

**General Debate Statement of Minister of State with Responsibility for
Disability, Anne Rabbitte**

**16th Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities
13-15 June 2023**

Dear President, Secretary General, excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues,

I am delighted to be able to address this year's Conference of State Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I am the Irish Minister of State with responsibility for Disability and for those who might not be able to physically see me, I am wearing a navy blazer, a white blouse and I have a pearl necklace around my neck. I also have glasses on my head.

The theme of this year's conference invites us to consider ways in which we can look to harmonize our national policies and strategies with the CRPD, placing a particular emphasis on reflecting on achievements but also identifying challenges associated with the continued implementation of the Convention.

For our part in Ireland, we continue to realise our commitments under the Convention. Domestically, we are reviewing our disability health services plans, we recently changed our laws on decision-making capacity, we have doubled the statutory target for employing people with disabilities in the public service, and we are reviewing our equality legislation and our laws on educational requirements for persons with disabilities. Around the world, we continue to advocate for, and with, people with disabilities.

In terms of strategies, Ireland's National Disability Inclusion Strategy concluded at the end of 2022. This strategy saw many successes and brought about systemic change in multiple respects. Its achievements will be built upon in a successor strategy, which is being developed this year.

The priorities pursued under the new disability strategy will be developed collaboratively across Government and with people with disabilities and their representative organisations. The sub-themes discussed at COSP this year are critical enablers of progress for us in this regard.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my thanks for the opportunity to speak to you all today. Ireland's delegation looks forward to sharing our experiences and learning from those of others at what I am sure will be an engaging and informative Conference.