**Reply of the Republic of Slovenia with regard to the Human Rights Council resolution 37/22 – implementation of Article 8 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**

**Questions no 1, 4, 5)**

Slovenia is aware that global commitment to combat discrimination and awareness-raising, addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion must stay on top of the political agenda and should be a priority in every single member state. With various governmental actions and measures, our national policies need to reach persons with disabilities.

Mainly it should be pointed out that in the Republic of Slovenia the Convention was translated in all accessible formats, to give opportunity to all persons with disabilities (the blind and partially sighted, deaf and hard of hearing, and to persons with intellectual disabilities) to be informed about it and is published at the ministry web side.

To raise awareness and provide information on legislation in the field of the protection of persons with disabilities, the Republic of Slovenia published in 2015 the Guide to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which was prepared within the scope of the “Promoting equality and combating discrimination of persons with disabilities – We can do it” project. The first such guide was printed in 2007, but as legislation and the rights of persons with disabilities changed through the years, we published a new one. Due to adjusted techniques, the Guide is also available to the blind and partially sighted, deaf and hard of hearing, and to persons with intellectual disabilities, and published on websites.

The rights of persons with disabilities in Slovenia are not guaranteed under a single umbrella act, but under sector-specific legislation, under different acts regulating the various rights of disabled persons in different areas:

- Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act;

- Protection against Discrimination Act,

- Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities 2014–202.

Awareness-raising and combating discrimination is one of the key objectives of persons with disabilities policy in Slovenia and requires a comprehensive, co-ordinated and integrated approach.

In January 2014, the Government adopted a new, second Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities 2014–2021 whose one of significant objectives is also awareness-raising. The activities carried out in the context of this Article of the Convention may be categorised as programmes, events, round table discussions, exhibitions and festivals, workshops and seminars, materials and publications, media, and other events.

In 2016, the Protection Against Discrimination Act was adopted, which determines the protection of all persons against discrimination in various fields of social life, when exercising human rights and fundamental freedoms, and when exercising rights and obligations and in other legal relationships in political, economic, social, cultural, civil or other fields. Disability is one of the personal circumstances, which is explicitly written in the act. This Act established the Advocate of the Principle of Equality as an independent national body for equality in the field of protection against discrimination. The Advocate inter alia addresses cases of discrimination and performs inspection tasks, provides independent assistance to persons discriminated against, files lawsuits and participates in judicial proceedings related to discrimination, and monitors the general situation in the Republic of Slovenia in the field of protection against discrimination.

In the framework of programmes, an important contribution to the implementation of Article 8 of the Convention was made by disability organisations implementing special social programmes that were largely funded by the Foundation for Funding Disability and Humanitarian Organisations of Slovenia (FIHO). An example of good practice that can be pointed out is the activities of the National Council of Disabled People’s Organisations of Slovenia (NSIOS) and the Association of the Disabled – Slovenia Forum, with their weekly shows broadcast by local radio stations across Slovenia. In addition, the Ministry of Health (MZ) co-financed, through public tender, regular activities of associations, institutions and private institutes and development programmes of non-profit organisations in the field of promotion and protection of health.

When actions are performed by disability organisations - DPOs, persons with disabilities are organically involved in their design, planning, implementation and evaluation and services emerged because the membership of a DPO articulated such a need. In the case of services are provided by institutions, the involvement of persons with disabilities is a little bit less pronounced. In the case of services designed and funded by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the services or funding were also developed in response to the needs of the community of persons with disabilities and their representatives DPOs are actively involved in the process.

Awareness-raising is also a part of the activities of the Slovenian University Rehabilitation Institute – Soča (URI – Soča). URI – Soča oversees the awareness-raising of employers in the context of the implementation of training and employment programmes and the provision of supported employment services and in the context of complex rehabilitation treatment of employed persons with disabilities. The Association of Slovenian Training Organisations for Persons with Special Needs (SOUS) implemented a project selected in the public tender issued by the Ministry of Education and Sport (MŠŠ) in the framework of the topic of the co-financing of professional training for experts in education and these included professional workers working with persons with special needs, teachers, childcare workers, education counsellors, and managerial staff at regular elementary and secondary schools and kindergartens.

2014 saw the commencement of the “We can do it” project to promote equality and combat discrimination of persons with disabilities, particularly in the field of employment, which concluded at the end of 2015. The objectives of the “We can do it” project were to raise the awareness of Slovenian society of the issues of disability and to better inform persons with disabilities of their rights; to make the built environment and information more accessible; to provide better opportunities for persons with disabilities to lead independent lives and their inclusion in society. The activities carried out within the scope of the project significantly contributed to better information and awareness, thus reducing discrimination in the employment of persons with disabilities, and in proceedings before state authorities and bodies of local self-government, holders of public authority and public service operators. Last but not least, the project also contributed to greater awareness and information of the entire society regarding persons with disabilities, and the respect of their human rights and dignity.”

Another example of good practice is the project "Municipality Tailored to the Needs of Persons with Disabilities", implemented by the Federation of Disabled Workers of Slovenia. The project was launched in 2003. By the end of 2018, the project had been carried out by 31 municipalities, including the two biggest urban municipalities (those of Ljubljana and Maribor). An award certificate can be granted to a municipality "whose operations take into account the diversity of needs of all its inhabitants and which deliberately develops, promotes and implements activities and measures that essentially contribute to a greater quality of personal life for all persons with disabilities and their families and creates possibilities for their social inclusion and for active participation in the social life of the municipality with the intention to exercise human rights and the rights of citizens" (Article 2 of the Rules on Obtaining the "Municipality Tailored to the Needs of Persons with Disabilities" Certificate).

**Question no 2)**

As regards legislative framework, public incitement to hatred, violence or intolerance is regulated by Article 297 of the Criminal Code (paragraph 1: »*Whoever publicly provokes or stirs up ethnic, racial, religious or other hatred, strife or intolerance, or provokes any other inequality on the basis of physical or mental deficiencies or sexual orientation, shall be punished by imprisonment of up to two years.*”).

There are numerous initiatives focusing on anti-discrimination awareness and combating hate speech, including through training and workshops of the Judicial Training Centre at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia.

Claims (actions) for compensation of violation of human rights can be submitted in accordance with civil law legislation (Obligation Code) and other relevant legislation before competent court.

According to the Slovenian Constitution, we are all equal before the law, namely there is no special statistics collecting number of persons with disabilities that are involved in judicial proceedings, neither as victims neither as perpetrators.

**Question no 3)**

An example of good (self-)regulatory practice is the Professional and Ethical Guidelines for RTV Slovenia broadcasting, which put special emphasis on attitudes towards persons with disabilities. Journalistic reporting and the portrayal of persons with disabilities in RTV Slovenia broadcasting must adhere to professional standards.

The Professional standards containing the section on people with disabilities ***12.2.* *''Portrayal of people with disabilities''* are** available through the following link: <https://stari.rtvslo.si/strani/professional-standards/17>