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

**First informal negotiation on the HLPF Ministerial Declaration 2017**

**June 15th, 2017**

Thank you excellency.

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

Persons with disabilities wholeheartedly welcome the theme of this year’s HLPF Ministerial Declaration: “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world".

We believe that persons with disabilities must be put at the forefront of any poverty eradication discussion as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development paragraph 23 not only recognizes that persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable, but explicitly states that more than 80 per cent of persons with disabilities live in poverty. As such, we are gravely concerned that the Ministerial Declaration falls short in addressing the challenges persons with disabilities face with regards to poverty.

We strongly recommend that the Ministerial Declaration include a stand alone paragraph dedicated to persons with disabilities in which urges Member States to introduce measures and policies that ensures persons with disabilities are protected from poverty and benefit equally from mainstream poverty alleviation programmes.

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of explicitly referencing persons with disabilities in this manner. All of our lessons learnt have shown that persons with disabilities cannot be passively included, but rather require the full, intentional commitment of us all.

Finally, we remain at your disposal to further strengthen the text and we have shared with the UN Secretariat concrete language recommendations.

Thank you.