



PRESS RELEASE

UN High-level Meeting: Global Development Goals Must Include Persons with Disabilities

Countries to call for actions that enable persons with disabilities to be fully included in education, health and employment opportunities

New York, 20 September—World leaders will gather together at a High-level Meeting on Disability and Development on 23 September to consider and adopt a resolution that calls for disability-inclusive development—development that affords persons with disabilities opportunities for obtaining full and productive employment and decent work and access to basic social services.

In the proposed outcome document for the Meeting, “The Way Forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond,” which has already been negotiated and will be submitted to Member States for adoption, countries reaffirm their resolve to work together for the advancement of the rights of all persons with disabilities, which are deeply rooted in the goals of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is estimated that 15 per cent of the world’s population, or one billion people, live with a disability, 80 per cent of whom live in developing countries. Recognizing that the rights of the world’s persons with disabilities have “yet to be fully translated into the inclusion of disability in internationally agreed development goals,” the outcome document stresses the importance of ensuring accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of development and of giving due consideration to all persons with disabilities in the emerging post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, “A world that recognizes the rights of the disabled, ensures that people with disabilities can be productive members of their communities and nations, and provides an inclusive and accessible environment, is a world that will benefit all of us -- with or without disabilities.”



He added that, while several States have taken major steps to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, “for too many persons with disabilities, stigma, discrimination and exclusion remain a fact of everyday life.” The challenge of the High-level Meeting on Disability and Development, he said, “is to energize the international community to move from commitment to action. As we strive to accelerate our work for the Millennium Development Goals, and as we consider the post-2015 development framework, greater recognition must be given to the issue of disability in sustainable, inclusive and equitable development.”

“Disability inclusive development is not a luxury nor a privilege,” said General Assembly President John Ashe. “It is a right that all human kind must embrace.”

In addition to world leaders, the High-level Meeting will also include over 800 representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities. Stevie Wonder, who is a UN Messenger of Peace advocating on disability issues, will address the opening of the Meeting.

The outcome document calls for the further engagement of Member States, the United Nations and all its agencies, and the Secretary-General to realize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond. It also encourages the international community “to seize every opportunity to include disability” in the global development agenda and to give due consideration to disability in the emerging post 2015 UN development agenda.

For the full text of the outcome document, see http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/hlmdd/a_68_l.1.doc

Additional information on the High-level Meeting can be found at <http://www.un.org/en/ga/68/meetings/disability/>

Background information on the High-level Meeting can also be found at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1590>

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