**Iran Autism Association’s comment on Article 27 of CRPD**

Human rights in different economic, social, cultural, civil, and political levels have been addressed in various conventions such as the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)," "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)," "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)" and other international relevant documents. All human rights are interrelated; hence violating each right leads to violating other rights. In the case of persons with disabilities, this is much more important.

One of the significant actions in realizing the rights of persons with disabilities is approving the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)" that introduces the social model for persons with disabilities in a different field such as the right to life (art 10), access to justice (art 13), education (art 24), health (art 25), habilitation and rehabilitation (art 26), work and employment (art 27), an adequate standard of living and social protection (art 28), etc. Mentioned rights are fundamental, and persons with disabilities should benefit from all rights in society. But in terms of work and employment, UDHR (art 23) points that every individual has the right to work. Also, article 27 of CRPD addressed the need to recognize the rights of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others to meet their basic needs, including food and shelter, and realize full participation in society. We strongly believe that employment is fundamental for persons with disabilities to maintain a decent standard of living for themselves and their families and is an essential factor influencing their opportunities to participate fully in society. When a person with a disability is unable to work and cannot gain income, other rights can be violated. They cannot support their families, attain an adequate standard of living, and not benefit from the right to education and health. Regarding the importance of the right of work for persons with disabilities in CRPD, some points are worth noting to make these rights more practical:

1. 27 (a) emphasized prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability at the workplace. In this regard, there are so many stereotypes on people with disabilities that they are not intelligent, cannot learn, and are not able to succeed in a job due to their particular condition. These prejudices among many employers, co-workers, and the general public exclude persons with disabilities from the workplace. So many barriers are caused by society rather than by a person's disability. Regarding the importance of awareness-raising addressed in article 8 of CRPD, we recommend that states establish clear rules for creating an inclusive workspace and supporting all individuals despite differences. Also, we propose that governmental and non-governmental entities follow a program to raise awareness in different parts of society, including workplaces. Apart from mental and physical situations, all human beings have weaknesses, strengths, abilities, and talents, so the right to work should not be deprived due to disability. In this regard conducting ongoing awareness-raising campaigns and programs can be effective. These awareness-raising programs can be done through social media, newspapers, magazines, workshops, street talk, etc.
2. In the next step, while the person with a disability includes at the workplace, she/he needs special conditions to feel comfortable and calm. For example, individuals with autism cannot endure intense light or voice. So, the light should be regulated and should provide them with a quiet environment. These are simple changes that bring peace for persons with autism. We recommend that a special committee supervise the environmental situation until the appropriate physical condition is realized. Article 27 (b) (safe and healthy working conditions) is fulfilled in this regard.

3- In order to people with disabilities to get used to the work environment easily and coordinate with other team members, it is necessary for persons with disabilities to have adequate access to general technical and vocational guidance programs. This vital issue is mentioned in article 27 (d). With the collaboration of NGOs and other organizations active in the field of disability, we recommend that particular research be conducted about which areas and skills each person with a disability is more talented and more likely to succeed. For example, individuals with autism are more likely to succeed in jobs that require high concentration, such as IT. Therefore, by identifying abilities and talents, it is possible to conduct persons with disabilities to fields appropriate to their circumstances from their childhood.

In many cases, when people with disabilities enter a new workplace, she/he needs additional training to adapt better. They may require a coach to cope with the conditions and requirements of the workplace. Therefore, the ongoing connection between employers and organizations in the field of disability is crucial. These organizations can introduce persons with disabilities to employers and guide them for additional training. Employers should accept that the recruitment and work process is not linear and may differ from person to person. In this regard and for creating an inclusive workplace, we need to take a new look and consider appropriate requirements for including individuals with disabilities.

Another essential element of training at the workplace is holding a training course for staff and colleagues. We believe that training for other members of organizations is as crucial as training for persons with disabilities. Sometimes we don't know how to behave with persons with disabilities, we cannot understand their needs, and our confusion and unawareness leads to misunderstanding or pity. For example, individuals with autism, due to sensory problems, prefer not to touch even in the shape of shaking hands; they may experience restlessness and anxiety. If we as colleagues know how to treat, it can help them experience calmness at the workplace. So, we recommend that training workshops hold for other staff for better understanding.

Overall, disability is full of challenges. Understanding them and recognizing their rights as citizens can help them cope better with their problems.