



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Report of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on its thirty-second session (3–21 March 2025)

I. States Parties to the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto

1. As at 21 March 2025, the date on which the thirty-second session closed, there were 192 States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and 107 States Parties to the Optional Protocol thereto. The lists of States Parties to these instruments are available on the website of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat.

II. Opening of the thirty-second session of the Committee

2. The thirty-second session opened in a public meeting with welcoming remarks by the representative of the Secretary-General, the Chief of the Groups in Focus Section, Human Rights Treaties Branch, Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The welcoming remarks are available on the Committee's website.

3. The Committee reviewed and adopted the provisional agenda¹ and programme of work for the thirty-second session.

III. Membership of the Committee

4. The list of members of the Committee as at 21 March 2025, indicating the duration of their terms of office, is available on the Committee's website.

IV. Election of the Bureau

5. The election of the Bureau was led by the Chief of the Groups in Focus Section. The following members were elected for a term of two years, in accordance with rules 15, 16 and 17 of the Committee's rules of procedure:

<i>Chair:</i>	Kim Mi Yeon
<i>Vice-Chairs:</i>	Amalia Eva Gamio Ríos
	Abdelmajid Makni
	Christopher Nwanoro
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Laverne Jacobs

¹ [CRPD/C/32/1](#).



V. Working methods

6. The Committee discussed various issues related to its working methods and decided to continue updating and streamlining its working methods during the intersessional period. It continued to use task forces for the dialogues with States Parties. It also discussed matters related to the treaty body strengthening process.

VI. Activities related to general comments

7. The Committee continued, in private meetings, its work on drafting a general comment on article 11 of the Convention. It held a day of general discussion on the right of persons with disabilities to participate in political and public life, as a step towards drafting a general comment on article 29 of the Convention.

VII. Activities related to the Optional Protocol

8. The Committee examined three communications submitted for its consideration under the Optional Protocol to the Convention. It found violations of the Convention in two of them: *N.I. v. Sweden*,² concerning the deportation of a person with disabilities to Lebanon, and *Al-Awdah v. Saudi Arabia*,³ regarding the incommunicado detention and enforced disappearance of a person with disabilities and failure to provide a fair trial, care and reasonable accommodation. The Committee found that the facts before it did not disclose a violation of the Convention in *Handke v. Germany*,⁴ concerning access free of charge to an inclusive secondary school for a child with disabilities.

9. The Committee also adopted a follow-up progress report on individual communications. That report sets out information received by the Special Rapporteur for follow-up to Views between the thirtieth and thirty-second sessions pursuant to the Committee's rules of procedure, and the Committee's assessments and decisions concerning the follow-up.

10. The Views and decisions adopted by the Committee regarding the communications were transmitted to the parties as soon as possible and subsequently made available on the Official Document System⁵ and the Committee's website. A summary of the Views and decisions adopted at the thirty-second session may be found in annex III to the present report.

11. The Committee considered matters related to inquiry proceedings pursuant to articles 6 and 7 of the Optional Protocol.

VIII. Future sessions

12. Subject to the availability of funding, the thirty-third session of the Committee is provisionally scheduled to be held in Geneva from 11 to 29 August 2025, and will be followed by the twenty-first meeting of the pre-sessional working group, from 1 to 5 September 2025.

IX. Accessibility of the Committee's meetings

13. The thirty-second session of the Committee was held in Geneva, with Committee members and delegations of States Parties participating in person. Stakeholders including organizations of persons with disabilities, civil society organizations, national human rights institutions, specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies participated in person.

² CRPD/C/32/D/64/2019.

³ CRPD/C/32/D/87/2021.

⁴ CRPD/C/32/D/82/2020.

⁵ See <https://documents.un.org/>.

International Sign interpretation, and remote captioning were available. The provision of national sign language interpretation was discontinued. Public meetings were webcast. No plain language or Easy Read versions of documents were available during the session. The software used for the registration of participants for the meeting was not fully accessible for participants with visual impairments. Current protocols for vehicles entering the Palais des Nations continued to pose barriers for participants with disabilities who required accessible transportation. Reasonable accommodation, including in the organization of travel for Committee members with disabilities, continued to be provided.

