



## **SOUTH AFRICAN COUNTRY STATEMENT**

**Conference of States Parties**

**to the**

**Convention on the Rights of Persons of Disabilities**

**17<sup>th</sup> Session**

**NEW YORK**

**11 to 14 June 2024**

Thank you Chairperson,

Honourable delegates,

As we move towards the Summit of the Future, it is imperative that we re-evaluate our approach to disability inclusion in the global landscape. In doing so, we must recognise the intersectionality of disability with technology, humanitarian emergencies, decent work, and sustainable livelihoods.

Firstly, technology has the power to revolutionise the lives of persons with disabilities. However, access to these advancements remains unequal, perpetuating the digital divides. We must prioritise the development and implementation of inclusive technologies that empower individuals of all abilities, ensuring equal access to education, employment, and social participation.

Secondly, humanitarian emergencies disproportionately affect persons with disabilities, exacerbating existing inequalities. As we navigate crises, we must prioritise inclusive emergency responses that address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities, ensuring access to essential services, assistive devices, and psychosocial support.

Thirdly, decent work is a fundamental right that must be extended to all, particularly persons with disabilities. Yet, they continue to face barriers in accessing employment opportunities, facing discrimination and limited accommodations. We must promote inclusive labour policies, provide skills training, and foster supportive workplace environments that enable persons with disabilities to fully participate in the workforce.

Lastly, sustainable livelihoods are integral to ensuring long-term well-being and independence for persons with disabilities. By promoting entrepreneurship, vocational training, and access to financial resources, we can empower individuals to build resilient livelihoods that contribute to both their personal fulfilment and the economic prosperity of their communities.

As we chart the course for the future, let us commit to a paradigm shift in our approach to disability inclusion—one that is grounded in principles of equity, accessibility, and empowerment. By harnessing the transformative potential of technology, addressing the unique challenges posed by humanitarian emergencies, promoting inclusive employment opportunities, and fostering sustainable livelihoods, we can create a world where all individuals, regardless of ability, can thrive and contribute to a more just and inclusive society.

In conclusion, let us seize this moment to reaffirm our commitment to disability inclusion and pave the way for a future where every individual has the opportunity to realize their full potential. Together, we can build a more inclusive world for generations to come.

I thank you.