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 >> Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining. I see that there are a few people online already. We will be waiting for a couple more minutes. And we will get Colin and Terry and then we'll get started. The caption link is available in the chat box. And I will paste it here again.

I'll come back to you in a couple of minutes. Thank you. So Matthew, you got Colin?

 >> I can see Colin on his Skype but he can't see me because my webcam is being used for this webinar.

 >> Tell him to join the webinar then he can see you.

 >> I know. I have.

 >> Thank you.

 >> Yep, he is logging in now. So he should be in in just a moment.

 >> Okay. I see he is here.

 >> Great. He has just sent me a message to say I'm on the webinar but no video. There should be a video. Can I just check that the captioner, can you see the sign interpreter?

 >> Okay. So the interpreter can actually see you.

 >> Colin said he can see me?

 >> No, no. The interpreter said she can see you but not Colin.

 >> The captioner said she can see me?

 >> Yes.

 >> Why can't Colin ‑‑ oh, he can see me now.

 >> So just chat that he can see you and you can see him and we are ready to get started. Okay? Okay. Matthew, are we ready to get started?

 >> Sorry. Just a technical glitch. I think Colin doesn't understand why we need Skype. And I am trying to explain that I need Skype so I can see him.

 >> Okay.

 >> 20 seconds.

 >> Okay. We are ready? Great. Matthew, can I ask you to mute your microphone, please?

 >> Oh, can you hear Colin as well?

 >> No, I can just hear the background noise. Just so make sure there is no feedback. So we'll get started now.

Okay.

 >> Good morning, everyone. And welcome to this first webinar for the board. Today we are going to be going over the UN system in New York. And we have with us Orsoyla Bartha who will be presenting on the system for about 45 minutes. And then we will have a question‑and‑answer session.

Thank you.

 >> ORSOLYA BARTHA: Good morning, everyone. My name is Orsoyla Bartha. And I am an IDA staff based in New York. And I have been with IDA for the last ‑‑ for more than five years. And my role within IDA is to follow all the processes related to the Sustainable Development Goals, but today I am going to talk about the UN system. And I hope to talk less than 45 minutes. I'm going to walk you through from a history structure, the disability issues can be found on the UN agenda. And I will try to walk you through in a very brief overview, brief introductory way. I have a more detailed presentation that I already wrote and time is going to disseminate this presentation that will contain more in‑depth information. I will go through the whole presentation. And afterwards I will give you enough time to have a discussion on any points or clarifications or any questions that you may have.

Okay. If there are no technical difficulties, if everything is in place, then let's talk about how the UN has been created. A little bit of history. So the United Nations is an intergovernmental organization to promote international cooperation and to maintain international order. The reason why it was established is that in 1945 countries agreed they do not want to have a next World War. This thinking brought together the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China to deliberate on an international organization that can fulfill and maintain international order and peace. So they drafted basically in 1944 between August and October the UN charter that is the founding document of the United Nations.

This document has been presented to 50 countries in San Francisco in 1945 on the 24th of October. And the 50 countries signed the UN charter and with that signature established the United Nations.

Very shortly after this Poland joined as one of the signatories. So we are considering Poland as also a founding member, which means 51 Member States established the United Nations.

Just a reminder today the UN has 193 Member States. And its role is to preserve peace all over the world. The membership of the UN has grown since the 1960s, and while during the Cold War it has focused on peace and security issues. What we can tell is from 1970 onward the UN's budget focused more on economic and social development programs and issues.

So the role of the UN is changing over the decades. I will give you a couple of examples later when we discuss thematic issues. The UN is located in New York. It is its headquarters. And the headquarter is an extraterritorial ground which means it is exempt from jurisdiction of the United States, although it is geographically based ‑‑ located in the United States.

But it is not part of it. There are also other locations for the UN. These are in Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna. The UN uses six official languages, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, English and Arabic and French. The founding of the United Nations is provided as an assessed and voluntary contribution coming from Member States. Today's objective, and I'm going to give you a list that developed over the last few decades, is to maintain international peace and security, promoting Human Rights, fostering social and economic development, protecting the environment, providing humanitarian aid, addressing natural disasters and armed conflicts.

Now let me turn to the structure of the UN and to talk you through the main bodies of the UN system. All these bodies have been established in 1945 in the UN charter. This main bodies or organs are the UN General Assembly. We call it also the GA. The Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, this one is the ECOSOC, the Trusteeship Council and the International Court of Justice. So these are the five main bodies.

And a little introduction what these main organs are doing. The General Assembly, it is the main deliberative policy making and representative organ of the United Nations. All 193 Member States are present in the UN General Assembly. It is universal. All Member States are present on an equal basis and all of the Member States have one vote. The General Assembly meets annually in New York in the General Assembly hall. And the meetings, the opening of each year's General Assembly is the third week of September. That is the time when you do not want to come to New York because it is very busy. The General Assembly elects a president for a one year term among the Member States. Decisions in the General Assembly are made on a simple majority basis. However, decisions considering issues related to peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters require a two‑thirds majority. The decisions of the General Assembly are not binding except the budgetary matters. The General Assembly can make any type of recommendation on any matter except when it comes to peace and security. Because then it belongs to the Security Council.

So the work of the General Assembly is started annually in September in a way that Heads of States are coming to New York and address the General Assembly on the annual team. Usually this means that 150 or more Heads of States are gathering in New York and it is a great opportunity for them to address and showcase what they have done and achieved last year and what is the idea for the next few years to come.

Also a great opportunity for them to meet, collaborate and exchange ideas. After the opening which lasts usually two weeks the General Assembly starts its works, its work in the main Committees that are supporting the work of the General Assembly and the deliberations of the General Assembly.

The main Committees of the General Assembly are organized along thematic topics. These are, we have the first committee, in the first committee the disarmament experts are sitting and deliberating. In the second committee you have the economic and financial experts. In the third committee you have the social humanitarian cultural experts. In the fourth committee the special political and declarational experts are deliberating. The fifth committee is always taking decisions on administrative and budgetary matters relating to the functioning of the UN system. And the sixth committee, the last one is the legal Committee which again provides recommendations on legal matters related to the UN explicitly.

So the six committees support the work of the General Assembly and in the six committees, one representative, one expert from the 193 Member States is sitting in and provides the national perspective.

Next, the Security Council. The Security Council's primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 50 members, five permanent members and ten nonpermanent members. Each member has a vote. The five permanent members have the right to veto any decision. All the decisions of the Security Council are binding for all the Member States. So whatever the 15 are deciding is binding for 193 Member States.

The mandate of the Security Council is to assess threat to peace or to act on aggressions. The Security Council has the right to impose sections or authorize the use of force. The Security Council has a presidency which rotates on a monthly basis. So the General Assembly annually. The Security Council monthly. Just for you to give an idea, the permanent members since the founding of the United Nations are China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States, the winners of the second World War. The permanent members change every two years ‑‑ sorry, the term for ‑‑ sorry. The term for nonpermanent members is two years. Annually five new nonpermanent members are elected. And for now the following ten nonpermanent members are part of the Security Council Bolivia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, Uruguay.

The next organ I would like to talk about is the Economic and Social Council called also ECOSOC. This body is a principal body for coordination policy review, policy dialogue, and recommendation on economic, social and environmental issues.

Also this body is in charge to review and support the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals including the SDGs. The ECOSOC is also the central mechanism for activities carried out by the UN system and specialized agencies. So ECOSOC is overviewing, for example, the UN ‑‑ UNWOMEN, UNICEF, UNDP, but we will come to that later. The ECOSOC makes also recommendations to the UN General Assembly.

ECOSOC has only 54 members. These are Member States. And they are elected for three years' term. The President of ECOSOC is elected for a one‑year term. To understand the structure under the ECOSOC we have the so‑called subsidiary bodies. The subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC are supporting the work of the ECOSOC Council. Subsidiary bodies are, for example, the Commission for Sustainable Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Population and Development. I am mentioning these because these ‑‑ these subsidiary bodies or functional commissions will be dealing with disability issues when they are meeting.

So you understand that they are under ECOSOC in support of work of ECOSOC and ECOSOC also has regional commissions. It has regional presence in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia, Western Asia.

This is again relevant for us because these regional commissions, for example, address sustainable development at the regional platform and again they are engaging with this and the outcomes of the regional platforms are communicated to the ECOSOC in New York.

Just to mention and place, provide you with a structural understanding, the High‑Level Political Forum which oversees the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is also under the ECOSOC and it carries out its AD conference coming up in July under the auspices of the ECOSOC.

The next principal organ I would like to mention is the Trusteeship Council. The responsibility of the Trusteeship Council at the establishment was the supervision of the trust territories. Since 1994, since the trust territories became self‑governed or independent the Trusteeship Council has no more need to meet. But it still exists. And if any Member States request that it is meeting again, it can be called to meet.

The next organ is the International Court of Justice which is the only main principal organ of the UN that is not based in Europe. It is based in the Hague, Netherlands and it discusses legal disputes submitted by the state. And it has an advisory or opinion providing function if it is requested by the United Nations organs or specialized agencies.