14. The Committee regrets that the United Nations Office at Geneva decided to cancel the provision of national sign language interpretation during the meetings of the Committee, without having closely consulted or actively involved the World Federation of the Deaf or the Committee. The Committee considers that this measure runs contrary to the commitments of the United Nations Office at Geneva under the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy.

15. The Committee regrets that a deaf member of the Committee was not properly supported by the Secretariat with regard to his request for the provision of sign language interpretation.

X. Cooperation with relevant bodies

A. Cooperation with United Nations organs and specialized agencies

16. At the opening meeting of the session, the Committee heard statements by a representative of the Committee on Victim Assistance under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; the Head of the Accessible Books Consortium, of the World Intellectual Property Organization; a representative of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); and the Director of the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

17. The Committee also interacted with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

B. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations and other bodies

18. At the opening meeting of the session, the Committee was addressed by representatives of the International Disability Alliance, the World Federation of the Deaf, Peace Inclusion Peace, United for Global Mental Health and the Universal Rights Group.

19. At the closing meeting of the session, the Committee was addressed by a representative of the International Disability Alliance.

XI. Consideration of reports submitted in accordance with article 35 of the Convention

20. The Committee held five constructive dialogues, all in person. The Committee considered the initial reports of Palau and Viet Nam,⁶ and the combined second and third periodic reports of Canada, the Dominican Republic and the European Union.⁷ The Committee also considered the initial report of Tuvalu in the absence of a delegation of the State Party.⁸ It adopted concluding observations in relation to those reports.⁹ A list of States

⁶ CRPD/C/PLW/1 and CRPD/C/VNM/1.

⁷ CRPD/C/CAN/2-3, CRPD/C/DOM/2-3 and CRPD/C/EU/2-3.

⁸ CRPD/C/TUV/1.

⁹ CRPD/C/CAN/CO/2-3, CRPD/C/DOM/CO/2-3, CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3, CRPD/C/PLW/CO/1, CRPD/C/TUV/CO/1 and CRPD/C/VNM/CO/1.

Parties whose initial reports are more than five years overdue may be found in annex II to the present report.

XII. Other decisions

21. The Committee adopted the present report on its thirty-second session.
22. The Committee adopted its biennial report, for 2023–2024, to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.
23. The full list of the decisions adopted by the Committee is available in annex I to the present report.

Annex I

Decisions adopted by the Committee at its thirty-second session

1. The Committee adopted concluding observations in relation to the initial reports of Palau, Tuvalu and Viet Nam and the combined second and third periodic reports of Canada, the Dominican Republic and the European Union.
2. The Committee examined three individual communications submitted for its consideration under the Optional Protocol to the Convention. It found violations of the Convention in two of them, and found that the facts before it did not disclose a violation in the third. A summary of the Views and decisions of the Committee may be found in annex III to the present report. The Views and decisions will be transmitted to the parties as soon as possible and will subsequently be made public.
3. The Committee considered matters related to inquiries pursuant to the Optional Protocol.
4. The Committee continued the process of drafting its general comment No. 9, on article 11 of the Convention. It held a day of general discussion on the right of persons with disabilities to participate in political and public life, as a step towards drafting a general comment on article 29 of the Convention.
5. The Committee decided that, subject to the availability of funding, its thirty-third session would be held in Geneva from 11 to 29 August 2025, and would be followed by the twenty-first meeting of the pre-sessional working group, from 1 to 5 September 2025.
6. The Committee decided to continue engaging with the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with a view to improving the provision of accessible conference services and reasonable accommodation to members of the Committee and participants with disabilities at its meetings.
7. The Committee adopted a statement on migrant women and girls with disabilities.
8. The Committee also adopted a statement on the provision of sign language interpretation at meetings of the Committee and support to deaf members of the Committee. In the statement, the Committee called upon:
 - (a) The secretariat of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy to work with the United Nations Office at Geneva and OHCHR to restore the previous standard of national sign language interpretation provided to the Committee and ensure that Hiroshi Tamon, a Committee member who is deaf, receives the support necessary to discharge his duties effectively;
 - (b) The United Nations Office at Geneva to reconsider and reverse the decision to discontinue national sign language interpretation for the Committee; to engage meaningfully with the Committee and the World Federation of the Deaf to ensure the continued provision of interpretation of both international and national sign languages at meetings of the Committee; and to ensure the availability of at least two interpreters proficient in American Sign Language to support Mr. Tamon fully during meetings;
 - (c) OHCHR to allocate additional resources, including extrabudgetary funds, to support Mr. Tamon's interpretation needs; to establish or expand voluntary funding on reasonable accommodation to ensure access for all rights holders covered by the OHCHR policy on reasonable accommodation policy to the necessary support; and to ensure the Committee's operation in a fully accessible and inclusive manner, in line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy;
 - (d) All the above-mentioned United Nations entities to take the steps necessary to end discriminatory measures affecting the rights of deaf persons and to restore the Committee's ability to function effectively.

