



# Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Distr.: General  
10 August 2017

Original: English

## Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Tenth session

New York, 13-15 June 2017

## Report of the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

### Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction . . . . .	2
II. Opening of the Conference . . . . .	2
III. Election of officers . . . . .	2
IV. Matters related to the implementation of the Convention: general debate . . . . .	3
V. Round-table discussions . . . . .	3
VI. Interactive dialogue between States parties and the United Nations system on the implementation of the Convention . . . . .	4
VII. Decisions by the Conference of States Parties . . . . .	5
VIII. Closing of the Conference . . . . .	5

### Annexes

I. Decisions by the Conference of States Parties . . . . .	6
II. President's summary of the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities . . . . .	7
III. Non-governmental organizations accredited to the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at its tenth session . . . . .	19



## **I. Introduction**

1. The tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 13 to 15 June 2017.
2. Six meetings were held at the tenth session of the Conference. On 13 June, the 1st and 2nd meetings were convened to consider the agenda items on the opening of the Conference, the election of officers, the adoption of the agenda, the organization of work and the general debate. Three round tables were held at the 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings, on 14 and 15 June. At its 6th meeting, on 15 June, the Conference considered agenda item 6 (interactive dialogue between States parties and the United Nations system on the implementation of the Convention), item 7 (decisions by the Conference of States Parties) and item 8 (closing of the meeting).
3. The text of the decisions adopted by the Conference is contained in annex I. The President's summary of the session is contained in annex II and the list of non-governmental organizations accredited to the Conference in annex III.

## **II. Opening of the Conference**

4. The Conference was opened by the temporary President of the Conference, Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.
5. At the 1st meeting, the Conference adopted the provisional agenda ([CRPD/CSP/2017/1](#)) and agreed on the organization of work for the session.

## **III. Election of officers**

6. Under agenda item 2, the following were elected by acclamation as new members of the Bureau: the representative of Bulgaria as President of the Conference and the representatives of Ecuador, Germany, Sri Lanka and Tunisia as Vice-Presidents of the Conference.
7. Opening statements were made by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and President of the Conference, Georgi Panayotov; the Chef de Cabinet of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti; the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Theresia Degener; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas Aguilar; and Maria Farah, representative of civil society.
8. Pursuant to rule 25, paragraph 5 (c), of the rules of procedure, and under agenda item 4, 38 new non-governmental organizations were accredited to the Conference (see annex III).

## IV. Matters related to the implementation of the Convention: general debate

9. During the general debate (agenda item 5 (a)), statements were made by 100 States parties,<sup>1</sup> including 1 regional integration organization.

10. Statements were also made by 1 country group<sup>2</sup> and 22 observers, including 3 international organizations,<sup>3</sup> the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, 2 national human rights institutions<sup>4</sup> and 16 non-governmental organizations.<sup>5</sup>

## V. Round-table discussions

11. On 14 and 15 June, the Conference held three round tables, at its 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings. At each round table, presentations were given by a panel of speakers, followed by interactive discussions.

### **Round table 1: addressing the impact of multiple discrimination on persons with disabilities and promoting their participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in line with the Convention**

12. The round-table discussion, under agenda item 5 (b), was co-chaired by Thomas Schieb, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Conference and Diane Kingston (civil society). Presentations were given by six panellists: Emerine Kabanshi, Minister of Community Development and Social Welfare, Zambia; Mercedes Juan López, Director General of the National Council for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, Mexico; Marieta Dimitrova, Legal Consultant, Bulgarian Centre for Not-for-Profit Law; Alastair McEwin, Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission; Facundo Chavez Penillas, Human Rights and Disability Adviser, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); and Lauro Purcil Jr., Member of the ASEAN Disability Forum.

<sup>1</sup> Statements were delivered by Ecuador, Zambia, Canada, Cambodia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Paraguay, Germany, Lithuania, South Africa, Namibia, India, Afghanistan, Brazil, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Norway, Mexico, Philippines, European Union, Portugal, Kenya, Egypt, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, Finland, Zimbabwe, Austria, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Chile, Poland, Australia, Denmark, Israel, Colombia, Guatemala, Jordan, Spain, New Zealand, Qatar, Hungary, Slovenia, Oman, Georgia, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Romania, Estonia, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Viet Nam, Panama, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Argentina, Nigeria, Kuwait, Andorra, Cuba, Peru, Senegal, Switzerland, China, Singapore, Republic of Korea, Uruguay, Bahrain, Thailand, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Burundi, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Malta, United Republic of Tanzania, Antigua and Barbuda, Turkey, Japan, Belgium, Myanmar, Honduras, Angola, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Ukraine, Uganda, State of Palestine, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Togo, Mali, Malawi, Saudi Arabia, Maldives and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

<sup>2</sup> Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Mine Action Service, World Intellectual Property Organization and International Labour Organization.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission and New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

<sup>5</sup> Progetto Filippide, International Disability Alliance, ASEAN Disability Forum, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, Inclusion International, International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, European Disability Forum, World Federation of the Deaf, Centre for the Human Rights of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, National Council for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (Mexico), Disabled People International, European Network on Independent Living, People with Disability Australia/National Association of Community Legal Centres, Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities, International Disability and Development Consortium and Ballerina Management Institute of India.

