



CONCEPT NOTE

14th Conference of State Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
High-level side event

Towards Meaningful Inclusion: Participation of Young Persons with Disabilities

From Commitment to Call to Action and Compliance

Wednesday, 16 June 2021, 8.30 AM – 09.45 AM EST

Organizers: Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations, Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations, Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations, Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Disability Alliance (IDA).

Background:

Young persons with disabilities have underscored the crucial need for a leadership role and representation particularly in the context of their compounded marginalisation during and in the aftermath of COVID. This is particularly relevant in the framework of this year's overarching theme of the 14th COSP to the CRPD on "building back better: COVID-19 response and recovery; Meeting the needs, Realizing the rights and Addressing the socio-economic impacts on persons with disabilities". The active participation of young persons with disabilities in leading, framing and deciding building back better from the unique perspectives of their specific youth and intersectional identities is pertinent.

At the 13th COSP to the CRPD coinciding with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 2020, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, the WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, OHCHR, UNHCR and the Secretary General's Disability Inclusion Team came together collaboratively with the support of the Permanent Missions of Finland and Ecuador to highlight the need for meaningful engagement, and bridging the participation and leadership gap of young persons with disabilities in the broader youth movement and disability rights movement and the larger UN processes.

The discussions that ensued at the side event led to all partners pledging from commitment to compliance informing a call to action to be developed with concrete recommendations to move the youth and disability inclusion agenda forward; anchored in the United Nations Youth2030 Strategy, supplemented by the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) and the CRPD. In order to support and further enhance the perspectives and recommendations of young persons with disabilities and to partner with them to realize their recommendations at the 14th Session of the COSP to the CRPD, the Call to Action and a youth driven network will be launched at a high-level side.



Objectives:

To bridge the participation and leadership gap of young persons with disabilities, and as a follow-up to the commitments made at the 13th COSP to the CRPD to support the young persons with disabilities, a Call to Action proposed by the young persons with disabilities themselves will be launched. The key asks being a dedicated space in the shape of a youth network led by young persons with disabilities, where young persons with disabilities can bring their perspectives, have the opportunity for direct representation, through a community of youth working closely with UN agencies and Member States. This network is envisioned as a forum where young persons with disabilities are empowered to choose and advocate on issues important to them with suitable resources and support.

There will be a panel discussion on how young persons with disabilities can build on and engage in this network and inform how the UN and Member States can engage with the network to bolster and make more inclusive their own mandates; particularly as they relate to youth and disability inclusion. Further, the panel will discuss how to enhance and take to scale the meaningful participation of young persons with disabilities through an inclusive, accessible and youth driven leadership perspective.

Young persons with disabilities have asked for support from institutions. Resources, tools, access, and opportunities to express their opinions are some of the crucial supports that the UN can make available for young persons with disabilities. This will enable young persons with disabilities to take the lead on amplifying their own perspectives on youth relevant issues crucial to them. These will be some of the critical issues raised by young persons with disabilities.

The Network

Through a youth led network, young persons with disabilities will be able to build and access a youth led community of practice and can lead on priority issues that most significantly impact their lives and identity as young people. They can decide as a collective their specific roles as young people in achieving the SDGs and in advocating for, outreach to, and movement building within regions and in communicating with other young people as a youth community. Additionally, this network will provide a safe space for young persons with disabilities to share their take on the larger youth and disability rights movements; challenges of accessibility and very specific barriers that they face as youth.

Outcome:

The side event will provide visibility to the demands of the young persons with disabilities and draw attention to the work being done by the UN and partners to fast track the space that was committed to young persons with disabilities at the last COSP to the CRPD. It will also highlight the young persons with disabilities need for a leadership role, support and capacity for resources and accessibility from UN agencies, State Parties to the COSP, and Members States.

Format of the Side Event:

A dialogue with the focus topic being an extension of the CRPD overarching theme of “Building back better: COVID-19 response and recovery; Meeting the needs, