

**Statement by H.E. Ms Evika Siliņa,  
Minister for Welfare of the Republic of Latvia**

President! Excellencies!

Distinguished delegates!

Latvia is honoured to be among State Parties where humanity, dignity and equality are seriously taken values. Respect for these values is vital globally and nationally – in planning and implementing policy measures to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.

Latvia has set a clear shift in the development of disability policy – from a medical model to a human rights-based approach. It emphasizes the active involvement of a person in public processes and living an independent life.

The overarching goal of disability policy in Latvia is in line with the Convention’s objective – to promote, protect and ensure that persons with disabilities can fully and equally enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, to promote respect for human dignity and take measures to reduce the consequences of disability.

Nonetheless, implementing the Convention and harmonizing national policies is a continuous process. New commitments are necessary to adapt to changing requirements and challenges, such as digital transformations. Our shared goal is to create a community where everyone feels included and can grow and develop.

Latvia fully supports the current session’s themes – equal access to sexual and reproductive health services, digital accessibility for persons with disabilities, and reaching under-represented groups. Addressing these shared challenges and exchanging good practices are vital for meaningful improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities across the world.

*The 16th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (COSPI6)  
“Harmonizing national policies and strategies with the CRPD:  
achievements and challenges”  
New York, 13 -15 June 2023*

Latvia has paid a lot of attention to raising public awareness and support for the rights of persons with disabilities. Latvia invests significant work to promote the accessibility of built environment, products and services to ensure that accessibility for persons with disabilities is not a special issue but everyday practice.

Referring to Russia’s war in Ukraine and its devastating impact on the most vulnerable groups, Latvia provides targeted assistance to Ukrainian citizens with disabilities – refugees and the war-injured, considering as much as possible their individual needs.

Dear participants!

We are committed to continuing all the activities that are necessary to build an understanding that support measures for people with disabilities, accepting diversity, ensuring equal opportunities, promoting social innovations and being ready for the demands of modern society is a mutual gain for all.

Thank you!