**Round table 2: inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action**

13. The round-table discussion, under agenda item 5 (c), was co-chaired by Amrith Rohan Perera, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Conference and Kalle Könkkölä (civil society). Presentations were given by six panellists: Julien Mwape, Board Chairperson, Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities; Muhammad Salah Alazzeh, Secretary General, High Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, Jordan; Gopal Mitra, Programme Specialist, Disability Section, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and co-chair of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action; Ramkusha Pant, President, National Federation of the Deaf, Nepal; Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; and Theresia Degener, Chair, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Round table 3: promoting inclusive urban development and implementation of the New Urban Agenda**

14. The round-table discussion, under agenda item 5 (d), was co-chaired by Xavier Torres, President of the National Council for Equality of Persons with Disabilities of Ecuador and Vice-President of the Conference and Jean-Luc Simon (civil society). Presentations were given by six panellists: Senarath Bandara Attanayake, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation, Livestock, Land and Forestry, Uva Provincial Council, Sri Lanka; Samuel Kipng'etich Tororei, Commissioner, National Land Commission, Kenya; Marco Antonio Pellegrini, National Secretary for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Brazil; Victor Pineda, President, Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments; Inmaculada Placencia Porrero, Senior Expert, Disability and Inclusion Unit, European Commission (focal point for the Convention); and Markus Schefer, Professor, Faculty of Law, Basel University, Switzerland.

## **VI. Interactive dialogue between States parties and the United Nations system on the implementation of the Convention**

15. Agenda item 6 was addressed at the 6th meeting, which was chaired by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and President of the Conference. Presentations were given by Wenyan Yang, Chief, Social Perspective on Development Branch, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); Michelle Funk, World Health Organization (WHO), rotation Chair of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; Craig Mokhiber, Director and Deputy to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, OHCHR; Grainne O'Hara, Deputy Director, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Office in New York; Filiep Decorte, Acting Director, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Office in New York; and Nagesh Kumar, Director, Social Development Division, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

16. Presentations were also given by representatives of other bodies and mandate holders: the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities of the Human Rights Council. A presentation was also made by Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, on behalf of civil society.

17. Following the presentations by panellists, the representatives of Brazil, Mexico and the National Association of Disability Advocates, Nigeria asked questions and made interventions.

18. A written statement was also received from the Russian Federation.

## **VII. Decisions by the Conference of States Parties**

19. At the 6th meeting, under agenda item 7, the Conference adopted unanimously three decisions proposed by its Bureau (see annex I).

## **VIII. Closing of the Conference**

20. At the closing of the Conference, the meeting heard statements by the representatives of Ecuador, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Germany, Vice-Presidents of the Conference.

21. The President of the Conference, in his closing statement, expressed his appreciation to all States parties and to the Secretariat for their cooperation and strong support in making the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties a success.

22. The Conference was adjourned at 6 p.m. on 15 June 2017.

## Annex I

### **Decisions by the Conference of States Parties**

At its tenth session, the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted the following decisions:

#### **Decision 1: Venue and timing of the eleventh session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, recalling General Assembly resolution [61/106](#) and taking into consideration rule 1, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the rules of procedure of the Conference, decides that its eleventh session will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 12 to 14 June 2018.

#### **Decision 2: Resources and support for the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities notes the provision of resources and support for the tenth session of the Conference and reiterates its recommendation to the Secretary-General to continue to provide adequate support to the eleventh and future sessions of the Conference.

#### **Decision 3: Request to the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities decides to request the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the Conference on its tenth session to all States parties and observers.