The Secretariat which is the final organ and body of the UN is that really big tall building in New York. The Secretariat comprises of the Secretary‑General and tens of thousands of UN staff members who do carry out the day‑to‑day work of the UN as mandated by the General Assembly or any of the principal organs. Just to simplify it, all the principal organs are consisting of representatives of Member States. But everyday decision they make it is carried out by the staff members in the Secretariat.

So Member States gives the mandate and staff, so the Secretariat carries it out.

The next item, agenda item would be to talk about the UN agencies. The UN specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the United Nations. All the UN agencies are established through a negotiated agreement. Some were established given the first World War and some were established as late as 2011 I think or '12. Established quite recently.

I would like just to list those agencies that we as IDA have been working closely or follow their work but please be aware that this list is a very long list.

One of the main UN agencies we are working together is the United Nations Development Programme which is called UNDP and it carries out work in 170 countries. And its main work is to help eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities, build resilience. Next is UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund. And it provides long‑term humanitarian and development assistance to children and mothers. UNHCR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, it protects refugees worldwide and facilitates their return home or resettlement.

UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund. This agency is focusing on supporting pregnancy, child birth, safe child birth and rights of young people. UNWOMEN is the newest UN agency which focuses exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment. UN‑Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme which promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlement.

The World Bank is focusing on poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards. It provides low interest loans or interest free credit and grants to Developing Countries versus the IMF which is the International Monetary Fund fosters economic growth and employment. And it provides short‑term temporary financial assistance to all countries that are requesting it.

WHO is the World Health Organization. And it attains and supervises that people have the highest possible level of health. It does deal with health crisis worldwide. UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization focuses on teacher trainings and to improve education worldwide. And finally ILO, which is the International Labor Organization that provides standards of employment, freedom to associate, promotes the abolition of forced labor and treatment when it comes to workplaces.

Key issues at the UN, as of today ‑‑ no, let me go back. So historically the UN has been established to maintain international peace and security. What does it mean, maintain international peace and security? It means prevention of conflict. It means providing a platform for many nations and parties. I'm talking State Parties. Support electoral crises to support those in a Democratic way, address sexual violence during conflict, during armed conflict. Sustain monitoring and address violations affecting the children including child soldiers in armed conflict and to establish peacekeeping missions.

So this was the main focus why the UN was created. After this the UN shifted, in particular to become a humanitarian assistant providing organization. As you know the humanitarian crisis has almost doubled in the last few decades and it became the primary responsibility of the UN to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need. Humanitarian assistance can be created after a conflict or it can be a natural disaster caused by climate change.

The Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations has done an excellent job coordinating all humanitarian actors on the mode to provide, mobilize and bring together support for those people who are in need.

After Kofi Annan, Ban Ki‑moon, the next Secretary‑General, he started to bring away from the humanitarian and bring the UN to a sustainable development oriented organization. This work is still ongoing. As you know in 2015 the Sustainable Development Goals have been agreed. While there is a large political focus to implement the Sustainable Development Goals the UN is still trying to break down the silos and merge the three big pillars which is peace and security, humanitarian and development.

So this is the focus that Ban Ki‑moon started and it looks like it is very much a rainforest and supported by Antonio Guterres who just became Secretary‑General starting the beginning of the year. In addition to this three main critical issues Human Rights has always been on the agenda of the United Nations. As you know the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a binding document for all Member States. And all Member States have the primary responsibility to protect it.

And finally just to mention a few other issues that are key to the UN, outside of the UN, is the development of Africa, justice and international law, nuclear, mechanical and chemical weapons disarmament, draft control and crime prevention and counterterrorism.

Now I would like to give you in my next agenda item an idea about where disability, where are the rights of Persons with Disabilities addressed in New York. Please be aware that you will also listen to another presentation which will ‑‑ which will address the Geneva system. So I am only talking about where you find the rights of Persons with Disabilities addressed in the main organs of the UN and related agencies.

So in the General Assembly we have a main committee which is called the Third Committee that is dealing with Human Rights and cultural issues and matters. The Third Committee is composed of Human Rights experts of 193 Member States. The Third Committee meets annually from October 'til the beginning of December and deliberates on a number of different issues. And as a result adopts a resolution. To give you an idea in 2016 the Third Committee adopted 50 resolutions. Out of the 50 resolutions 21 included reference to Persons with Disabilities.

This is a very high number. It means 42% of all resolutions adopted in the Third Committee had a reference to the rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Also important to mention that annually there is always a disability specific resolution adopted in the Third Committee. Either a resolution that is run by the Member States, Tanzania and Philippines, and that resolution always addresses issues on development or it is a resolution run by Sweden, New Zealand or Mexico. And then it has a different topic every year for you to know. In 2017 it will discuss matters relating to the rights and the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.

