**‘Armed Conflict and Disability - From Inclusive Protection to Peacebuilding’**

**Side Event**

**3rd Committee of the UN General Assembly**

**Thursday 26 October 2023**

**Organizer: United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities**

**Co-Sponsors:** Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations; United States Mission to the United Nations; Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations; Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations; Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations; Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations; Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations; United States Institute of Peace; International Disability Alliance; Human Rights Watch; Harvard Law School Project on Disability and the Nottingham International Law & Security Centre (NILSC).

***Concept Note***

***Background***

At the upcoming October session of the 3rd Committee of the UN General Assembly, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities will present [his third and final report](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a78174-peacebuilding-and-inclusion-persons-disabilities-report-special) on the broad theme of armed conflict and disability.

His avowed aim in covering conflict was to link the disability rights debate to grand challenges facing humanity. Without doubt, conflict remains one of those challenges and massively impacts persons with disabilities worldwide.

The [first thematic report](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a76146-report-rights-persons-disabilities-context-armed-conflict) of the Special Rapporteur focused on the visibility of persons with disabilities across all points on the peace/conflict continuum ranging from conflict prevention, to the conduct of hostilities, to humanitarian intervention and to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The [second report](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a77203-report-protection-rights-persons-disabilities-context-military) considered how to achieve greater inclusive protection of civilians with disabilities in the conduct of military and peacekeeping operations under international humanitarian law. And the third report outlines the positive moral agency of persons with disabilities as peacebuilders in their own countries. It exposes the untapped potential of persons with disabilities in rebuilding societies after the trauma of conflict.

***Purpose of this side event***

This side-event will reflect on the three thematic reports of the Special Rapporteur and its relevance for the future of peacebuilding. The issues raised go directly to the links between peace and security, development and human rights, and address core concern of the historic UN Security Council Resolution 2475 (2019) in terms of meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction and peacebuilding.

The side-event will provide a platform to make direct links to the related work of the UN Special Representative on children and armed conflict (Virginia Gamba) and the newly appointed UN Global Advocate for persons with disabilities in conflict and peacebuilding situations (Giles Duley).

More practically, it will also provide a reflective space to think aloud about concrete options for building on the historic UN Security Council Resolution 2475 (2019) on the protection of persons with disabilities in conflict and its linkages with other Security Council agendas including women, youth and peace and security. The untapped potential of Resolution 2475 has yet to be realised to enable all persons with disabilities to be active agents in re-building their own societies after conflict. We have many opportunities from now until June 2024 to build towards a formal commemoration or meeting in the UN Security Council, and this side event on the margins of the Third Committee is a critical step in that engagement.

***Logistics***

This event will occur on Thursday, October 26, 2023, at the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations, from 1.15 pm to 2.45 pm. Sign language interpretation and closed captioning will be provided. This is a hybrid event and online participation is possible. [Click here to register](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.office.com%2Fg%2FPDisX6s6xV&data=05%7C01%7CKoracS%40state.gov%7C00eb8ab52cd34c77b20108dbd496ce8f%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C638337516399291211%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ZNjADjI%2BiLRbG4aOWG%2FZPM6BGazRz8HO6767Da7%2BFOU%3D&reserved=0).

***Programme***

Moderator: Dr. Janet Lord

Opening Remarks

* **Ambassador Lisa Carty, U.S. Representative to ECOSOC**
* **Ambassador Alicia Buenrostro Massieu, Chargé d'affaires, a.i., Permanent Mission of Mexico to the UN**
* **Deputy Permanent Representative, Justin Fepuleai, Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the UN**

Discussion

* **Main messages from the three thematic reports of the Special Rapporteur**. Gerard Quinn.
* **Better protecting children with disabilities in armed conflict: children with disabilities as drivers of a lasting peace**. Virginia Gamba (video statement).
* **Keeping the agenda alive - The role of the new UN Global Advocate for persons with disabilities in conflict and peacebuilding situations**. Giles Duley.
* **A Precondition for a better future - Facing the past –** Prof. Linda Steele (UTS Sydney).
* **UN Security Council Resolution 2475: Unrealized Potential for the Disability-Inclusive Peace and Security Agenda -** Elham Youssefian, International Disability Alliance
* **The inclusion and contribution of persons with disabilities to peacebuilding process -** Nujeen Mustafa, Syrian refugee and disability rights activist

Q & A moderated by the Chair.

* **Elizabeth Murray, United States Institute of Peace**
* **Key Policy Recommendations for the future in the United Nations system** – William Pons.

Closing remarks:

* **Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations, Ms. Joanna Skoczek**