## Annex II

### **President's summary of the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

#### **Opening of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

1. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, opened the tenth session of the Conference of States Parties in his capacity as temporary President of the Conference.
2. The Conference, at its 1st meeting, elected by acclamation the following as new members of the Bureau: the representative of Bulgaria as President of the Conference and the representatives of Ecuador, Germany, Sri Lanka and Tunisia as Vice-Presidents of the Conference. It also adopted the agenda of the Conference ([CRPD/CSP/2017/1](#)) and approved by consensus the accreditation of 38 new non-governmental organizations that had applied to participate as observers to the Conference.
3. During the opening segment of the 1st meeting, a statement was made by Georgi Panayotov, the newly elected President of the Conference and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations, who extended a special welcome to eight States parties that had ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities since the previous session.<sup>a</sup> Acknowledging that significant steps had been taken by the international community to implement the Convention since its adoption a decade earlier, the President underscored the importance of achieving the goals of the Convention and creating societies without discrimination as well as further promoting the human rights of persons with disabilities and their inclusion and empowerment, emphasizing the need to focus on ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in all aspects of life.
4. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet, recognized the Convention as a tool for both human rights and development. She stated that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledged to leave no one behind and therefore emphasized that enhanced efforts must be made to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in every sphere of life.
5. Theresia Degener, Chair, Committee on the Rights of Person with Disabilities, noted the importance of the participation and representation of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the Convention. She outlined several areas for collective efforts that were crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including ensuring the empowerment of women and children with disabilities, enhancing the participation of persons with disabilities in national institutions, data collection and the evaluation of policies and programmes.
6. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, called for increased involvement of persons with disabilities in all aspects of development, including decision-making processes, on the basis of the principle of equality of opportunity and full participation, as enshrined in the Convention. While noting the complementarity of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda, the Special Rapporteur called upon the United Nations system, including the Statistics Division, to support national statistical offices in collecting

<sup>a</sup> Belarus, the Central African Republic, Comoros, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iceland, the Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa and Fiji.

disaggregated data by disability using the short set of questions on disability developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics.

7. Maria Farah, a representative of civil society, emphasized the importance of the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, working together with States parties and other stakeholders, in establishing strong laws that protected, promoted and respected all rights of all persons with disabilities. Ms. Farah called for concrete actions and measures to be taken to achieve the full inclusion of persons with disabilities through revising or adopting relevant laws and policies and other actions.

## Round-table discussions

### **Round table 1: addressing the impact of multiple discrimination on persons with disabilities and promoting their participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in line with the Convention**

8. Thomas Schieb, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Conference, and Diane Kingston, a representative of civil society, co-chaired the first round-table discussion, on the morning of 14 June.

9. In his introductory remarks, Mr. Schieb indicated that the current situation of persons with disabilities, especially for women and girls with disabilities, was unacceptable. Addressing the existing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by persons with disabilities and facilitating the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities must remain a top priority. Although Governments played the primary role in the implementation of the Convention, their work would be more effective if partnerships were formed among multi-stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

10. Emerine Kabanshi, Minister of Community Development and Social Welfare, Zambia, shared her country's experience in addressing the multiple forms of discrimination and pursuing inclusive development for persons with disabilities. She enumerated a series of actions and measures taken, including the adoption of the Persons with Disabilities Act (2012), the National Social Protection Policy and the National Policy on Disability with specific targets and strategies on protecting and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. She highlighted the need to develop a national strategy with clear targets and timelines, adequate budget allocation and the importance of having a sound legal redress and accountability mechanism in addressing discrimination. Zambia had conducted a national disability survey in 2015 to assess the situations of persons with disabilities and the effectiveness of relevant laws, policies and programmes. Ms. Kabanshi reiterated that the aforementioned should be pursued through actively consulting, engaging and cooperating closely with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations and forming multi-stakeholder partnerships.

11. Mercedes Juan López, Director General of the National Council for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, Mexico, presented a perspective on how Mexico had been combating discrimination against persons with disabilities, who accounted for nearly 6 per cent of the national population. She stated that the Government's commitment to persons with disabilities was embodied in many aspects. Following the incorporation of a provision on the right to non-discrimination in the Constitution in 2001, the new Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination and Creation of the National Council to Prevent



Discrimination had been promulgated, among other legal actions, to close the gaps of social inequality experienced by persons with disabilities. Through the National Strategy for Social Inclusion, multi-dimensional work had been carried out to combine ministerial resources and efforts and actively engage with members of the civil society community. To formalize the participation of the latter, a consultative assembly had also been set up. To better assess the situation and inform policymaking and implementation, the national information system took an integrated approach to collecting data on persons with disabilities through registering them and linking them to various sectors, such as health and social development. Ms. López identified two outstanding challenges: the legal capacity of people with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities to exercise their individual autonomy; and the lack of progress made on healthy ageing and home care for older persons with disabilities, a population that had increased as a result of demographic and epidemiological transition.

12. Marieta Dimitrova, lawyer and legal consultant at the Bulgarian Centre for Not-for-Profit Law, focused her presentation on one challenging issue faced by persons with cognitive and/or mental disabilities in enjoying their human rights, autonomy and exercise of legal capacity. She stated that stereotypes persisted in many instances and, in her view, the existence of the guardianship regime was equivalent to statutory discrimination. Ms. Dimitrova challenged the guardianship system, suggesting three key actions to be taken in order to combat the aforesaid discrimination against persons with disabilities: (a) legal reform based on actual situations on the ground and national contexts; (b) supported decision-making for persons with disabilities in line with the spirit and principles of the Convention; (c) civil society organizations must be involved and engaged as key partners in this endeavour. She presented the draft law on legal capacity developed by the Bulgarian authorities in close collaboration with civil society organizations and persons with disabilities, which established a model of supported decision-making and provided conditions for the full realization of all human rights of persons with disabilities. She emphasized that Bulgaria was one of the very few countries in the world that had developed such a pilot project for the implementation of article 12 of the Convention and called for the early adoption of the draft law.

