

## **Accompanying Note to the AIIC-ESA Supplementary Agreement**

### **concerning technical, practical and organisational guidelines to be considered for Remote Simultaneous Interpretation (RSI)**

This Accompanying Note is established between the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) and the European Space Agency (ESA), in accordance with Section 6.5 of the Supplementary Agreement which entered into force on the date on the signature page below.

The purpose of this Accompanying Note is to guide AIIC and ESA, as organiser of meetings with RSI, in the implementation of technical, practical and organisational aspects to be considered for RSI, within the limit of available standard technical arrangements and reasonable practices. Arrangements to be undertaken by ESA, in particular technical arrangements, are considered as met within the limits set out in this note.

#### **I – Technical guidelines**

##### ***Platforms and headsets***

Acoustic shock or peak load protection  
Constant noise exposure protection

ISO-compliant USB headsets with an integrated microphone and in-built acoustic echo cancelling (for soft consoles) will be provided to interpreters.

##### ***Consoles***

Two types of consoles can be used:

- (i) Hard consoles connected to the RSI platform, also referred to as “hybrid RSI”, are the preferred option.
- (ii) Soft consoles (fallback solution) which will include:
  - a microphone on/off button;
  - a mute/cough button;
  - outgoing and incoming channels (for relay interpretation);
  - a volume control.

Add-on possible options for soft consoles:

- volume control knob;
- bass/treble control;
- any add-on to reduce use of mouse.

## **Screens**

Ergonomically positioned large screen in the interpreter's line of vision (preferred solution).

Reasonably sized screen(s) inside the interpreting booths (fallback solution). Position will be adjustable.

## **Sound and image quality**

In case of fluctuations in sound and image (blurring or freezing) or poor synchronisation between the two, priority should be given to sound quality.

## **Video feeds/inputs**

The video feeds/inputs will include a panoramic or partial view of the meeting room:

- close-up view of the active speaker and/or close-up view of the chair/moderator;
- display of documents to replicate what is shown in the meeting room.

## **II – Practical guidelines**

### **Technical support**

Technical support will be provided to assist interpreters in case of technical problems with the platform.

### **Pre-meeting set-up**

The system/connection will be tested with the interpreters 30 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to start.

### **Training/technical briefing**

Interpreters will receive training prior to the first use of a given platform.

### **Team communication**

Interpreters will have the possibility of communicating with their team partners throughout the meeting.

### **III – Recommendations to remote participants**

#### ***Headphones and microphones***

In order to optimise sound quality, participants should use quality headphones with an integrated microphone, plugged into their device.

Microphones should be muted when not speaking.

Using the computer's in-built loudspeaker and microphone system will cause a feedback loop, and should therefore be avoided.

#### ***Ambient noise interference***

Participants should choose a quiet place from which to connect to the meeting, in order to avoid interference from the outside environment.

Ambient noise interference causes additional hearing stress to the interpreters and impinges upon their ability to provide quality interpretation, and should therefore be avoided wherever possible.

Participants should turn off all sound notifications (skype, WhatsApp ,emails, etc) while attending virtual meetings.

#### ***Connection stability***

In the interest of uninterrupted two-way communication, and to avoid audio buffering and video freezing wherever possible participants should ensure that they are using the most stable network connection available to them (LAN or Wifi).

#### ***Scripted speeches***

Participants should wherever possible submit scripted speeches in advance to the interpreters, via the organiser of the meeting.

Participants should avoid reading from documentation, wherever possible.

### **IV – Guidelines for organiser of the meeting**

#### ***Briefing***

Briefing for speakers should include:

- recommendations to remote participants as detailed in Section III above;

- reminder that sufficient time should be granted between each intervention to allow the interpreters to finish sentences and switch channels, where appropriate.

### ***Distribution of documents***

The organiser of the meeting should make available documents in advance of the meeting. Paper copies should be distributed to interpreters present where an interpretation hub is to be set up..

### ***Communication***

The designated interpretation team leader will have the possibility of communicating with the organiser of the meeting throughout the meeting.

### ***Authorisation to stop interpretation***

The designated interpretation team leader can decide to stop interpretation during the meeting when technical requirements are not met and do not allow for quality interpretation. In addition individual interpreters may, for the same reasons, decide to interrupt interpretation of a given speaker or intervention.

### ***Disclaimer***

A disclaimer will be added to the web streamed and/or archived recording stating that interpretation is intended to facilitate communication and does not constitute an authentic record of the event.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the AIIC and ESA have caused their duly authorised representatives to sign two originals of this Accompanying Note, in the English language.

Done in Geneva

On

For the International Association of  
Conference Interpreters,

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Done in

On

For the European Space Agency,

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Uros Peterc  
*President*

Johann-Dietrich Wörner  
*Director General*