

Observance of the 2019 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

United Nations Secretariat, New York

3 December 2019, GA Building, Conference Room 4 (10:00am – 5:00pm)

Since 1992, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) has been annually observed on 3 December around the world. The theme for the 2019 IDPD is **‘Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda’**. The theme focuses on the empowerment and the leadership of persons with disabilities to take action on the inclusive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pledges to ‘leave no one behind’, recognizing disability as a cross-cutting issue, to be considered in the implementation of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This 2019 observance of the IDPD at the UN Headquarters will consist of an official opening, a panel discussion on new initiatives for disability inclusion, and a spotlight event on the theme of **‘Sport for all for peace and development’** to discuss sport as a powerful enabler of peace and sustainable development through the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

Opening of the Observance of the IDPD at the UN Headquarters (10:00am – 11:00am)

Division for Inclusive Social Development/DESA

The Opening of the Commemoration Event of the IDPD will highlight the importance of leadership of persons with disabilities for the 2030 Development Agenda. It will include statements by global actors that will take stock of progress and share a vision for a disability-inclusive global agenda, addressing the three pillars of the work of the United Nations.

Panel: New initiatives for disability inclusion (11:00am – 1:00pm)

Important initiatives for the disability inclusion have been launched this year across the three pillars of the UN system: peace and security, human rights, and development. This panel session will address the initiatives and discuss next steps. The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) was launched by the UN Secretary General in June to transform the way the UN works on disability, operationalizing the disability inclusion across its system. UN entities and other stakeholders are individually and collectively taking action to mainstream disability and build an inclusive, accessible and sustainable work for all. Progress has been made at many fronts to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities, their rights, well-being and perspectives in the global agenda. Accessibility – an essential means and the precondition for

an inclusive society and development – continues to gain more visibility and deliver results through the efforts of the international community. A first ever Security Council Resolution to protect persons with disabilities in armed conflict (S/RES/2475(2019)), further articulated the important nexus between disability and peace and security and marked an important step forward for persons with disabilities who are particularly at risk during conflicts.

A five-year ‘Safe Ground Campaign (2019-2023) was initiated by UNMAS. with the slogan: ‘Turning minefields into playing fields’. The aim is to garner attention and provide assistance to the survivors of explosive ordnance through the promotion of sport and play. Similarly, sport can support armed services personnel and veterans with disabilities, facilitating their inclusion and participation through events such as the Invictus Games, an international adaptive multi-sport event launched in 2014.

Civil society and the private sector are also taking the lead in supporting the inclusion of persons with disabilities at the global, regional, national and local action. New and emerging networks are spearheading the mainstreaming of disability in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs.

Following the 2019 IDPD, in December 2019, the Government of Qatar will organize a global conference on disability and development to step up the ongoing efforts by global, national, regional and local actors to keep the promise of the 2030 development agenda for all.

The 2019 IDPD Spotlight Event: Sport for all for Development and Peace (3:00pm – 5:00pm)

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Spotlight Discussion: Sport for all for Development and Peace

The preamble of the 2030 Agenda acknowledges sport as an important enabler for sustainable development and peace. This message was consolidated by the 2018 Secretary-General’s report “Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace” (A/73/325) and the General Assembly’s resolution on “Sport as an enabler of sustainable development” (A/RES/73/24). ‘Sport’ as defined by the Kazan Action Plan comprises sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, and organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms.

Sport is a powerful tool to promote multilateralism and to bring people together. In the context of peace building and conflict prevention/resolution as well as post-disaster relief, sport can promote peace, tolerance and understanding.

Article 30 of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) established the right of persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities. In June 2019, a dedicated high-level panel of 12th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

underlined for persons with disabilities, sport has the power to change perceptions, prejudices and behavior and is powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks. Through persons with disabilities continue to be excluded from recreational and sporting activities due to misconceptions, prejudice and lack of accessible facilities, Member States and civil society stakeholders are increasingly supporting policy interventions that are improving accessibility and availability of sporting opportunities for persons with disabilities.