13. Alastair McEwin, Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission, made his presentation with a focus on indigenous aboriginal people with disabilities, who were more likely than other Australians to experience various forms of disadvantages, such as higher unemployment rates, poverty, discrimination and exposure to violence, which reinforced the need for a more inclusive approach to ensure equitable and inclusive development. While noting that some measures had been taken by the Government, Mr. McEwin called for additional actions to cut across policy intervention silos, with a more holistic approach to addressing the intersection of disability and other characteristics such as gender, indigenous status and race in order to meet the socioeconomic needs of indigenous people with disabilities. In the context of the ongoing efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which presented more opportunities to better monitor and evaluate the impact of multiple disadvantages, he highlighted that States needed to adopt and implement appropriate legislation, policy and programmes that recognized and responded to the needs of all those who experienced multiple forms of discrimination. Persons with disabilities and their organizations must be involved in the development of solutions and be provided with opportunities and resources to participate in relevant processes. Similarly, national human rights institutions should play a leading role in relevant monitoring and evaluation exercises.

14. Facundo Chavez Penillas, Human Rights and Disability Adviser, OHCHR, referenced the questions under discussion in the policy framework of the Convention, especially article 5 on equality and non-discrimination, underscoring that persons with disabilities, especially women and girls, often faced compounded barriers to the exercise and enjoyment of their rights in all spheres of life. Central to non-discrimination was the provision of reasonable accommodation. In that regard, the failure to provide such reasonable accommodation could constitute discrimination. He added that “reasonable accommodation” was still a comparatively new concept in human rights and disability discourses. Furthermore, proactive steps were required to uphold equality and non-discrimination, including consulting with and actively involving persons with disabilities in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies; harmonizing laws and policies in line with the Convention; and adopting a twin-track approach to mainstream disability in policy interventions and develop specific policies. Training was vital to eliminate stereotypes and stigma. Mr. Penillas concluded that the Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved if equality and non-discrimination were not properly reflected in laws and policies.

15. Lauro Purcil, Jr., a lead convenor of the Philippine Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and a member of the ASEAN Disability Forum, discussed the experience of disability civil society organizations in engaging in the national budgeting process in the Philippines since 2010. Constitutionally, all Filipino citizens had the right to influence government policies, including budget allocation, through their affiliation with a civic group. The key to the budget advocacy of the Philippine Coalition on the Convention was monitoring and assessing the allocation of funds and human resources for persons with disabilities. There were still many challenges, such as the reluctance of government agencies to share relevant information; lack of awareness of the diverse situations and needs of persons with disabilities; and the lack of capacities of civil society in engaging Government and other stakeholders in a sustainable and effective manner.

16. In the interactive discussion segment, representatives from Panama, Romania, Chile, the Republic of Korea, China, South Africa, Norway, Namibia, the European Union, Costa Rica, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Iraq and observers, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the African Disability Forum, Progetto Filippide, the Jeffs Foundation, the Collective Group of Civil Society Organizations of El Salvador, the Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi and the National Commission for Persons with Disability in Sierra Leone, made interventions from the floor.

#### **Round table 2: inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action**

17. The round table was co-chaired by Amrith Rohan Perera, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, Vice-President of the Conference and Kalle Könkkölä, a representative from civil society.

18. Julien Mwape, Board Chairperson, Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities, highlighted that efforts must be made to ensure that persons with disabilities were included in the goals, targets and indicators of national policies and action plans relating to humanitarian action and disaster risk management in line with existing international frameworks such as the Sendai Framework. Development agencies and humanitarian actors should do more to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities were assessed and included at all stages of disaster management, namely, preparedness, response, relief, recovery and reconstruction, and to fully engage all key stakeholders in working together. Ms. Mwape identified some key

areas for humanitarian action: determine vulnerabilities — economic, physical and environmental — that can raise risks for persons with disabilities; conduct risk and needs assessments; establish community registers to gather accurate information; and design national action plans to reduce risks for all, while paying special attention to persons with disabilities. She stated that proper legislation and policies, action plans and specific guidelines and strategies were needed to enhance early warning systems, including in communication, and to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian actions.

19. Muhammad Salah Alazzeq, Secretary-General, High Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, Jordan, began his presentation with a distinction between two categories of refugees with disabilities residing in Jordan, namely, an estimated 53,000 Palestinian refugees with disabilities who were registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the approximately 19,000 Syrian refugees with disabilities living in Syrian refugee camps in Jordan. Mr. Alazzeq stated that Jordan had adopted a Syrian crisis response plan (2016-2018) to make services and support available to refugees with disabilities. Poor accessibility and lack of reasonable accommodation in the refugee camps had been a major challenge and deserved the attention of the relevant authorities and donors. The emergency line for deaf refugees using sign language through video calls was recognized as a good practice at home and abroad. Mr. Alazzeq concluded by calling upon United Nations agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations and, in particular, donors to work in partnership to discharge their own responsibilities as outlined in article 32 of the Convention, on international cooperation, so as to ensure that humanitarian responses and actions were inclusive of and accessible to refugees with disabilities.

