

**MESSAGE BY H.E OMBENI SEFUE, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**THEME: *REALIZING THE MDGs FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TOWARD 2015 AND BEYOND***

**3 DECEMBER, 2010**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As a leading sponsor of the recent General Assembly resolution A/C.3/65/L.12 entitled “Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities”, Tanzania is grateful and honored for this opportunity to speak at this celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

As we continue to implement the Millennium Development Goals it is important that persons with disabilities are involved and are regarded as active participants and beneficiaries of development. This is their right, and it is our duty to grant it. It is unfortunate that when the Millennium Development Goals were launched, persons with disabilities were not explicitly considered or mentioned, even though they obviously have special needs. This oversight, if not addressed, will impede the achievement of many of the MDGs since one out of every five of the world’s has some form of disability. That is why this resolution A/C.3/65/L.12 is so important.

This resolution is an affirmation by the international community that the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) must address the needs and the poverty of the hundreds of millions of persons with disabilities, especially those who live in developing countries. Needless to say that the links between poverty and disability are so strong that unless concrete and specific steps are taken to address the issue, poverty will continue to persist and the MDGs will just be goals that will not be fully realized.

We call on Member States, international organizations and all other relevant stakeholders to promote the realization of the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities by, inter alia, explicitly including and mainstreaming disability issues and involving persons with disabilities in national plans and tools designed to contribute to the full realization of the Goals. We also ask development partners to assist developing countries in building the financial and human resource capacity to respond to the specific needs, including education, health and employment of people with disabilities.

Lastly, I urge governments and all stakeholders to ensure that persons with disabilities and their organizations are an integral part of all development processes. In this way, their special needs will be taken into account and their rightful integration and involvement in the development of their countries will be realized.

My Government will continue to do its part, and among many of the initiatives, we have made sure that people with disabilities are always represented in Parliament. There is much more we can always do to ensure that people with disabilities, in all societies, are both participants and beneficiaries of social and economic development at all levels.

May we always keep them in our minds, not only on this Day of Persons with Disabilities, but always, everytime, everywhere.

**I thank you**