



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**STATEMENT BY HON. ASAMO HELLEN GRACE,
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DISABILITY AFFAIRS AT THE
17TH CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES**

11TH – 13TH JUNE 2024

President of the Conference

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I take this honour to convey my appreciation to you the President, the Organising committee and delegates who have graced this 17th session of the conference of state parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Mr President, before I focus on the three Thematic areas of this year's conference, allow me highlight a few CRPD milestones by the Government of Uganda.

- a) Strategic legal reforms on disability inclusion. These include the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2020 which domesticated most of the of CRPD provisions, among other legal reforms.
- b) In terms of access to education, apart from promotion of inclusive education; a total of 113 special schools of learners with special needs are now fully supported by Government to offer special needs education to learners with disabilities.
- c) In terms of inclusive Health, Government of Uganda in 2023, was among the first countries in Africa, to approve Ministry of Health staff structure that include sign language interpreters in health facilities.

Mr. President and Excellencies,

The 3 focus areas of this conference are critical in the lives of Persons with Disabilities across the Globe.

The conference first thematic area on cooperation for technology and inclusive future is critical for the Government of Uganda. For instance, according to Uganda Communication Commission report of 2018, access to laptops by Persons with Disabilities was estimated at 3.9%.

The second thematic area on Inclusive Humanitarian Emergencies is equally fundamental in disability programming for Uganda. According to UN Humanitarian Commission for Refugees report of 2022, Uganda hosts over 1.6 million Refugees and asylum seekers. The data from the agency (UNHCR) indicated that 132,100 (8%) of Refugees are living with a disability.

The third thematic area of decent work and inclusive livelihoods also aligns well with Uganda's realities. According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics report of 2019, only 1.3% of Persons with Disabilities were decently employed.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate Uganda's commitment to address these gaps; as part of the UN CRPD, and other international, regional and national level frameworks on disability inclusion.

I thank you

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY