



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**STATEMENT BY MRS. CELIA NABETA, CHARGE D’AFFAIRES A.I,
PERMANENT MISSION OF UGANDA TO THE UN**

**AT THE 16TH CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES,
NEW YORK, 13 – 15 JUNE, 2023**

Madam Vice-President,

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I am honoured to address all state parties present at this 16th Session of the Conference of State parties to the CRPD.
2. Uganda's commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol has been unwavering. Since ratifying it on 25th September 2008, we have strived to ensure that persons with disabilities are granted the same rights and privileges as all other citizens.
3. The CRPD has provided us with a broad framework to develop legislation, policies, and programs that aim to improve the lives of persons with disabilities. In this regard, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2020 in Uganda has adopted a comprehensive definition of disability, including physical, mental, sensory impairments, and environmental barriers that limit individuals' participation in society on an equal basis with others.
4. It is estimated that 12.4% of Uganda's population has a disability, highlighting the significance of mainstreaming disability across all government programs. Inclusion of persons with disabilities in programming and governance has become a priority, ensuring their meaningful participation and decision-making processes.

Madam Vice-President,

5. Our journey to domesticate the Convention has been progressive. We repealed the outdated Persons with Disabilities Act 2006, which did not align with the UNCRPD, and replaced it with the comprehensive Persons with Disabilities Act 2020, which fully integrates the provisions of the CRPD.

6. To further align our policies, the Government of Uganda has formulated the Revised National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2022. This policy serves as a framework to deliver essential services to persons with disabilities and strengthen their rights.
7. Recognizing the importance of sexual and reproductive health for persons with disabilities, especially women and girls, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2020 guarantees their right to enjoy family life and have intimate relationships. However, we are saddened by the continued instances of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence targeting women and girls with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual disabilities. To combat this, the Government, in collaboration with UNFPA and UNICEF, has established the National Gender-Based Violence call center (116), enabling communities to report cases and provide support to the victims.
8. We also understand the significance of access to information and digitalization for persons with disabilities. Consequently, we have formulated the National Disability and ICT Policy to enhance their access to information and technology.
9. In our pursuit of full inclusion, the Persons with Disabilities Act now recognizes and includes specific categories, such as persons with albinism, little people, and emerging congenital disabilities. This expansion allows for tailored interventions to address their unique needs.
10. In conclusion, the Government of Uganda reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of the CRPD and to continue ensuring accessible services for persons with disabilities so as not to leave anyone behind.

Thank you.