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**Statement by Ms. Catalina DEVANDAS-AGUILAR**

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(Spanish)

11th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

Opening remarks

“Leaving no one behind through the full implementation of the CRPD”

12 June 2018,

New York



Mr. Secretary General, Mr. President,

ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin by thanking the bureau for the invitation to participate once again in the opening of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The theme that brings us together this year sums up well a concern shared by all of us here: To leave no one behind in the implementation of the Convention.

Leaving no one behind requires paying attention to the diversity within the diversity, ensuring the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by all persons with disabilities.

This is an objective that 177 States have adopted when ratifying the Convention, but also an obligation of the United Nations System by virtue of its founding Charter.

However, we must ask ourselves: Are we prepared to not leave any person with disabilities behind?

The short answer is no.

We have made progress, but the promise of change brought by the Convention is not reaching everyone in the same way. The CRPD has made it possible to position the rights of persons with disabilities in the international and national agendas, but there are still important limitations in the formulation and implementation of public policies that respond to the demands and needs of the diversity of persons with disabilities.

The difficulties are varied and complex, including:

* difficulties in the diagnosis and delimitation of problems;
* several intervention models that need to be reconsidered;
* insufficient technical capacity of the operators;
* the lack of coherence and coordination among sectors and stakeholders;
* insufficient statistical and administrative information;
* financing and sustainability problems;
* insufficient mechanisms for measuring results; and
* lack of mechanisms to ensure participation and accountability.

In sum, there is a great demand for public interventions of better and higher quality.

Against this background, I would like to insist once again on the need to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations System to maximize its impact as a strategic partner of States in realizing the rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their inclusion in all development efforts.

Three years ago, we raised in this same space the need to consider the adoption of a System-Wide Action Plan on persons with disabilities, which could establish mechanisms, indicators and targets to strengthen the quality and coherence of actions undertaken by the system, increasing participation, transparency and accountability.

Today, Secretary General António Guterres has announced important decisions taken by its Executive Committee towards ensuring accessibility and mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities across all operations of the United Nations System, including the consideration of a policy, an action plan and an accountability mechanism.

I want to publicly acknowledge these encouraging decisions. It shows the Secretary General’s leadership and commitment to the reform of the United Nations System for making its human rights and development efforts more effective and inclusive. This is an ambitious and far-reaching proposal, which can mean a turning point in fulfilling our common goal of leaving no one behind.

I would like to call on the States to support this process, which, I have no doubt, will be beneficial for all. My mandate will actively engage and support these efforts to the maximum of our capacities. The United Nations can and should become a strategic ally to realize the rights of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Secretary General, delegates and delegates,

All of us --the United Nations, the States and persons with disabilities themselves-- have irreplaceable roles to play to make rights a reality. Only by working together we will be able to build societies that are inclusive of all people, with and without disabilities, in which each of us has the opportunity to grow, develop and contribute to our communities with dignity, autonomy and independence.

Only by working together will we fulfil our common goal of leaving no one behind.

Thank you very much.

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