9. The Committee decided that it and its various working groups would continue their work to contribute to the twentieth anniversary of the Convention, including the preparation of specific guidelines to complement the general comments already adopted by the Committee.

10. The Committee noted that, with 192 States Parties, the Convention was the second most ratified human rights treaty. However, it reiterated its concern that the high rate of ratification was not matched by meeting time and resources allocated to the Committee. The Committee therefore called upon Member States and all competent United Nations bodies to rectify the situation by increasing the meeting time and resources allocated to the Committee with a third session of at least three weeks' meeting time.

11. Remaining concerned about the increasing number of initial and periodic reports pending its consideration, the Committee called upon Member States and the bodies concerned to grant the Committee sufficient meeting time and resources to address the backlog.

12. The Committee called upon States Parties with long overdue initial reports, as listed in annex II to the present report, to submit their reports as expeditiously as possible. The Committee decided to engage actively, in coordination with the treaty body capacity-building programme of the OHCHR Human Rights Treaties Branch, with States Parties whose initial reports were more than 10 years overdue to build capacity for reporting.

13. The Committee adopted the report on its thirty-second session, and its biennial report to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

Annex II

States Parties whose initial reports are more than five years overdue

<i>Party</i>	<i>Due date</i>
Guinea	8 March 2010
San Marino	22 March 2010
Lesotho	2 January 2011
Yemen	26 April 2011
Syrian Arab Republic	10 August 2011
United Republic of Tanzania	10 December 2011
Malaysia	19 August 2012
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	29 November 2012
Belize	2 July 2013
Cabo Verde	10 November 2013
Nauru	27 July 2014
Eswatini	24 October 2014
Dominica	1 November 2014
Cambodia	20 January 2015
Barbados	27 March 2015
Papua New Guinea	26 October 2015
Côte d'Ivoire	10 February 2016
Grenada	17 September 2016
Congo	2 October 2016
Guyana	10 October 2016
Guinea-Bissau	24 October 2016
Madagascar	12 July 2017
Gambia	6 August 2017
Bahamas	28 October 2017
Sao Tome and Principe	5 December 2017
Antigua and Barbuda	7 February 2018
Brunei Darussalam	11 May 2018
Comoros	16 July 2018
Central African Republic	11 November 2018
Samoa	2 January 2019
Suriname	29 April 2019
Fiji	7 July 2019

Annex III

Summary of Views and decisions adopted by the Committee regarding individual communications

N.I. v. Sweden

1. The Committee examined the communication in the case of *N.I. v. Sweden*.¹ The author of the communication was N.I., a national of Lebanon. He had taken part in an armed conflict against Da'esh, which had left him with "mental health problems". On an unspecified date, he had left Lebanon and arrived in Sweden, where he had requested asylum. On 21 October 2015, the Swedish Migration Agency had rejected his application for asylum, finding that he did not require international protection as his post-traumatic stress syndrome was not life-threatening. The Migration Agency's decision was confirmed by the Migration Court and the Migration Court of Appeal. The author's health had subsequently declined, and he was additionally diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and assessed to be at a severely elevated risk of impulsive suicide, extended suicide and psychosis. The migration authorities had rejected three requests for re-examination of the author's asylum application, and had subsequently rejected his second asylum application. In his communication to the Committee, the author claimed that his deportation to Lebanon would breach his rights under articles 10 and 15 of the Convention, as he would face a real risk, on account of the absence of or lack of access to appropriate treatment in the country, of being exposed to a serious, rapid and irreversible decline in his state of health, resulting in intense suffering or a significant reduction in life expectancy.

