The Global Disability Summit Argentina 2019, follow-up in Latin America, was held from June 6 to 8 in Buenos Aires City. Hosted by the Government of Argentina, co-organized with IDA and RIADIS. Participants included organizations of persons with disabilities and their Families, Civil Society Organizations, private sector companies and Government Representatives. The goal was to reaffirm the commitment for the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the region and the world.

The Argentina Government was represented by the vice-president, Gabriela Michetti and her advisers and the ANDIS (National Agency for Disability).

IDA and RIADIS committed a Summit Reference Group to lead the organization of the civil society and to be in contact with the Argentina Government. Inclusion International was a member of the Reference Group through Elena Dal Bó. Elena also had the mission to lead the participation of the Argentina organization of persons with disabilities and their families (OPDF). The Reference Group gathered Latino American and Caribbean leaders with disabilities, Elena as family member and Gabriela Martinez (CONFE). They met every Tuesday evening through Skype and held constant communications by Email and Whatsapp.

Argentina group for the Summit was formed by 6 Federations of national and international outreach: FAICA (Blind and low vision ) member of the ULAC and WFB, CAS (Deaf) member of WFD, ASDRA member of FIASDOWN, APADEA, member of Latino American and World federations of persons with autism and their families, Group Art 24 national network for inclusive education, member of RRIE (Regional Network for Inclusive Education of Latino America). Asociacion Azul, member of II in Argentina, was also part of the group. There is not at the moment in Argentine an organization of Deaf Blind persons. A person with partial deafblindness referred by the Latinoamerican Federation of Deaf Blind persons was contacted and invited to the Summit and Forum. Three organizations of persons with psicosocial disabilities did not answer to the invitation to join the group. A few organizations invited declined the invitation because they argued that supporting the Summit was the same as to support President Macri and his administration. In fact there was a strong campaign against the Summit and against our group of OPDF in the middle of a strong campaign against the Government facing the general elections in October.

IDA and RIADIS, together with the Summit Reference Group, received the answers of a Global Online Consultation, on the feelings of organizations of people with disabilities and their families in the region and the world. They were the basis for building the Statement of Civil Society and planning the panels, thus bringing the voice of people with disabilities to the Summit.

The Statement was read before the closing panel of the Forum and during the Summit.
Civil Society Forum- June 6th had the participation of people from 12 countries. The activities of Asociacion Azul were related to the Panel on Inclusive Education, and to the Closing Session, as described below.

Panel on Inclusive Educación
Moderator: Elena Dal Bó
Sue Swenson was invited but could not be in this panel
Magdalena Orlando, consultant for Unicef and other organizations, spoke about the legal framework of inclusive education in the system of United Nations, specially the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the CRDP and the SDG 4 of the 2030 Agenda
Gabriela Santuccione, RREI (Regional Latinoamerican Network for Inclusive Education) and Grupo Art 24 for Inclusive Education from Argentina, spoke about the need of strong political decision.
Cristina Sanz, President of ICEVI Latinoamerica, spoke about ICEVI’s project that recorded the opinions of children with vision difficulties in mainstream schools, and gave a strong vision about the difference between special education and special schools.
Elena Dal Bó closed the panel stressing the high level of knowledge and ability to advocate of the regional organizations on inclusive education, while the great difficulty remaining was to be listened by the high levels of governments, so the question was what do we need to do to be listened by them?

Closing Panel of the Forum of Civil Society
The Declaration of the Civil Society Forum was read before this panel,
Moderator: Dominique Kantor, self-advocate of ASDRA, Asociacion Sindrome de Down de Argentina (not a member of II)
Fred Schroeder, President of the World Blind Union who stressed the influence of underexpextations in the discrimination of people with disabilities, He referred specially to discrimination in employment
Juan Cobeñas, Asociación Azul, stressed aspects of the declaration concerning independent living, supports to live in the community, deinstitutionalization, and the uppermost need to be listened by government officials NOW.
Dominique Kantor highlighted the need to live equally in the community and that people with disabilities are already ready to assume this position in society

Global Disability Summit 2019 Argentina, Follow up, June 7th
The panel that opened of the Summit on June 7th was moderated by self advocate Marco Quevedo, from FEPAPDEM, II’s member in Ecuador.
Marco is the president of the new organization of self advocates, AECADI, Asociacion Ecuatoriana de Autogestores con discapacidad Intelectual.
Jose Miguel de Arteaga, moderated the closing panel. He is a member of AECADI.
Luis Gabriel Villareal was invited to be a panelist at the Summit. When he declined Jaime Cruz was also invited, but declined the invitation too. Both were going to COSP in New York
Twelve Latino American and Caribbean countries were represented at the Summit by OSC.
There were representatives from beyond Latino America and the Caribbean: Canada, Japan, Korea, Spain, India, Great Britain, Germany and United States.

Governments of Uruguay, Brasil, Paraguay, Ecuador, Spain, UK (DFID), India, Japan sent representatives.

There were representatives from BID, Bridging the Gap and JICA, and of many UN Agencies.

Three members of the Washington Group offered a Side event workshop on statistics.

**Side events** (with participation of Asociacion Azul)

1. **OPDF from the Argentina Provinces.** The group of Argentine OPDF advocated strongly asking the Argentine Government to found the participation of people from the 24 argentine provinces. This request was not even accepted by the Government, but after exerting strong advocacy strategies, with the support of RIADIS, more than 75 persons with disabilities and families could be present at the summit, founded by a grant from BID through the Argentina Government. These people met in a side event to discuss barriers faced in each province and strategies used, as well as explore the possibilities of acting articulating different disabilities and different regions in a permanent national platform.

2. **Independent Living.** This side event was organized by Asociación Azul. It had the contributions of:
   - **Begonia Grau,** Director of Services for people with disabilities in Uruguay,
   - **Leonardo Ruiz,** director of the Council on disability of the City of Buenos Aires, who presented programs for independent living run by their offices.
   - **Asociación Azul** presented:
     - **Julián Vazquez**
       - Training for Personal Assistants
       - Project of law on Personal Assistance in provincial Parliament
   - **Graciela Aguirre, Isabel Romero** and **Josefa Morales,** three ladies that live in the community, work and have an independent life presented their experiences as part of a program of externation for women with intellectual disabilities living in a big institution of the province of Buenos Aires.

   **Carlos Barrantes** Manager of the Center for Independent Living Morpho, from Costa Rica, presented this program supported by JICA and the Japanese Government.

   This side event was relevant because it has set the starting point for a movement in Latinoamerica, towards a regional goal on Independent living, including people with intellectual disabilities, speech impairments and health issues and complex need of support so that nobody is left behind.

Please, find the **Statement of the Civil Society** here: