

54th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Summary

Multi-stakeholder panel discussion:

Implementation of the Post-2015 development agenda in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

5 February 2016

The Commission held a multi-stakeholder panel discussion on implementation of the post-2015 development agenda in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under sub-item 3 (b). The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms. Catalina Devandas-Aguilar delivered a key note speech, followed by presentations from the following panelists: Mr. Osamu Nagase, visiting research professor at Ritsumeikan University, Japan; Ms. Li Xiaomei, Deputy Director-General of the International Department of China Disabled Persons' Federation; Mr. Valery Nikitich Rukhledev, President of the All-Russian Society of the Deaf, Russian Federation; and Ms. Christine Brautigam, Director of the Intergovernmental Support Division at the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The Panel was chaired by His Excellency Dr. Ion Jinga Chair of the Bureau to the Commission and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations, and was moderated by Mr. Vladimir Cuk, Executive Director, International Disability Alliance, a civil society network of global and regional organizations of persons with disabilities and their families.

Overview

Panelists reviewed the historical evolution of the work for persons with disabilities within the United Nations and the critical role played by the Commission for Social Development in promoting the rights and advancement of persons with disabilities in the global development agenda over the past decades. The progressive shift in approaches to disability, from a medical-welfare perspective to a social and rights-based approach, was discussed and panelists commended the tremendous progress made in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in international normative frameworks. The strengthened understanding and recognition of the urgency of including persons with disabilities and leaving no one behind in international development frameworks is well reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This marks a significant achievement for persons with disabilities, recalling that persons with disabilities were largely invisible in the framework and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Social policies inclusive of persons with disabilities are sound investments in society, and achievement of the SDGs relies on the involvement and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all development efforts. The relationship between social development and human rights, as articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, was emphasized by panelists as being interlinked, indivisible and mutually reinforcing. Panelists stressed that the international community need to incorporate both a social development and

human rights perspective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and pursue a paradigm shift that places the rights, perspectives and wellbeing of persons with disabilities at the center of all development efforts.

Examples of good practices from countries and programmes illustrate how national practices have evolved and can be used to inform and guide future work of the United Nations and Member States. Processes to strengthen disability-responsive measures and inclusion emphasized the importance of involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all stages of policy and programme design, implementation and monitoring. Intersectionality between disability and gender and multiple forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities were also given emphasis due to the multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization faced by groups, such as women and girls with disabilities. The experience of mainstreaming disability in gender empowerment efforts as well as a need for adding a gender lens to the work in the disability field was highlighted. Panelists noted the value of sharing lessons from country level experiences to multi-stakeholder forums to inform, shape and strengthen future actions in social development for persons with disabilities.

Future role of the Commission in advancing social development for persons with disabilities

Panelists discussed the role of the Commission for Social Development in supporting a coherent and cohesive approach to the rights of persons with disabilities within the United Nations system and, particularly, in relation to monitoring and measuring progress. Existing mechanisms to advance the rights of persons with disabilities the United Nations system, including United Nations departments, specialized agencies, funds and programmes; inter-governmental processes such as the General Assembly, ECOSOC, CSocD, as well as Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Human Rights Council; the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and special mandate holders, including the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility, were considered by panelists and participants, bearing in mind the importance of avoiding duplication. Close cooperation between the United Nations system and Member States is key to ensure successful and coherent implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The paucity of available data and information on persons with disabilities and the challenges they face to inclusion and participation in society and development is a significant barrier. It was noted that effective actions and measurement of progress rely on quality and readily available data. Commitments to leaving no one behind in the implementation of the SDGs also require the existence and reporting of accurate data and information on the situation of persons with disabilities in development. Political commitment at all levels is necessary to ensure monitoring and evaluation mechanisms include persons with disabilities. The historical role of the Commission in bringing about international commitment for development that is inclusive of persons with disabilities was well-noted in this regard. It was proposed that the Commission build on progress made by taking on a leadership role in monitoring the implementation of the

2030 Agenda for persons with disabilities. This resonated among panelists and Member States, who noted with particular concern the need for the United Nations to better support the collection and reporting of data disaggregated by disability.

Various proposals for monitoring mechanisms to mainstream disability in development and to advance the rights, perspectives and wellbeing of persons with disabilities in society and development were put forward. There was significant support for the establishment of an annual multi-stakeholder panel under the Commission, to discuss, share experiences and review progress in the implementation of the SDGs for persons with disabilities. The focus of the panel could be aligned with the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) periodical themes and findings can directly feed into HLPF dialogues. A proposal was made for the creation of a standing forum on disability and development within the Commission or under the General Assembly. The possibility of the Economic and Social Council creating a permanent space in which United Nations agencies, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other relevant mandate holders can analyze progress in the implementation of the SDGs, coordinate efforts to ensure coherence of approaches and support States in their reporting to the ECOSOC HLPF was raised. It was also suggested that a high-level technical panel be established to discuss the implementation of the SDGs, ensuring the participation of all stakeholders, such as persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, academia, civil society organizations and local governments.