

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR T. MUSHAYAVANHU THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 17TH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (COSP-17): 11 to 13 JUNE, 2023

Thank you, Chairperson,

The overarching theme of the session, which provides us the opportunity to ***"rethink disability inclusion in the current international juncture and ahead of the Summit of the Future"***, is pertinent, as we seek to improve our management of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities now and in the future.

The rapid advancement in technological innovations is an opportunity to harness this technology to advance assistive technology innovations for persons with disabilities, more so, in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. The increasing global threats also disproportionately impact persons with disabilities, hence the need for commensurate responses taking advantage of technological advancement. Allied to that, is the need for technology transfer, for an inclusive future.

In the world of work, promoting the rights of persons with disabilities to decent work and sustainable livelihoods is crucial in advancing the right to occupy space in the labour market, including establishing and sustaining their own livelihood projects in both rural and urban areas.

Chairperson,

The Government of Zimbabwe fully recognises the importance of promoting, protecting and respecting the rights of persons with disabilities, guided by robust policies, laws and strategies. In this regard, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, launched the National Disability Policy, which is aligned to both the Constitution and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Among other things, the National Disability Policy has sections that are dedicated to international cooperation, assistive technology, risk and humanitarian emergencies, as well as employment and self-reliance.

The Government of Zimbabwe has put in place mechanisms to ensure that at least 15% of public service employees are persons with disabilities. The private sector and other sectors are also being encouraged to integrate persons with disabilities in employment

and to ensure that they are provided with reasonable accommodation in the workplace.

Chairperson,

We remain open for constructive dialogue and cooperation with other States on issues of disability, and with relevant international organisations as well as with civil society, including in the area of technology innovations and transfer. Zimbabwe remains guided by the principle of collaboration with all members of the UN family in pursuit of our goal of achieving the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all facets of life, as we, together, ***"rethink disability inclusion in the current international juncture and ahead of the upcoming Summit of the Future"***.

I thank you.