We are very happy to have this resolution for the very first time. So within the General Assembly the Third Committee addresses the rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Conference of States Parties was created in Article 40 of the UNCRPD. And the Conference of States Parties is meeting under the General Assembly rules. So again connected to the General Assembly and it is organized by the Secretary‑General. It is interesting for you to know that no other Human Rights Treaty foresees or has a Conference of States Parties. So this is quite unique to the CRPD. And I will stop here about the cost because you are most familiar with it. The ECOSOC, as mentioned before the ECOSOC has functional commissions. One key commission for us is the Commission of Social Development which has an explicit mandate to address disability at its sessions. This Commission meets usually in January or February. And it passes on a biannual basis a resolution that this is addressing the rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of Persons with Disabilities usually reports or participates in a dialogue with the Commission.

Just a couple of years back it was mandatory for the Special Rapporteur to report at the ‑‑ the commission on social development. However the mandate has changed. And the mandate of the Special Rapporteur has been given to Geneva, to the OHCHR, to the office of ‑‑ a representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Other commissions of ECOSOC such as the Commission of Status of Women can address rights of Persons with Disabilities or include reference to the rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Very briefly, we are also working with ECOSOC humanitarian segment and there is a very new development that the interagency Standing Committee task team will develop guidelines on the inclusion of the rights of Persons with Disabilities in humanitarian actions.

When it comes to UN agencies and the UN system as a whole a so‑called interagency support group has been established which is composed of UN agencies and U.S. Secretaria to discuss disability related issues system wide applied to the UN.

This is the IASG task group. IDA and IDDC is an observer in this IASG. And finally within UNDP a fund has been created to promote the rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is called UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this is the UNPRPD.

The aim of this fund and partnership is to ensure that UN country teams work on disability inclusive projects and programs together with Governments and DPOs at the national level.

Just in one minute to finish up the presentation and the structure of the UN, let me address who are the relevant groups at the UN that we very often refer to. The UN is organized around official regional groups which are the African Group, the Asia‑Pacific Group, the Eastern European group, the Latin American and Caribbean Group which is the GRULAC and the Western European and other groups. These are the official regional representative groups of the UN. When there is a decision in the UN or any negotiation ongoing representatives of these groups are coming together to form a joint statement, joint opinion. Also there is ‑‑ there are the ‑‑ not official groups but however the real political players are the G77. The G77 is a loose coalition of Developing Countries. They negotiate jointly and they have 133 member countries. Usually they are one side of the table. On the other side you will find the European Union, CAN which is Canada, New Zealand, Australia and then some others like the United States, Norway, Switzerland and so on. So these are the political powers within the UN.

The final word is on participation of Civil Society. Civil Society is present since 1946 in the UN. There are some very strict rules how to participate in order for an organization to be officially part of UN deliberations organization has to apply for a consultative status with ECOSOC.

When this is granted there are rules how to receive UN past and past UN meetings. What is more important is the UN is more and more opening up to Civil Society participation. And then all UN processes we talk about the participation of Civil Society except when it comes to the Sustainable Development Goals or any related process. Because then we call, we use the terminology stakeholders. The stakeholders are a much wider term for participation because it includes Civil Society, business, private sector, and local authorities which is as we know a Government segment. That's why in sustainable development processes we use the terminology stakeholders. I will stop here and sorry for taking so long.

 >> Thank you so much. We will share these notes with everyone after the call. And you can listen back to this call later on. We are going to open up the floor now for ten minutes of questions. If you have any questions, specifically for Orsolya please use the raise your hand function or send us a message in the chat box and we can address some questions. Matthew, I will have you facilitate any questions from Colin and Terry. So are there any questions?

We have a question ‑‑ Terry or ‑‑ okay.

 >> So thank you very much for that presentation. A lot of it I knew. A lot of it I didn't. So it is really, really positive to gain that insight.

 >> Sorry. Is this Terry or is it Colin or Terry?

 >> Terry. Terry.

 >> Thank you. Terry. Sorry. I didn't catch the first part.

 >> So a lot of which I knew which was great to have. A lot of which I didn't know which is even more beneficial, especially in understanding the structure of how the UN works. Now can we ensure that all of these notes that have been taken here by the subtitler are e‑mailed. I think you have already said that that's okay. So if you can keep doing that. Also is there any way of putting together a visual structure like a flow chart that explains how these interagencies work together? I think a lot of us within IDA obviously don't have English as a first language. So it would be really useful for us to have some kind of visual flow diagram which shows how these agencies work together and how they link in to one another. So, for example, we have the UN in terms of how it is set up. That's fine. That's self‑explanatory. I think we know that. But if we could just have what you have been explaining about all the different agencies, and if we could have that as a template that would be really, really useful.