2. The State Party submitted that the communication was inadmissible *ratione materiae*, insufficiently substantiated and without merit.

3. The Committee did not consider it arbitrary, manifestly unreasonable or a denial of justice for the authorities of the State Party to have concluded, on the basis of the documentation on file, including medical country information, that the care available in Lebanon was sufficient and appropriate in practice for the author. However, the Committee found that it was not clear whether the State Party's authorities had considered the extent to which the author would actually have access to the required care, taking into account the high cost of the treatment, his low cognitive function and inability to work, the documented assessment that his condition would aggravate upon return to Lebanon, his lack of contact with relatives in Lebanon, the stigmatization of mental health in Lebanon and the impact of the challenging circumstances in the country on the actual provision of healthcare, including mental healthcare. In the absence of such an analysis, and given the life-threatening nature of the author's condition, the Committee considered that his removal to Lebanon would, if implemented, violate his rights under articles 10 and 15 of the Convention.

4. The Committee recommended that the State Party provide the author with an effective remedy, review his case and publish and circulate the Committee's Views. The Committee also recommended that the State Party take measures to prevent similar violations in the future and ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities were properly considered in the context of asylum decisions.

Handke v. Germany

5. The Committee examined the communication in the case of *Handke v. Germany*.² The authors of the communication were Günter Handke and Kirsten Wilke, who were acting on behalf of their son, Christoph Jo Handke, a national of Germany born on 16 May 2001. Mr. Handke had tuberous sclerosis, a genetic disease characterized by epileptic seizures and cognitive impairments. His mental development had been impaired in infancy as a result of frequent epileptic seizures. In 2008, he had started at an inclusive primary school, attended both by pupils with disabilities and by other pupils. The authors had wanted Mr. Handke to

¹ CRPD/C/32/D/64/2019.

² CRPD/C/32/D/82/2020.

attend an inclusive secondary school. The authors had been informed by the State Education Office of Saxony-Anhalt that Mr. Handke could be assigned to public schools only, from which the authors would choose their preferred option. Through a school allocation order, dated 16 May 2013, he was officially assigned to Alexander-von-Humboldt school, a mainstream school, and Käthe-Kruse school, exclusively for children with intellectual disabilities. The School Education Office agreed to include an additional line in the allocation order stating that it would not object to his enrolment at Saale school, a private school, which was the authors' preferred option. The authors enrolled Mr. Handke in Saale school for the 2013/14 school year, as they were convinced that it was the only school offering inclusive education. Because of his disability, he could not use public transport to travel to Saale school, 60 km away from his home. He therefore needed a private driver or a taxi to go to school, resulting in monthly travel expenses of 2,000 euros. The cost of transportation and transportation assistance could be reimbursed only for travel to schools officially assigned in the school allocation order. The authors therefore challenged the school allocation order of 16 May 2013 before the domestic courts, which dismissed their complaint and subsequent appeals. The authors claimed that Humboldt school was not inclusive, as they had been informed by school authorities that there was no prospect of inclusive education there due to class sizes and available resources. The authors alleged a violation of Mr. Handke's right to inclusive education without discrimination under article 24, read in conjunction with article 5 (3), of the Convention, and violations of his rights under articles 7 (1) and 9.

6. In its observations, the State Party claimed that it had not violated article 24, read in conjunction with article 5 (3), of the Convention, as Mr. Handke had not been excluded from the general education system. The State Party submitted that Humboldt school was, undisputedly, a mainstream secondary school offering inclusive education that he could have attended.

7. The Committee recalled that considerable weight should be given to the assessment conducted by the State, and that it was generally for the organs of States to review or evaluate the facts and evidence of the case, unless it could be established that the evaluation had been clearly arbitrary or amounted to a manifest error or denial of justice. The Committee noted that, from a reading of the decisions in question, it could not be established that the evaluation by the authorities had been clearly arbitrary or amounted to a manifest error or denial of justice, because there was no legal basis for the authors' claim. In addition, the Committee considered that the authors had not demonstrated that Humboldt school was unable to provide Mr. Handke with reasonable accommodation so that he could enjoy his right to inclusive education, particularly in the light of the State Party's uncontested assertion regarding the existence of teachers at Humboldt school who had been trained in inclusive and "special" education. The Committee was therefore of the view that the facts before it did not disclose a violation of 5 (3), 7 (1), 9 and 24 (1) and (2) of the Convention.

