**Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**Israel's intervention**

**24.3.2021**

Mister Chairman,

I wish to start by welcoming Miss Odelia Fitussi to her first session of the CRPD. Israel is very proud to have her as the first Israeli Member of the Committee, and we wish her success in her work.

Israel wishes to thank the Committee for giving Member States the opportunity to engage on such an important subject through the dialogue today and through the Committee work on the Draft General Comment on Article 27.

Israel believes that the right to employment goes far beyond earning a salary and living in dignity. Employment enables persons to contribute to society and strive toward self-fulfillment throughout life. Inclusive workplaces can reduce stigmas, change attitudes and promote inclusion and full participation in all areas of life.

Israel exerts many efforts and invests resources to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities in different aspects, including by promoting equal access to work.

In that regards, Israel would like to share with the Committee some of its best practices, in line with its submission to the Committee.

The prohibition to discriminate against persons with disabilities, by reason of the disability, has existed in Israeli legislation since 1998 in the *Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities Law*. Such discrimination is prohibited in hiring, as well as in employment conditions including payment, promotion, vocational training or continuing education and dismissal.

It is important to note that according to the referred law, the definition of discrimination includes failure to make adjustments required by virtue of the special needs of a person with disability, that facilitate his or her employment, according to the provisions of the law.

In order to encourage employers to make such adjustments and to ease the financial burden they entail, employers could receive, under specific regulations, government participation in funding of adjustments. There is also a procedure for lending accommodation equipment to employers when an employee with disabilities starts work, and until they are permanently employed.

Furthermore, according to the law, a person who suffered from discrimination in employment is entitled to the protection of the Law, and may sue in the labor courts independently, or be represented by the representative employee's organization at the workplace. He can also receive legal aid from the Commission for Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities, or by a non-governmental organization promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

In addition, since 2014, employers are required to promote appropriate representation for persons with disabilities in their workplace, and where there are more than 100 employees, employers are required to appoint an officer charged with promoting the employment of persons with disabilities in the workplace. Since 2017, such an obligation includes public service employers with 25 or more employees.

Israel has many more good practices, but also still faces many challenges in order to achieve full equality. Israel takes pride in its achievements but continues to learn, advance and initiate. It is our strong belief that engagement with persons with disabilities is crucial for its continued advancement, and therefore wishes again to thank the Committee for this opportunity.

Thank you.