20. Gopal Mitra, Programme Specialist, Disability Section, UNICEF, and co-chair of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, pointed out that persons with disabilities were at higher risk in humanitarian crises, yet humanitarian actions often failed to include them, further deepening their exclusion. That was even more often the case for women and children with disabilities. Four aspects were critical for making humanitarian actions inclusive of children and adults with disabilities: (a) participation of persons with disabilities in the planning and implementation of humanitarian actions; (b) humanitarian action data disaggregated by disability, and humanitarian needs assessments that asked the right questions and used appropriate tools to capture the needs of the persons in question; (c) the building of knowledge and capacity on disability among humanitarian personnel, which was critical to the inclusion of persons with disabilities; (d) the development of guidelines to strengthen accountability and transform practices. He made a call to stop the funding of any projects for the construction or renovation of inaccessible humanitarian infrastructure.

21. Ramkusha Pant, President, National Federation of the Deaf, Nepal, in his presentation using the 2015 earthquake in Nepal as an example, discussed some key issues and challenges facing deaf persons and other persons with disabilities in natural disaster risk preparedness, relief and humanitarian responses. Based on case studies, he had found that timely and adequate information on the humanitarian needs of persons with disabilities and on humanitarian actions and available services, and actual access to emergency relief and accessible services, such as sign language interpretation, were vital, yet too often not in place. Learning from the lessons in Nepal, disaster reduction and humanitarian actions required appropriate legislation, accessible institutions, national strategic plans to ensure the mainstreaming of disability issues, and the inclusion of and participation by persons with disabilities. In addition, it was of vital importance to ensure better

coordination, training and dissemination of information and communication in an accessible manner.

22. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities stated that persons with disabilities were one of the groups that were the most affected by all kinds of humanitarian emergencies and yet one of the most invisible. They often faced greater challenges in accessing and benefiting from humanitarian actions, owing to the wide existence of discrimination, lack of accessibility and support services and the absence of proper training and awareness among humanitarian actors. With the strengthened international normative frameworks, the Special Rapporteur underscored three priorities to fully include persons with disabilities in humanitarian actions: (a) ensure a human rights approach in all efforts to make humanitarian action inclusive; (b) ensure greater international, financial and technical cooperation for an inclusive response; (c) develop comprehensive technical guidelines for inclusive humanitarian responses. The Special Rapporteur appealed to States and the United Nations system to enhance their efforts and work more closely to make humanitarian actions accessible and inclusive. She emphasized that the transformation of humanitarian action to adequately respond to diversity could not be accomplished without the active participation of persons with disabilities in all stages of emergency preparedness and responses.

23. The Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities highlighted key issues relating to the implementation of article 11 that should be covered by States parties in their national reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. That included measures adopted to ensure that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were meaningfully informed of and consulted regarding strategies, plans and protocols in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian emergencies and that they actively participated therein; measures adopted to ensure the inclusiveness and accessibility of disaster risk reduction measures and disaster management strategies; steps taken to optimize the use of mass media with the aim of providing adequate, accessible and timely information on risks and humanitarian emergencies to persons with disabilities; measures adopted to ensure the protection of the life and safety of persons with disabilities; steps taken to ensure that post-emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction were inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities; and measures adopted to train emergency and humanitarian actors on the inclusion of an age and disability perspective based on human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. The Chair emphasized the need to take an intersectional human rights approach and to address multiple forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities in all humanitarian actions.

24. During the interaction with the panellists, statements and questions were issued from the floor by representatives of Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Mexico, Ecuador, Finland, Morocco, China, Myanmar, UNICEF, the Federation for Disability, the Women's Refugee Commission, the Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi, Handicap International, the National Association of Disability Advocates, Nigeria, and ICRC.

### **Round table 3: promoting inclusive urban development and implementation of the New Urban Agenda**

25. Round table 3 was co-chaired by Xavier Torres, President of the National Council for Equality of Persons with Disabilities of Ecuador and Vice-President of the Conference and Jean-Luc Simon, representing civil society.

