

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Yanerit Morg
Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico at the
Opening ceremony for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities
3 December 2010**

Mr. Thomas Stelzer, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs (DESA),

Distinguish Ambassadors of the Philippines and Tanzania.

Ms. Maria-Veronica Reina, Executive Director of the Global Partnership for Disability and Development

Mr. Werner Obermeyer, World Health Organization Executive Director of New York Office,

Dear Colleagues,

It is really a pleasure for me to participate in this important event to commemorate the International Day of Persons With Disabilities. The theme of this year “Keeping the promise: mainstreaming disability in the Millennium Development Goals” is particular relevant. As we approach the year 2015, there is an urgent need to step up our efforts to include persons with disabilities in the development agenda at the international, regional and national level.

But inclusion and development policies could not promote effectively the wellbeing of persons with disabilities if their human rights are not equally promoted and fully respected.

Last September, during the High Level Meeting of the MDGs, the World Leaders recognize that the respect for and promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of an effective work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and that policies and actions must focus on those living in the most vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities.

Taking in to account this important link, I would like to focus my remarks on the impact of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the achievement of the MDGs and other international agreed development goals.

Since the entry into force of the Convention in 2008 the number of States Parties has increase dramatically. Today, 147 States are signatories and 96 are States Parties, each year, the Conventions advances towards universal ratification.

As you know, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities marks a "paradigm shift" in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It leaves behind

the erroneous notion that persons with disabilities should be considered as "objects" of social protection or charity, towards viewing them as persons with rights, who are capable of making their own decisions as well as being active members of society.

The Convention is a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. For instance, it is the only human rights treaty with a specific provision on International Cooperation -Article 32-.

Furthermore, the Convention requires States Parties to collect information, including statistical and research data, to formulate and implement policies and identify and address the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights. This is very important, because lack of statistics is one of the main problems when assessing if social programs and development strategies target persons with disabilities effectively.

Dear Colleagues

Mexico has had the honor of being the President of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention for the last two years. The Conference has established itself as a unique space to share best practices between member States and promote an interactive dialogue with experts from the Committee and civil society. The strategies and activities undertaken by agencies, funds and programs of the UN in order to mainstream disability issues into their work are also presented in a special segment.

This year, for example, the Conference discussed priority issues concerning Article 19, which outlines the rights of persons with disabilities to live freely in their respective communities, Article 24 on the right to education and Article 11 regarding situation of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

The experts addressed the most common barriers for the implementation of Article 19. The key themes of choice, autonomy, deinstitutionalization, full participation, and supportive resources were reviewed.

In the case of the right to education a wide range of issues were considered. In particular: insufficient data to determine rates of disability in schools, poorly designed inclusive practices, inadequate resources, negative attitudes towards disability and the consequences of excluding children with disabilities from the education system in terms of future dependence.

One of the key suggestions made was the need to accelerate the shift in societies from special education to mainstreamed inclusive education. In order to achieve this goal specific measures are needed to incorporate more teachers with disabilities into the regular system and provide training for teachers, staff and peers.

I am sure that in the upcoming years the Conference of States Parties would continue to promote substantive discussions and engage Member States and relevant

stakeholders in promoting the full realization of the human rights of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the Conference should enhance its relation with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This treaty body would provide much needed support to the implementation of the Convention through its general comments and recommendations presented to Member States that present their reports to the consideration of the Committee.

As we continue to promote development policies with a specific human rights approach the United Nations can play an important role through its activities at the country level.

Mexico wants to congratulate the United Nations Development Group for the endorsement of the Guidance Note on Disability. This note would provide much needed direction to UN Country Teams to incorporate disabilities issues in their plans and activities in collaboration with Governments and other partners. The Government of Mexico expresses its intention to work closely with the Resident Coordinator and the UN family in our country to promote the use of this important tool.

Thank You