

General Statement of the Federal Government of Germany on the occasion of the 16th Conference of State Parties on the Convention of the Rights for Persons with Disabilities delivered by the Head of the German Delegation, Dr Annette Tabbara, Director General at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 13 June 2023

Chairperson,

Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the current government programme, we have committed ourselves to ensuring accessibility in Germany in all areas of public and private life. This is very ambitious, going further than any previous government programme.

Our goal is to create an accessible, people-centric social environment. Another major goal is to make the labour market even more inclusive. Let me say something about both these issues.

Having said that it was coming at the last Conference of States Parties, I am happy to say that we launched the "Federal Accessibility Initiative - Germany is becoming accessible" in November.

We want to make progress with accessibility in areas of life that people with disabilities consider most important.

The topics we are focussing on are: mobility, housing, health and digital technologies.

We want to make progress with accessible healthcare, for example, creating a plan of action for a diverse, inclusive and accessible healthcare system.

We also intend to build more affordable accessible housing and provide accessible transport for both long-distance and local journeys. We are also planning to introduce a statutory obligation for private providers of goods and services to ensure accessibility or at least make reasonable accommodations.

We already have guaranteed access for people with disabilities and their assistance dogs to facilities open to the general public.

We have taken a big step with the Act to Promote an Inclusive Labour Market: Starting in 2024, companies will have to pay a rather high compensatory levy if they do not employ any persons with disabilities.

We will also take measures to reduce the number of people entering workshops for people with disabilities and to increase the number of those moving from those workshops to the general labour market.

Alongside this, we are working with the social partners and the integration offices on an "inclusion alliance" to promote the employment of people with disabilities.

However, Germany also has its eye on issues beyond its borders. I am very pleased that together with the Kingdom of Jordan Germany will be hosting the next Global Disability Summit in Berlin in April 2025 in cooperation with the International Disability Alliance.

In just a few days, Berlin will be the focus of international attention. The opening ceremony of the Special Olympic World Games will take place on 17 June. We are all looking forward to the event very much.

Our constructive dialogue with the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will be in August this year. We see the Concluding Observations as important recommendations that will shape Germany's future policies on inclusion.

Many actors and much patience are necessary to achieve an inclusive society.

I firmly believe, though, that an inclusive society is a better society.

Thank you for your attention.