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Statement submitted by Asian People's Disability Alliance, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2011/100.

Statement*

Diaspora community's assistance for disabled children's education and inclusion

Asian People's Disability Alliance is a registered charity in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland set up over 21 years ago for the needs of Asian disabled people and children in the United Kingdom. We have expanded our knowledge and share our expertise with our colleagues in the Global South.

We would like to bring this development awareness presentation for the 2011 annual ministerial review when it will focus on "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education".

This "development awareness" is based on its partnership work with voluntary services overseas under the Diaspora Volunteering Initiative funded by the Department for International Development, which recruited and mobilized the diaspora professional volunteers and deployed them to carry out activities for the benefit of disabled people and those with mental health needs in a rural area of a developing country. During the past few years, a tremendous effort was made to implement the internationally agreed goals and commitments with regard to education. However, applying these efforts to target education and equality for disabled children has lagged behind.

We believe that Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals to achieve universal primary education fundamentally ignores the special and specific educational needs of disabled children. Therefore better and more reflective indicators need to be put in place to measure the actual numbers of disabled children achieving primary education. This indicator will enable Governments to understand the situation and put appropriate measures in place to positively assist disabled children.

The entrenched negative factors like stigma, superstitions, prejudice and other obstacles still work against disabled people's participation and inclusion in the spheres of society, compounded by lack of capacity and resources in some developing countries, tend to place disabled children at the bottom of the list of groups neglected by the wider society. Cultural and religious inhibitions also play a part in preventing many disabled children, particularly those with learning difficulties, to receive independent living support and training that could enable some of them to live independent lives and become contributing members of society but instead, they are confined to a life of dependency and charity.

The diaspora community's assistance

The expatriate diaspora community has over the years managed to acquire skills and professional qualifications and some of them have successfully established businesses. This community is in a good position to contribute their expertise. They can assist individually or collectively and set up disability-specific projects in rural areas. The community can recruit diaspora teachers and other professionals and redirect their expertise to meet the educational needs of disabled children who have no access to education. The expatriate community can organize

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

advisory or steering groups, panels or forums of experts and offer their expertise, backed by mobilized resources, and target strategically the policy and service planning departments, ministries and other government bodies of developing countries in order to enshrine equality and social inclusion measures for disabled people.