26. Senarath Bandara Attanayake, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation, Livestock, Land and Forestry, Uva Provincial Council, Sri Lanka, stated that the Government

of Sri Lanka had pledged to ensure sustainable urbanization. In Sri Lanka, with the support of the United Nations, a concept of “inclusive cities” and “disabled- and age-friendly cities” had been adopted to consider improvement of the built environment coupled with social and economic inclusion. The concept emphasized the elimination of barriers and the participation of all stakeholders in achieving the goal of inclusive and accessible cities for all. The inclusive city concept had received recognition from the President of Sri Lanka, who established a special office to coordinate and promote the application of the concept in a number of districts in the country. From 2011 to 2017, progress had been made in implementing programmes for accessible built environments (in public institutions, places of worship, community centres and health centres), accessible sanitation facilities, improved access to electoral processes and education, addressing poverty through the provision of livelihood support, promoting the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector and supporting self-employment by persons with disabilities. He underscored the importance of creating wider awareness about the concept of inclusive cities among policymakers and officials.

27. Samuel Kipng’etich Tororei, Commissioner, National Land Commission, Kenya, stated that neither the 1948 colonial Nairobi master plan nor the post-independence Land Planning Act (repealed in 1996 by the Physical Planning Act) gave sufficient attention to the specific needs of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities clearly found themselves excluded in the planning for and development of cities and urban areas, especially informal settlements. Highlighting the importance of all users’ rights and needs in urban planning and development, he noted a perceptive move in the right direction in Kenya’s legislation and government policies concerning persons with disabilities: more specifically, the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2003, the establishment of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (2004) and the ratification of the Convention (2008) should be embraced by urban planners and development actors. He stated that advocacy should shift its focus to practical programmes for actions and called for the engagement of all stakeholders to work together, with greater inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities, as envisaged in the New Urban Agenda.

28. Marco Antonio Pellegrini, National Secretary for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Brazil, shared the experience and lessons learned in promoting inclusive urban development in Brazil. His office was a national focal point that coordinated the actions and efforts of line ministries within the Government for the implementation of the Convention. Many initiatives and programmes had been undertaken at the national and local levels, for example, constructing accessible public parks, sports facilities, housing and transportation. In that regard, strategic measures included following a universal design approach to housing and providing incentives to developers to do so. Another important element for the successful promotion of accessible and inclusive urban development was the provision of proper training for development actors and professionals.

29. Victor Pineda, President, Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments, pointed out that article 9 of the Convention, on accessibility, and Sustainable Development Goal 11, on sustainable cities and communities, provided a sound set of international normative frameworks on inclusive urban development for all. For the successful promotion of accessibility in transportation and built environments, there was a need for political will and a real partnership among multi-stakeholders. It was necessary to address the gaps between national commitments and local capacity. Taking the construction of “smart cities for all” as an example, tools and guidelines were needed to enable local authorities and development actors on the ground to enhance understanding on how to deliver

digital accessibility and inclusion, including relevant technical codes and standards. With the pace of rapid urbanization, urban planning must be inclusive, utilizing a cross-sectoral approach and taking into account climate change, gender, accessibility and equity, among other facets.

30. Inmaculada Placencia Porrero, Senior Expert, Disability and Inclusion Unit, European Commission, stated that accessibility in urban contexts illustrated the intersection of three areas, namely, built environments, transport and information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as smart mobile phones and electronic interfaces, which were increasingly impacting the provision of services. Making accessible ICTs was the most cost-effective option and deserved more attention and investment in the long term. With respect to the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the promotion of accessible development, she listed some common elements for successful good practices: (a) comprehensive legislation that set accessibility in frameworks combating discrimination and public procurement frameworks and that combined both horizontal and sectoral requirements; (b) clear allocation of responsibility for achieving accessibility, to be taken by public and private actors; (c) realistic time frames for implementation; (d) practical guidance for practitioners in the form of technical standards that were linked to legal requirements; (e) tools for the monitoring of implementation; (f) robust enforcement of legislation and policies; (g) participation of persons with disabilities in policymaking and monitoring processes; (h) proper training of professionals and urban development actors; and (i) investments and research on accessibility.

31. Markus Schefer, Professor of Law, Basel University, Switzerland, argued that cities could offer opportunities to plan, design and build better places for all and meet their rights, needs and aspirations. On how inclusive development strategies could capitalize on the knowledge and expertise of persons with disabilities, Mr. Schefer emphasized the importance of active participation in all planning and execution of urban plans. Co-construction would increase the expertise of urban planners and architects in fulfilling their mandates. States could play important roles in fostering such co-construction by including relevant requirements in urban planning curricula. Another area was public procurement, where experts with disabilities could be included as co-constructors, not just consultants, from the beginning of a project.

32. During the question and answer segment, representatives from Kazakhstan, Qatar, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Morocco, Mexico, Canada, China, Norway, Portugal, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Guinea, Netherlands, Turkey, Thailand, Ecuador, Namibia, Malawi, the National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Korea, Christian Blind Mission and the Brazilian Bar Association took the floor.

### **Interactive dialogue between States parties and the United Nations system on the implementation of the Convention**

33. The President of the Conference opened the interactive dialogue between States parties and the United Nations system on the implementation of the Convention.

