and it can be showed during ICAT. UNESCAP welcomes everyone's suggestions. Aiko accentuated that this seminar should invite people from various sectors including business sector, like airlines, travel agency, etc.

• **The Accessible Tour Exchange**

5.5 Aiko supported the idea of accessible tour exchange, and suggested the cooperation can be made between universities in the Asia-Pacific region. She offered the UNESCAP building as a possible venue for volunteers training. To motivate the students, such volunteer work could be credited and a network should be created.

5.6 Rex suggested that a special package be formulated. He added that apart from AT, UNESCAP can also develop various programs and give certifications. Hiro emphasized the idea of inclusive community. He said that volunteer work should be based on community development, not only providing services for

PWDs, but also for non-PWDs, like children and elderly. The goal is to stimulate people to go out and enjoy life with the help of volunteers.

- 5.7 WCAT Secretariat reported that according to the action plan, cooperation with NCCV in Vietnam will be made. Other tour exchanges with countries in AP region can also be planned. The university student volunteer service exchange can be one of the models.

6. Any Other Matters

- 6.1 Rex shared the information of Transed 2010 in Hong Kong which will be held in the end of May or early June, and suggested that everyone can learn information of accessible transportation from its website. Rex also explained that Transed 2010 will also include AT apart from just Transport. He welcomed everyone to participate.

- 6.2 WCAT Secretariat, Emma responded that APDF has a Working Committee on Accessibility and Universal Design (WCAUD). The information of Transed 2010 will be passed to the chairperson of WCAUD, Ms. Judy Wee for a bigger mobilization of support. WCAT will also work closely with WCAUD.

7. There being no other matters, the meeting ended at 1:00pm.