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

***Implementation at the regional and sub-regional levels***

**July 10th, 2017**

**10.30am - 1.00pm**

This year marked the first time that persons with disabilities participated in all five regional forums on sustainable development.

Engaging in the regional level sustainable development forums presented a unique opportunity for persons with disabilities to address the significant and pervasive barriers to participation encountered at all levels. The participation of persons with disabilities at the regional level also fostered collaboration with other civil society actors to highlight the cross-cutting impact of poverty on persons with disabilities. Within the Africa, Asia-Pacific, and the European Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, civil society included recommendations on how to include persons with disabilities in poverty alleviation policies within individual and collective statements. Persons with disabilities provided critical recommendations on inclusive disaster risk reduction in the Asia Pacific, increasing accessibility in the Arab region, and the importance of including persons with disabilities when integrating the 2030 Agenda into national and regional policies.

Engagement at the regional level is promising in bridging the vital experiences at the national level with the global level. However, the barriers in which hinder the critical participation of persons with disabilities must be addressed at all levels.

We are calling on governments and the UN system to:

* Ensure accessible and inclusive participation of persons with disabilities within all processes at the regional forums
* Ensure the issues highlighted by persons with disabilities at the Forums are increasingly reflected in the outcomes of the regional forums.
* Increasingly promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities within poverty eradication discussions at national, regional, and global levels.