



DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

Commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3 December 2024

THEME

Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities

for an inclusive and sustainable future

BACKGROUND

Leadership of persons with disabilities

The leadership of persons with disabilities is epitomised by the global disability rights movement's slogan "nothing about us without us". It connotes the basic requirements of participation, representation and inclusion and calls for persons with disabilities to actively shape the conditions of their lives.

One of the priorities of the global disability agenda is to advance the agency and leadership of persons with disabilities. In the past decades, persons with disabilities and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) have already championed for the changes in their communities, and have been leading many of the community-led initiatives not only to advance their own rights, and wellbeing but also promoting inclusive development for instance enabling universal access to basic services by all; they have done so by taking both targeted and mainstreaming approaches

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to disability inclusion through, among others, consultation, data collection and analysis, and support with advocacy and accountability efforts.

Global leadership: Breakthroughs achieved

The global leadership of persons with disabilities in multi-lateral and intergovernmental processes and frameworks to achieve human rights, peace and development, has led to such breakthrough achievements as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and UNSC Resolution 2475.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) stands as a landmark treaty incorporating development objectives for persons with disabilities in the international human rights frameworks. The drafting process of the CRPD prominently featured extensive leadership and engagement of the global disability community, along with the mobilization of broad networks of civil society, working side-by-side with the intergovernmental community. This process is widely recognized as one of the most significant in the realm of human rights treaties, with individuals with disabilities worldwide, including from the Global South, assuming pivotal leadership roles.

Building upon the United Nations' longstanding commitment to inclusive society and development and the normative force of the CRPD, the outcomes of the 2015 Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and its follow ups have underscored the leadership of persons with disabilities as a central issue in crisis management. Most recently, bringing this prominent leadership of persons with disabilities to the international humanitarian community, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2475 represents a momentous milestone as the first instance in which the Security Council has specifically addressed the situation and protection of individuals with disabilities in peace and security.

This year, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled “Inclusive development for and with persons with disabilities”, calling upon Member States, the UN system and other partners to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the CRPD, through addressing the disability-inclusive response to the challenges facing the world while mainstreaming the rights, well-being and perspectives of persons with disabilities. The resolution specifically focuses on promoting the participation and perspectives of persons with disabilities and continues to advance disability inclusion across the pillars of the UN's work, with key components to render the disability inclusion a central issue in the global agenda.

Opening the corridors of power: opportunities for leadership of persons with disabilities

The observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024 (IDPD 2024) takes place against the backdrop of pivotal global developments, most recently the Summit for the Future. The Pact for the Future, alongside the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration for Future

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Generations, aim to reinvigorate the multilateral system, renew commitments under the 2030 Agenda and transform global governance to better meet the challenges of today to safeguard a resilient future. These frameworks are aligned with inclusive and sustainable development goals and present opportunities to strengthen disability rights. Notably, there are several cross-cutting areas where concrete actions Member States have committed to, promoting the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities, including in the areas of armed conflict; science, technology and innovation; young people and social inclusion and integration; youth participation; and accessibility and disability inclusion within the UN system.

Likewise, the upcoming Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025 offers another key moment to address gaps and recommit to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action and its implementation, as well as give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Looking forward to 2025, the IDPD 2024 presents an opportunity to amplify the role of persons with disabilities in reinforcing the social pillar of sustainable development and underscoring that economic growth, while essential, is not sufficient on its own to address the deep-rooted and structural inequalities that persist.

These key global Summits will complement one another in providing a continuous roadmap toward disability-inclusive and sustainable peace and development. By emphasising this complementarity, the IDPD 2024 aims to underscore the importance of leveraging the leadership of persons with disabilities to ensure disability-inclusive and sustainable peace and development for all.

COMMEMORATION

Date: Tuesday 3 December 2024, 10:00am, UNHQ New York.

Format: In-person.

The commemorative event to be held at the UN Headquarters in New York to mark this year's IDPD will consist of an in-person opening segment and a virtual panel. The opening segment will provide a policy overview of the global disability agenda over the past year, as well as look forward to key global policy milestones ahead. The overview will encompass developments and achievements following the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (17th session), the 79th session of the General Assembly and the Summit of the Future, as well as discuss the upcoming Second World Summit for Social Development (2025) and ongoing efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for, with and by persons with disabilities.

PANEL DISCUSSION AND PROPOSED DISCUSSION POINTS

Format: Virtual.

The panel discussion, following the opening segment, will be organised in a virtual format, engaging experts, advocates and leaders in the global disability rights movement and highlighting emerging trends and opportunities for amplifying the voices, agency and action of persons with disabilities in key areas related to disability-inclusive and sustainable peace and development.

The following discussion points will structure the panel discussion:

- (i) The upcoming Second World Summit for Social Development, scheduled to take place in 2025, aims to accelerate progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda, as well as take stock of achievements and progress made since the first World Summit in 1995. Crucially, this global forum presents opportunities for persons with disabilities to advocate for inclusive and sustainable social development for all.
- (ii) Marking 5 years since its adoption, UNSC Resolution 2475 has built on the foundations of the CRPD and laid the groundwork for further developments in the field of international peace and security. Persons with disabilities have been key contributors to this development in international law and policy furthering the protection and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the context of peace and security.
- (iii) The current climate crisis is affecting people and planet as a whole. Recent global climate change conferences (COP) have demonstrated a growing advocacy for disability inclusion and the rights of persons with disabilities, including particularly of youth with disabilities, in the climate change agenda. The promise of young persons with disabilities must be urgently harnessed in order to achieve sustainable peace and development, including through inclusive education as a tool to support and foster the leadership of young persons with disabilities to advocate for the issues that are most important to them.