Al-Awdah v. Saudi Arabia

8. The Committee examined the communication in the case of *Al-Awdah v. Saudi Arabia*.³ The author of the communication was Abdullah Alaoudh, who was acting on behalf of his father, Salman al-Awdah, a national of Saudi Arabia born on 1 February 1957. Mr. Al-Awdah was a prominent scholar and advocate of rights-based reform in Islamic thought. On 9 September 2017, he had been arrested by State security agents and taken to an unknown location. Efforts by persons associated with Mr. Al-Awdah to locate him had been unsuccessful and had allegedly led to the arrest of his brother. The State Party had not acknowledged Mr. Al-Awdah's detention or indicated his location until 26 December 2017. According to the author, Mr. Al-Awdah had been subjected to torture and denial of medical care while in detention, which had led to hearing and sight impairments and, as observed by his family, to his appearing disoriented, unresponsive and aloof in court. The author also alleged that the authorities had kept Mr. Al-Awdah outside of the protection of the law, subjected him to solitary confinement and denied him reasonable accommodation, legal aid and family visits. The author further claimed that Mr. Al-Awdah's trial, for charges under the State Party's anti-terrorism legislation, had been unfair and that the prosecution had

³ [CRPD/C/32/D/87/2021](#).

requested that the death penalty be imposed. The author claimed that the State Party had violated Mr. Al-Awdah's rights under articles 5 (1), (2) and (3), 10, 12, 13 (1), 14, 15, 16, 17, 21 and 25, read alone and in conjunction with articles 1, 3, 4 and 5 (3), of the Convention, and under articles 10, 14 and 25, read alone and in conjunction with article 11.

9. The State Party contended that the communication was inadmissible and, on the merits, maintained that its authorities had not breached Mr. Al-Awdah's rights under the Convention.

10. The Committee considered that the detention of Mr. Al-Awdah was arbitrary given, among other elements, the delay in the authorities' acknowledgement of his detention, the lack of progress in his trial, the lack of any documentation provided by the State Party to justify his detention and the overly broad definition of the charges against him. The Committee noted that no reasonable accommodation had been provided to Mr. Al-Awdah taking into account his impairments. Noting the delayed acknowledgement of the deprivation of his liberty, the Committee considered that the State Party had subjected Mr. Al-Awdah to enforced disappearance. The Committee further considered that the State Party would breach Mr. Al-Awdah's right to life if it were to sentence him to the death penalty. It considered that, in the absence of measures taken to fulfil Mr. Al-Awdah's due process rights taking into account his disabilities, the State Party's authorities had breached his right of access to justice. The Committee considered that the State Party had breached his right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability, and, given the degree of suffering involved in prolonged isolation, his rights to respect for his physical and mental integrity and not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The Committee therefore concluded that the State Party had breached Mr. Al-Awdah's rights under articles 5 (1), (2) and (3), 10, 12 (1), 13, 14, 15, 21 and 29 (b), read alone and in conjunction with articles 3 (b), (c) and (f) and 4, of the Convention, articles 15, 17 and 25, read alone and in conjunction with articles 3 (b), (c) and (f), 4, 5 (3) and 14, and article 10.

11. The Committee recommended that the State Party review Mr. Al-Awdah's case to ensure that he had a fair and public trial, or release him; immediately cease, investigate, prevent the reoccurrence of and establish accountability for acts of reprisal against Mr. Al-Awdah and his relatives; and provide Mr. Al-Awdah with an effective remedy. The Committee also recommended that the State Party take measures to prevent similar violations in the future, including by: reviewing counter-terrorism legislation; preventing, investigating and establishing accountability for enforced disappearance and incommunicado detention; ensuring the provision of adequate healthcare and reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities in detention; ensuring that mechanisms competent to monitor detention were independent and effective; giving due consideration to abolishing the death penalty; and training law enforcement personnel on the scope of the Convention and the Optional Protocol.
