

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

Statement by Amb. Joanna Wronecka

- I am very pleased to speak today exactly one year after the first ever meeting of the Security Council dedicated to persons with disabilities organized by Poland and six months after the adoption of the Security Council resolution 2475 on persons with disabilities presented by Poland and the United Kingdom
- The promotion of rights of persons with disabilities has been a long-standing priority of Polish government. Therefore, when we were elected as non-permanent Member for the Security Council we were determined to bring this important matter to attention of the Security Council this important matter.
- Persons with disabilities are often forgotten during the time of peace and they are even more forgotten during the times of war. Over one billion people worldwide suffer from some form of disability, half of whom are in states affected by armed conflict. Persons with disabilities are at higher risk of injury or death during an armed conflict, either as specific targets or through inability to protect themselves. Particularly for those with newly acquired disabilities, living in conflict means struggling to obtain not only necessary medical treatment, but also access to food, sanitation, and water.
- Furthermore, humanitarian responses concentrate on meeting the immediate basic needs of an average population and, as a consequence, they tend to neglect or simply ignore the specific needs of this group. And contrary to this practice, they should be a prioritized group in the Protection of Civilians framework.
- Persons with disabilities are largely excluded from peace-building efforts - often due to prejudice. Their voices are also not heard at the table of the Security Council neither. Their needs are therefore not adequately addressed.
- Therefore, since the beginning of our work on resolution 2475 - we set ourselves three goals that we want to achieve. First is strengthening the data collection and reporting on persons with disabilities. Second is the need to build the capacity and knowledge on the needs and rights of

persons with disabilities among peacekeepers and peacebuilders. Last but not least with this resolution we want to empower and engage persons with disabilities in conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction and peacebuilding. We wanted to make sure persons with disabilities and their organizations are not subject of the discussions in the Security Council but they are our partners. The resolution encourages the SC to invite briefers with disabilities to the Security Council and meet persons with disabilities and the organisation representing their rights during the field visits of the SC.

- We are very proud that this important resolution has been adopted unanimously by the Security Council with almost 70 co-sponsors showing the strong support of the SC and international community for this matter.
- Is our common obligation to make sure that people with disabilities are no longer left behind in the times of armed conflicts and humanitarian crises. Poland is determined to be part of this endeavor, also after our term at the Security Council comes to the end.