

February Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 - Declaration

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The post-2015 political declaration must include persons with disabilities to create a fully inclusive society for all and truly to ensure that no one is left behind. Approximately one billion people – 15 per cent of the world's population – are persons with disabilities. They must be recognised by all Member States and be included in the new development framework. Eighty per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries, such as mine in Kenya.

It means that for instance, Kenyan women with disabilities are systematically discriminated as well as socially excluded from any development initiatives. Their standard of living is by all means not adequate and it has an impact not only for themselves but also for their family. Women with disabilities are simply not considered equal citizens: they cannot inherit, they cannot own resources, they cannot have access to quality education. You, as leaders of the world, have the power to change that!

These are my two key recommendations for achieving an inspirational Declaration:

- 1. Including an explicit reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).** This is essential because the UN CRPD, adopted by all Member States of the UN General Assembly, is a legal obligation for the 152 countries that have ratified it, and represents a development treaty for all States to ensure that no one is left behind.
- 2. Ensuring that the post-2015 development framework leaves no one behind by explicitly referencing persons with disabilities.** This is imperative since persons with disabilities were absent from the Millennium Declaration and consequently left out of policies and processes related to the Millennium Development Goals. If we are to build on the MDGs, it is crucial that the one billion-strong population of persons with disabilities are not excluded again in the new development framework.

I would like to now provide two main points of feedback on the draft elements for the Declaration:

- 1. The Declaration must guarantee that upon agreement of a new set of sustainable development goals that no target will be considered met unless met for all, including persons with disabilities.** The three pillars of sustainable development which are inclusive economic development growth, social

development, and environmental protection can only be achieved through specific actions, which are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

- 2. The Declaration must include persons with disabilities when addressing inequality.** This is essential since persons with disabilities often encounter overlapping inequalities, such as women, girls, and youth with disabilities, indigenous peoples with disabilities, and older persons with disabilities. Due to this, inequality cannot be discussed without the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

In closing, in order for us to truly create an inclusive society for all, I would like to emphasize that we have a duty to leave no one behind, including persons with disabilities.