34. Wenyan Yang, Chief, Social Perspective on Development Branch, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, made a presentation on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. Since the previous session, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs had focused its work in key areas concerning the promotion and implementation of the Convention, in particular with respect to supporting the implementation of the Convention in tandem with other global commitments and building upon the interlinks with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Department was

preparing the first United Nations flagship report on disability and development, scheduled for release in 2018, which was aimed at providing a knowledge base to inform and further disability-inclusive development and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals for persons with disabilities. A number of expert group meetings and discussions organized by the Department had contributed to major global policy development and relevant processes around the World Humanitarian Summit, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women and their follow-ups. The Department had also provided support to States to implement the Convention, through the provision of capacity-training workshops on the Convention and the collection and utilization of disability data, engaging and benefiting 82 countries. In addition, it had also started work on updating the United Nations guidelines to assist States in improving data to monitor progress towards achieving development goals for persons with disabilities.

35. Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director, UN-Women, highlighted that women and girls with disabilities were likely to be left behind, in terms of lower economic and social status; violence, abuse and neglect; and multiple discriminatory practices. In that regard, efforts should be made to consider gender equality and the empowerment of women on the one hand and the aspect of disability on the other hand. UN-Women had started to regard disability in a systematic manner: bringing normative changes and standard-setting at the global, regional and national levels; prioritizing disability and gender equality and the nexus between the larger discourses of gender equality and mainstreaming disability in gender equality discourses; advocating for equal access to physical environments and protection against violence and discrimination; improving data and statistics on gender and disability by encouraging the use of the Washington Group tools; and promoting synergies between gender equality and the disability inclusion agenda at country offices.

36. Michelle Funk, a representative from WHO, presented a joint statement of the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in her capacity as the annual rotation chair of the of the Group. She highlighted the collective initiatives and work of the Group in the previous year, focusing on priority issues and challenges faced by persons with disabilities, such as lack of employment and access to health care, ICTs and decision-making processes. In response to those challenges, the Inter-Agency Support Group had strengthened collective efforts across the United Nations system, including by establishing working groups to work on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian actions, community-based development initiatives, women and girls with disabilities and options for potentially using the United Nations system-wide action plan as a strategy to better address the challenges faced in the implementation of the Convention.

37. Craig Mokhiber, Director and Deputy to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, OHCHR, reported on the initiatives of the Office. For instance, OHCHR proposed to better use the tools available for data disaggregation at the 2020 round of national censuses and recommended the use of a set of questions developed by the Washington Group/UNICEF module on child functioning. It had also initiated a project to develop human rights indicators for the Convention and policy guidelines connecting the Sustainable Development Goals with human rights obligations under the Convention. The Office had conducted a study on equality and non-discrimination to inform the annual debate of the Human Rights Council in 2017 and was working on another annual study on the right to access to justice. OHCHR strongly encouraged States parties to address the current gender imbalance within the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

38. Grainne O'Hara, Deputy Director, UNHCR Office in New York, informed the meeting that in situations of humanitarian crises such as forced displacement, persons with disabilities continued to be left behind, experiencing challenges in moving physically to safer places. Programmes with a shortage of funding often left persons with disabilities behind, resulting in a lack of access to basic services. She expressed the commitment of UNHCR to continuing the promotion of the outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit, including the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. UNHCR had been working on a guideline for full inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian actions.

39. Filiep Decorte, Acting Director, UN-Habitat Office in New York, stated that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promised to leave no one behind and the New Urban Agenda further elaborated on how to operationalize that goal in the urban development context. In order to achieve inclusive and sustainable urban development there must be accessibility and access to adequate housing, mobility and transportation, as well as public services for all, including persons with disabilities. Strong participation by civil society, in particular persons with disabilities and their organizations, as well as well-designed and planned urban development, were needed to achieve transformative urban development for all.

40. Nagesh Kumar, Director, Social Development Division, ESCAP, stated that ESCAP had launched the Incheon Strategy as a regional guiding framework. Many initiatives had been taken and progress was being made in implementing the Strategy, such as the adoption of national legislation and disability inclusive action plans.

41. Following the panellists' presentations, a representative of New Zealand, on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Finland, Iceland, Jamaica, Jordan, Norway, Panama, Poland, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and New Zealand, made an intervention.

42. Following the joint statement, representatives of Mexico, Namibia, and the National Association of Disability Advocates, Nigeria, made interventions.

43. The President of the Conference introduced the panellists for the second segment of the interactive dialogue.

44. The Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stated that the Conference of States Parties and the Committee were two pillars of the same international mechanism for the implementation of the Convention. The success of each pillar would reflect on the other. It was important that the rights of persons with disabilities be mainstreamed in State parties' reporting to the high-level political forum. Since the ninth session of the Conference, the Committee had held its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions and adopted concluding observations, including a specific recommendation on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee had also adopted two general comments, on women and girls with disabilities and the right to inclusive education. It was currently working on two general comments, on the right to live independently in the community and on non-discrimination and equality. She concluded by encouraging States to give special attention to women candidates with disabilities for the forthcoming election of the Committee in 2018 in order to restore the gender parity of the Committee.

45. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities stated that she placed emphasis on three strategic areas, namely, inclusive development, active citizenship and diversity assessment. Within those mandates, she had produced four thematic reports, on social protection, participation in decision-making, inclusive



public policies and support services, in the past year. She had also continued to cooperate with United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons. She called for the support of States for a possible system-wide plan of action for further inclusion of persons with disabilities within the United Nations.

46. Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, a representative of civil society, referenced the achievements made during the first decade since the adoption of the Convention and called for attention to the gender balance in the Committee during the forthcoming election in 2018.

47. Following the presentations by panellists, questions and interventions were made by the representatives of Brazil, Mexico and the National Association of Disability Advocates, Nigeria.

48. A written statement was received from the Russian Federation.

49. Following the panel discussions, and under agenda item 7, the President of the Conference presented three decisions, which were subsequently adopted by the Conference of States Parties.

### **Closing of the Conference**

50. The Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and President of the Conference, in his closing remarks, extended his appreciation to all States Parties for their confidence in the Bureau in organizing this important session, which started the second decade of the Convention. He also expressed his compliments to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and to OHCHR for their support in the preparation and organization of the session. He recapped the highlights and achievements during the three-day programme, which covered a wide range of issues relating to the implementation of the Convention, with a record high number of speakers of nearly 130 under one single agenda item, “general debate”, including more than 20 at the ministerial level. He pointed out that the three round-table discussions at the tenth session had focused on some of the most pertinent issues for persons with disabilities with regard to the implementation of the major global agreements of the past couple of years, namely, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, commitments relating to humanitarian actions and the New Urban Agenda, the success of which would largely depend on how States engaged persons with disabilities and took the action necessary to empower them and ensure their full inclusion and participation. He welcomed the very informative and useful exchange on the implementation of the Convention with the United Nations system, the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, emphasizing that an important takeaway of the interactive dialogue was the need to further strengthen all United Nations actions with regard to the promotion and protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities as a coherent and consistent policy within the United Nations system. The President of the Conference stressed that at the tenth session, the Bureau, under the leadership of Bulgaria, had placed stronger emphasis on the participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders in all deliberations relating to the implementation of the Convention, which constituted a major step forward in the efforts to make the Conference and the implementation of the Convention more participatory and inclusive for persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, in line with the Convention and its article 4.3 in particular.

51. He recalled that the deliberations during the tenth session had an added value for strengthening the inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda and assuring that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would lead to the realization of all human rights of persons with disabilities and to their empowerment and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others. During the discussions, a number of important issues had been highlighted, including that more attention and concrete action both on the part of States parties and the United Nations system were needed in order to ensure that the commitments contained in the Convention and the 2030 Agenda were fulfilled for persons with disabilities as a matter of priority. One of the most pressing issues was to ensure the disaggregation of data by disability. The President of the Conference underscored that in order to deliver on the promise of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first, enhanced efforts should be made to collect quality data disaggregated by disability.

52. The representatives from Ecuador, Germany, Sri Lanka and Tunisia, Vice-Presidents of the Conference, also made statements at the closing meeting, in the afternoon of 15 June.

## Annex III

### **Non-governmental organizations accredited to the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at its tenth session**

1. AbleThrive
2. Access Exchange International
3. Action on Disability Rights and Development
4. Alhassan Foundation for Differently Abled Inclusion
5. Associação Nacional de Membros do Ministério Público de Defesa Dos Direitos dos Idosos e Pessoas com Deficiência
6. Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children
7. Benemérito Comité Pro Ciegos y Sordos de Guatemala
8. Cambodian Disabled People's Organisation
9. Center for International Stabilization and Recovery
10. Dementia Alliance International
11. Disabled Peoples' International Europe
12. Disabled Peoples' International Korea
13. Dream for Disability Foundation
14. The Family Resource Network
15. Federação Brasileira das Associações de Síndrome de Down
16. Fight the Stroke
17. Fundación Descúbreme
18. Fundación Dime
19. Instituto ser educacional
20. International Disability Alliance
21. International Dyslexia Association
22. International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine
23. Kids Brain Health Network
24. Kpakpando Foundation for Physically Challenged Persons
25. Markaz-e-Umeed for Special Needs Children — Pakistan
26. National Federation of the Blind
27. New South Wales Consumer Advisory Group — Mental Health
28. New South Wales Council for Intellectual Disability
29. New World Hope Organization
30. Potohar Mental Health Association
31. Progetto Filippide
32. Sierra Leone Campus Civitan International

33. Swedish Disability Federation
  34. Tangata Group
  35. The Lucy Foundation
  36. UCP Wheels for Humanity
  37. Women Enabled International
  38. Women's Refugee Commission
-