

Excellences, colleagues and partners,

It is a great honour for me to speak to you on behalf of persons with disabilities.

I would like to start by thanking Member States and the UN system for working together with us the people on designing the post-2015 development agenda. The conversation on shaping the new framework has been one of the most inclusive efforts in UN history. What is emerging from this dialogue is a remarkable vision: a universal agenda, applicable to all countries and to all people with a determination to eradicate extreme poverty and create true sustainable development.

Persons with disabilities would like to embrace this vision of the 21st century. As the Chair of the International Disability Alliance, the world's largest network of global and regional organizations of persons with disabilities, I have hope that the new framework has opened doors for us to participate, to be included and to be recognized as active contributing members of society without any discrimination or fear of being left out or left behind. Not only today, but also in the future toward 2030 and beyond.

Let me tell you about us. We, persons with disabilities, comprise an estimated population of one billion people globally, of whom eighty per cent live in developing countries and are overrepresented among those living in absolute poverty.

Persons with disabilities often encounter discrimination and exclusion on a daily basis. This means, in particular, pervasive exclusion from development programmes and funds, education, employment, healthcare services, communication, information, infrastructure, economic empowerment programmes and transport services. In addition, the effects of climate change, such as natural disasters and food insecurity as well as conflict situations, make us, persons with disabilities, disproportionately affected.

Let me give you a real-life example occurring as I speak. Exclusion happens even here at the United Nations; today, in this very room. Accessibility is not just about physical access: the Deaf community and hard of hearing people are not able to participate in or watch this meeting due to lack of sign language interpretation and captioning services. They are not able to participate in this process and learn the diverse views of colleagues, Member States and the UN system.

Despite this lack of inclusion, persons with disabilities remain committed to this agenda and are confident that any challenge can be solved if we work together. We, all constituencies of persons with disabilities from all regions of the world, are ready to be part of and contribute to the implementation process starting from design and planning, through to the monitoring and implementation phases. Let us collaborate with you on the creation of an

inclusive society and ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are realized through the new framework in all aspects, from the local and national, to regional and global levels.

We recommend:

- To ensure that interlinkages are established between the post-2015 development agenda and existing mechanisms, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
- To design national implementation plans of the post-2015 development framework with and inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- To establish safeguards so the new framework does not create or perpetuate institutional, attitudinal, physical, legal, and information and communications technology (ICT) barriers to the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities.
- To strengthen the capacity of national statistical agencies to measure the progress achieved for persons with disabilities by disaggregation of data by disability status, sex and age. In addition, to measure that the most marginalized are lifted out of poverty through the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

Poverty eradication and the achievement of economic growth can ensure the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. As such, the new framework must be people centered with participation at all levels. We, persons with disabilities, should be recognized as equal partners and work with all of you - Governments, the UN system and civil society - in the post-2015 implementation process. In the words of the 1945 Charter of the United Nations, I would like to close with a promise and call that we, persons with disabilities, are ready to build a sustainable world without poverty and discrimination.

Thank you.