

STATEMENT

*BY MS. TATEV STEPANYAN, DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA,*

*AT 16TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ON “HARMONIZING NATIONAL
POLICIES AND STRATEGIES WITH THE CRPD: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES”*

Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my honor to address the 16th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Government of Armenia pays special importance to the CRPD and has assumed profound reforms in disability sector.

The Republic of Armenia has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention in 2022.

In 2021, the laws "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" and "On the Assessment of Person's Functionality" were adopted, by which Armenia at the legislative level rejected the only medical approach to disability strengthening its social and human rights approach.

In particular, in accordance with the Law "On Assessment of Person's Functionality" major significance is given to social factors, such as the person's occupation and participation, as well as environmental obstacles when assessing disability.

The Law "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" complements the above-mentioned law by establishing requirements that persons with disabilities must be provided with equal opportunities and accessible conditions for their full social inclusion. Based on this Law, a number of legal acts were adopted to create basis for the development of new services in Armenia.

In particular, in 2024 the Government of Armenia is planning to introduce the service of personal assistant, which is now being piloted. By another bylaw employers and heads of educational institutions are obliged to provide reasonable accommodations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The evolving digital transformations provide both challenges and opportunities to us.

In this regard, let me refer to the “Guide to promotion of accessibility of information and communication, including web content, and raising awareness for facilitation of the social inclusion of people with disabilities”.

Excellences,

As a result of decades long armed conflict Nagorno-Karabakh holds proportionally high degree of disabled persons including among civilians. As result of the ongoing blockade of Nagorno Karabakh by Azerbaijan, around 120.000 people, including more than 9.000 persons with disabilities face grave human rights violations.

The closure of the Lachin corridor, the lifeline road connecting Nagorno Karabakh to Armenia, has led to a series of human rights violations and has a disproportionately negative impact on persons with disabilities.

The unimpeded humanitarian access and freedom of movement along the Lachin corridor, in both directions, must be restored. I call on humanitarian actors and human rights organizations to provide adequate assistance to people with disabilities in Nagorno Karabakh and ensure the UN access on the ground.

We believe that strong commitment to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, the values and approaches enshrined in the Convention reaffirmed by this Conference will dominate around the world, providing more fair, secure, inclusive and prosperous environment.

Thank you.