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**12<sup>th</sup> Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with  
Disabilities**

**Interactive Dialogue on Implementation of the Convention between States Parties and the  
UN System**



**Statement by**

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**Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

Your Excellencies,

Dear colleagues and friends,

It is with great pleasure that I deliver these words to the Conference on behalf of the UN human rights office.

Every year the Conference provides us with the opportunity to gather and reflect on our efforts to implement the CRPD and to advance the rights of persons with disabilities.

And the good news is that every year we celebrate more progress, and more milestones.

Our Office joins in welcoming the adoption of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy. As coined by our Special Rapporteur, UNDIS is the “operationalisation of the CRPD for the UN” and we wholeheartedly commit ourselves to strengthening the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities, as staff, experts, partners and beneficiaries of the UN, in its work--across the pillars and around the world.

While the Conference’s overarching theme touches on ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in a changing world through the CRPD, the CRPD itself time and time again proves to us how it is changing the world.

UNDIS is the most recent case in point.

In addition, today we commemorate International Albinism Awareness Day and for the first time last September, we celebrated the International Day of Sign Languages.

Another key milestone was the first ever Open Arria-Formula discussion on persons with disabilities at the Security Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December last year, which concluded with the commitment to ensure a more inclusive and participatory approach toward persons with disabilities during armed conflict and within emergency response.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Convention has contributed to major shifts in our approaches, attitudes and policies.

And it is not only to the benefit of women and men, girls and boys with disabilities, but everyone, every person, every society, in all our diversity.

The Convention’s principles and provisions serve us all because they strengthen our communities: they strengthen our responses against exclusion and segregation and illustrate that reaching the furthest behind first is the key to leaving no one behind.

Excellencies,

During these past days, we have discussed the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport.

We have also discussed tools– the use of ICTs, other new technologies and assistive devices which facilitate the exercise of human rights.

It is incumbent on us all, States, UN agencies and entities, international cooperation actors and the private sector, communities and civil society, to ensure that these devices and technologies are made available, affordable and accessible for persons with disabilities as a critical means to empowerment, and to be vigilant that new technologies do not contribute to the creation of new barriers.

At times, it may be challenging to recognise and distinguish which actions and measures reinforce or impede the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

In an effort to contribute to CRPD compliant actions and measures, OHCHR is leading an EU funded project to develop tools, including human rights indicators on the Convention and policy guidelines on realising the SDGs guided by the CRPD.

These tools will ensure the mutual reinforcement of human rights obligations under the Convention and the commitments subscribed under the 2030 Agenda.

We encourage you all to make use of and test these tools and to provide us with your feedback as we move toward finalising them later this year.

The CRPD is our common roadmap, our common platform, and our hope for ensuring a world that ensures dignity, celebrates diversity, and uplifts the human rights of people everywhere.

We join all of you in committing ourselves to its full implementation. And we thank you.