



PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
333 EAST 38TH STREET 9TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10016
Tel: (212) 213-5583 Fax: (212) 692-2498
E-mail: pmun@southafrica-newyork.net

**STATEMENT BY H.E MS LULU XINGWANA,
MINISTER FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES,
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

(07 September 2011 – 15h00 – 18h00): “Enabling Development, Realizing CRPD through Participation, Employment and International Cooperation” (Article 32).

Article 32: International Cooperation

South Africa acknowledges the importance of international cooperation in support of national efforts towards the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its Optional Protocol in order to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities in every state, particularly in developing countries. This cooperation must be undertaken among States, as well as in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations including civil society and organizations of persons with disabilities. Such partnerships should promote and create equal opportunities and accessible and inclusive participation of persons with disabilities.

South Africa has acceded to, or ratified most of the African regional and international human rights instruments in the area of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. South Africa is one of countries in the world where the Constitution expressly requires that in interpreting and applying the provisions in the Bill of Rights, a particular attention be given to relevant international laws, and comparable international standards and experiences. Government policies on disability are progressive and in line with the constitution, which embodies the principles of social justice, dignity and equality of opportunities. This embodiment in the Constitution creates an excellent, sustainable environment for the implementation of the UNCRPD.

Other measures taken to ensure the inclusive involvement of persons with disabilities in international cooperation includes ; participation in the work of the Second African Decade Programme of Persons with Disabilities with specific focus on the Continental Plan of Action with priorities such as HIV and AIDS, Education, Employment and Empowerment.

South Africa is also a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol ratified as early as 2007. The Convention asserts the rights to education, health, employment, adequate living conditions, freedom of movement, and freedom from exploitation and equal recognition before the law for persons with disabilities which South Africa is closer to achieving.

The country regularly participates in actions toward facilitating and supporting capacity-building, through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices.

In order to encourage capacity building, exchange of information and best practice, South Africa aims to nominate a candidate for election to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

South Africa also welcomes the appointment of the special Rapporteur on disability to the United Nations Mr Shuaib Chalklen, who is doing a good job in the disability sector globally, which is good for Africa's participation in disability issues.

South Africa recognises that a disability mainstreaming strategy is a critical approach of including disability issues within the Millennium Development Goals. Disability has been effectively mainstreamed in some aspects of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) related to health, primary education and gender equality.

A challenge is presented by lack of coherent, disaggregated data to measure progress with regards to the MDGs and disability. South Africa will utilize the opportunity of the review of the MDGs to ensure greater awareness of disability mainstreaming within the MDGs, the policies and services towards their realisation.

South Africa prioritized among others, the International Cooperation, Trade and Security (ICTS) Ministerial Cluster activities for the next five (5) years and beyond. The Ministerial Cluster is mandated to implement and maintain exchange controls and engage in diplomatic relations creating and achieving a "Better South Africa in a Better Africa and a Better World".

Consistent with the African Union agenda, South Africa remains committed to strengthening trade relations with global partners and to fostering African development.

In order to progressively realize the rights stated in the present Convention through international cooperation, South Africa recommends that States Parties take appropriate measures such as development cooperation, exchange programmes, bilateral and trilateral agreements, domestication of international instruments, development of mainstreaming norms and standards in line with international laws.

Finally South Africa will continue strengthening internal and bilateral relations with countries throughout the world, promoting interests and strengthening relations on domestic priorities in education, health, rural development, land reform, food security, investment opportunities, work creation and crime prevention, which will promote sustainable livelihood of persons with disabilities.

Thank you.