**First informal discussion on the HLPF Ministerial Declaration**

16th of June, 3-6pm Conference room 6.

**Statement on behalf of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities**

Thank you excellency.

I am speaking today on behalf of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities.

I would like to thank you for presenting the elements for the draft HLPF Ministerial Declaration.

Persons with disabilities wholeheartedly welcome the theme of this year’s HLPF, which is the overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda: to leave no one behind. We have been actively engaged throughout the post-2015 process and — since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda — we are now supporting the implement of the SDGs worldwide. We are committed to their realization for everyone, including ALL persons with disabilities. Therefore, we would like to make the following recommendations towards the Ministerial Declaration:

1. First, we recommend that the discussion papers on the theme of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, submitted by Major Groups and other Stakeholders, are recognized as important contributions to the HLPF within the HLPF Ministerial Declaration;
2. Secondly, we recommend that, among the preparatory processes, the meeting of the Major Groups and other Stakeholder to be held on the 10th of July, prior to the HLPF, is recognized and that the outcome of this meeting is shared with all Member States;
3. And thirdly, let me emphasize the involvement of Major Groups and other Stakeholders, and the inclusiveness of the implementation processes. Persons with disabilities are among those who are most often left behind. This is because we face multiple and compounding barriers: institutional barriers, attitudinal barriers, physical barriers and legal barriers. We also face multiple barriers specifically to participation, including to information and communication. And so, we would like to recommend that the HLPF Ministerial Declaration clearly encourages Member States and the UN system, at all its levels, to eliminate these barriers, including those that prevent us from participating as equals.

Finally, in my personal capacity, as a member of the deaf community, allow me to say that I am looking forward to attending an inclusive and accessible High-level Political Forum, which itself will leave no one behind.

Thank you.