 >> Okay. Great. Thanks, Terry. Great question. The UN has actually put together a very great representation of the agencies and the regional commissions which I will put a link to in the document that we will send out this afternoon. If you can let me know if this is what you are looking for. If not, then I am happy to build something on top of that which is more specific to IDA. Right. Thank you, Terry. I see there is a question from Ruth. Ruth, please go ahead.

Ruth, we cannot hear you. I have turned on your microphone. So you should be able to speak but we cannot hear you. So while we figure that out I see a question from Rosario. Please go ahead.

 >> Okay. Can you hear me now?

 >> Yes, go ahead.

 >> Thank you. So much. Thanks to Orsolya for the excellent presentation. I keep learning a lot about the UN system. And I want to know something about the six official languages. I want to know apart from using these official languages in the main events such as the conference of State Parties, is there any criteria in order to translate all documentation that United Nations has in a language? Because I know that there are most of the documentation that are not translated in to Spanish or other languages. Is there any criteria to ‑‑ because I know that every year I assume that a lot of the documentation are going to be published for the United Nations and what is the criteria that this document is going to be translated or this document is not going to be translated in to the six languages.

 >> ORSOLYA BARTHA: Thank you for this question. All official meetings must have translation in to the six languages. All official documents must be translated in six languages. The documentation and translation process is about six weeks long. So you may see it often that a document is already published in English and it is available in English but usually then we have to wait quite some time to have access to the documents in other languages. Just an example, whatever we are submitting to the High‑Level Political Forum as a background documentation because we have the right to submit annually one document is translated in to six languages and I am more than happy to share in Chinese, Russian, French, of course, I cannot verify some of these languages. But it is availability in six languages. It takes awhile and you should be able to find, Rosario, all official documents in six languages. We had a question from Ruth. Ruth was asking whether IDA has ECOSOC status. We are in the process to receive ECOSOC status. One of the criteria to apply for ECOSOC status is that the organization has to be functional and legally incorporated for two years before applying to receive ECOSOC status. It is under review and we are hoping that we are going to get it granted these days. Thank you.

 >> Great. Are there any more questions? So I have a question, Orsolya. Sorry, I see a question from ‑‑ okay. So I have a question. Thank you very much for the presentation. I was wondering what kind of advice you would give the board members for their participation at some of these processes through their own organizations. Obviously as IDA we work as an alliance. Is there some way that they will be able to engage? What kind of advice would you offer?

 >> ORSOLYA BARTHA: This is not an easy question. First of all, most members of IDA have ECOSOC status. And most of you have been working with the UN quite closely in a number of processes either in New York or Geneva. I would like to encourage to continue during the conference you are attending for our own organization because these are all recorded and kept documented by the UN. For those IDA members who are not ‑‑ who do not have ECOSOC status, I would recommend to apply for it because it is ‑‑ it is a bit complicated but free of charge application process and then it will help us as an umbrella organization for IDA to show that our members are active and are engaging with the UN. It will help us in our advocacy and help us to create a better understanding also within UN formed Member States. Thank you.

 >> Thank you. If there is no more questions, then I think we can finish. Oh, a question from Salam. Thank you, Salam.

 >> Thank you for the presentation. I have a little question. Do you say about the declaration of Human Rights is a binding document? I am confused because I think it is not a binding document. A binding document for me is a practice and Convention and other documents levels. You can clarify me this point?

 >> ORSOLYA BARTHA: Thank you. You are right. It is not ‑‑ well, you are partially right and I'm now looking in to my mind how to explain this easily. The terminology with regards to what is binding and what is not, and you are right, if we are talking about declaration, legally a declaration is just a political will and it is not binding unless it is implemented in to the national law. And it becomes national law. However, despite the title of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights that it is just a declaration, a political will of Member States. It is agreed by all UN Member States and it is considered as binding for all UN Member States because it is such a fundamental Human Rights document. Obviously when it comes to implementation and enforcement of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that's another very complicated question. But principally it is binding for UN Member States as it is one of the founding documents of the UN. And I apologize for ‑‑ if this is not entirely answering your question but we'd like to look at it as Human Rights lawyers as a binding document. Thank you.

 >> CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much, everyone, for joining us today. And like I said I will be following up from this e‑mail ‑‑ from this call with an e‑mail to all to share the webinar link and the documents as well. So thank you very much. And we hope to speak to you soon. Thank you. Good‑bye.

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