**SIDE EVENT**

**MANDATE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

**Synergies among Universal Human Rights System in the framework of Agenda 2030**

March 7, 2018 11:30 hrs, room XXIV Palais des Nations, Geneva

**Co-organized by**

The Special Envoy of the Secretary General on disability and Accessibility,, the Permanent Mission of Chile, the Permanent Mission of México, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and International Disability Alliance,

**Concept Note**

**Objective of the Meeting**: Present the mandate of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General on Disability and Accessibility, Ms. María Soledad Cisternas, and discuss about synergies of this mandate with the universal mechanisms of Human Rights in the framework of Agenda 2030 and the full implementation of the CRPD.

**Background:**

The work of the United Nations in the field of disability is deeply rooted in the goal of its Charter: progress in economic and social development and promotion of human rights for a peaceful and prosperous world. As guided by the General Assembly, the international framework on disability is built upon a set of disability-specific instruments, notably the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Furthermore, in recent years, the General Assembly of UN adopted a series of resolutions on advancement of inclusive development, promotion of rights for persons with disabilities and accessibility, including:

* Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: the way forward, a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond (2013); Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond (2015); Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities (2017); four resolutions on the CRPD and its Optional Protocol (2008, 2009, 2011 and 2013); strengthening of treaty bodies which recognizes in the oversight system the importance of monitoring access, reasonable adjustment and participation of experts with disabilities in different human rights committees (2014); and Towards the full realization of an inclusive and accessible United Nations for persons with disabilities (2016) inter alia.

In the other hand the Human Right Council has also a long way on the promotion of the Rights of persons with disabilities. For example, the Annual Reports of the Human Rights Council presents on the last five years, specific resolutions: 22/3 The work and employment of persons with disabilities (21 March 2013), 25/20: The right to education of persons with disabilities (28 March 2014), 26/20: Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (27 June 2014), 28/4: The right of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community on an equal basis with others(26 March 2015), 31/6: The rights of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (23 March 2016) and 35/6: Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (22 June 2017).

The Secretary General has stressed, “Let us also renew our promise, engraved in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to leave no one behind and ensure that all persons can contribute as active members to peaceful and prosperous societies.” in his message referring to persons with disabilities on the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day (2 April 2017).

In this sense, the Secretary-General has highlighted the importance he assigns to persons with disabilities by deciding to appoint a Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility, sending thus a strong signal to the international community on the implementation challenges in the field of rights and sustainable development.

On June 20, 2017, he named María Soledad Cisternas as Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility. In this role, and in terms of her designation, she will promote the rights of persons with disabilities and accessibility, focusing on the guiding principles of the Convention, and on the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Human rights and inclusive and equitable development, as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda, are correlated and interdependent and should generate a mutually reinforcing effect for the implementation in both spheres, for equality and full inclusion of persons with disabilities in social and socio-economic development, in ensuring the promises of leaving no one behind. In today’s world, the interaction between these two spheres must be acknowledged; it is not possible to contemplate their implementation through separate and independent channels.

The SDGs and the Convention intersect and reinforce with each other, providing a strong guidance to the work of the United Nations in various areas relating to persons with disabilities, including in accessibility, which is an essential that cuts across many issues and bridges achievement of sustainable development and the enjoyment of human rights.

**Participants**

Opening Remarks and moderator, H.E. Socorro Flores Permanent Representative of Mexico and co-chair of Group of Friends of the CRPD.

Panelist

1. Ms. María Soledad Cisternas, Special Envoy of the Secretary General on Disability and Accessibility.
2. Mr. Facundo Chávez representative of Office the High Commissioner of HR
3. Ms. Catalina Devandas, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disability
4. Ms. Silvia Quan, International Disability Alliance.