

# **FIFTEEN PERCENT**

a photography project  
**BY CHRISTIAN TASSO**

# **EXHIBITION**

palais des nations

# **GENEVA**

# **2018**



United Nations  
Human Rights

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

# LIKE NEVER BEFORE

media holds a powerful and present force in the daily lives of every citizen of the world. It plays a significant role in telling stories and shaping the images of individuals and groups within our society. Today, media continues to portray persons with disabilities as passive victims in need of treatment, charity and benevolence. Where there may be a rare positive headline concerning them, commonly the message is equally misinformed, depicting them as superheroes having surmounted the “unsurmountable” to accomplish a feat which society never expected of them. These stories continue to have at their base the division of “us” and “them”, absent of a shared humanity. With the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), whose 10th anniversary of entry into force we celebrate this year, a paradigm shift has taken place to discard the charity and medical approach to persons with disabilities and to adopt a human rights based approach which recognizes their rights and calls for and values their participation and inclusion in society.

# THE PROJECT

FifteenPercent is a photography project by Italian photographer Christian Tasso about persons with disabilities across the world which commenced in 2015. It is entitled “FifteenPercent” because this is the proportion of the world’s population which is made up of persons with disabilities as estimated by the World Bank and World Health Organization.

Every frame of the project is centered on the personal story of the subject first and foremost as an individual within their personal sphere of attitudes and ambitions. Their disability becomes just one element among many which make up their identity.

FifteenPercent aims at portraying the multiple facets and identities of humanity as a celebration of difference and diversity and seeks to raise awareness and understanding that our communities are ever enriched by the diversity of its members, be they persons with disabilities, women, youth, older persons, and all other groups.

And our communities can only be strengthened by ensuring the inclusion of each of its members.

In celebration of 70 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the exhibition serves as a call to

embrace diversity as part and parcel of humanity. The portraits illustrate responses to the question posed by Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the drafters of the UDHR :

## **“WHERE, AFTER ALL DO UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS BEGIN?**

In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works.

Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice,

equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

### **THE STORIES THAT COMPOSE THE WORK DERIVE FROM:**

Italy, Ecuador, Romania, Nepal, Germany, Albania, Cuba, Mongolia, India, Kenya and Cambodia.

#### **Hashtag**

#CRPD4me  
#Inclusion4me #ADay4All  
#FifteenPercent #UDHR70

#### **Instagram**

@FifteenPercentProject  
@unitednationshumanrights

#### **Twitter**

@UNHumanRights

## The exhibition is supported by:



**Embracing Diversity**  
Catalina Devandas Aguilar  
UN Special Rapporteur on the rights  
of persons with disabilities.



International Labour Organization



MISSION PERMANENTE DE  
LA REPUBLIQUE DE BULGARIE AUPRES DE L'ONU ET  
LES AUTRES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES A GENEVE



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TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER  
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Permanent Mission of Portugal  
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**Accessibility features have been embedded into the exhibition in an effort to render the works and message accessible to a wide range of people:**

- The captions of the photographs are also presented in Braille. Braille is a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are blind or who have low vision.
- QR codes accompanying the photographs lead to audio descriptions of the images appearing in the photographs for people who are blind or who have low vision. The audio descriptions are available in the UN languages: English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Spanish and Russian.
- Large print formats of the exhibition's texts are available for persons who have low vision also in different languages.
- The video displayed in the exhibition features captioning for persons who are hard of hearing as well as international sign interpretation for deaf persons.



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