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**10th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**Interactive Dialogue on Implementation of the Convention between States Parties and the UN System**



**Statement by**

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**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**15 June 2017, 15:00 to 18:00**

**Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

Excellencies, colleagues and friends,

It is a great pleasure to deliver these remarks to this Conference on an issue that has been so central to our work, and to that of the broader international human rights movement for so many years now:

the dignity, power, agency and human rights of persons with disabilities.

The challenges have been many. But then too, the progress has been inspiring.

In just the past year, since this Conference last net, so much has happened.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has now achieved the stunning number of 174 ratifications and accessions.

OHCHR is pleased to see the efforts undertaken by States parties to increase the number of ratifications through various peer strategies, including the Universal Periodic Review in the Human Rights Council.

We encourage these practices as invaluable to our goal of reaching universal ratification.

At the same time, increased efforts are necessary to bring the CRPD’s optional protocol up to the same level of ratification[[1]](#footnote-1).

While the Geneva-based human rights mechanisms supported by OHCHR are fully-engaged, we also look forward to increased collaboration with States parties to the CRPD here in New York, not least to ensure that all processes connected to the 2030 Agenda involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations as experts in the field.

I also want to offer OHCHR’s collaboration to support the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the thematic discussions connected to the 2030 Agenda, including review processes under the High Level Political Forum.

Chair, we are on the verge of the 2020 round of national censuses.

In accordance with the data revolution proposed by the 2030 Agenda and its call for disaggregation by disability, OHCHR, together with a number of development organizations, UN agencies, and civil society partners, has expressed the need to better use the tools currently available for data disaggregation at the census and survey levels.

During the last meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators in Ottawa, we recommended the use of the short set of questions developed by the Washington Group and the UNICEF/Washington Group module on Child Functioning.

Both instruments can be easily and cost-effectively inserted in all national data collection efforts. They are currently the only available tools tested and proven to deliver comparable data across regions.

We thus urge States parties to seize the 2020 round as an opportunity to establish the statistical baseline for measuring the implementation disability goals and targets under the SDGs, as well as to advance their obligations under article 31 of the CRPD on statistics and data collection.

Excellencies, in November 2016 OHCHR initiated a project, with generous funding from the European Union, to develop human rights indicators for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as policy guidelines connecting the Sustainable Development Goals with human rights obligations under this treaty.

We are convinced that these tools will be of great value for states and their partners, as they will facilitate aligned CRPD implementation with international commitments subscribed to under the 2030 Agenda.

And let me recognise the commitments made by Ethiopia, Jordan, Nepal, Moldova and Paraguay to contribute to this work.

By this time next year, we expect to have the first results of this work, which we will share with you at the next Conference of States Parties.

Colleagues,

This year’s thematic focus of the Human Rights Council in the annual debate on the rights of persons with disabilities was on equality and non-discrimination.

OHCHR’s annual study was dedicated to this issue.

Allow me to invite all States parties to make use of the study to guide relevant development of policies and law reform.

In particular, this study provides a comparative analysis of national level practices on reasonable accommodation, as well as the legal frameworks in place to support them.

Currently, OHCHR is working on its next annual study, this time on the right of access to justice, which will be submitted to the Human Rights Council for the 2018 March session.

As always, we would welcome contributions to the study from all states and other partners.

Excellencies,

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is, in many ways, a ground breaking human rights body with much to be proud of.

But to claim the banner of a truly 21st Century human rights body, we must first make every effort to increase regional and gender balance among the expert members of the Committee.

Thus, OHCHR would like to strongly encourage States parties to urgently address the current gender imbalance within the Committee by proposing a majority of women candidates to next year’s elections.

Ladies and gentlemen, during the past three days, the international community has been discussing a fundamental principle of the human rights-based approach to disability:

-participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the implementation of the Convention.

I would like to commend the efforts of the President and the Vice Presidents of the Conference of States Parties, to increase the involvement of persons with disabilities in its preparations, by reflecting their perspectives in background papers to the panels and by enabling their contribution to the appointment of panellists with disabilities.

I would also like to encourage them to institutionalize these good practices through adopting rules on the participation of persons with disabilities in this context.

And, today, we also appeal to member states to commit to actively including persons with disabilities in the process of negotiations toward the adoption of a *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, and in the *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework*.

We know that persons with disabilities and their families are over-represented among those on the move, particularly among those forcibly displaced by conflict and disaster.

The United Nations must therefore not fail this population—must not leave them behind—by ignoring their crucial voice, and their right to participate on an equal basis with others.

I thank you.

1. OP has 92 ratifications (22/5/17) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)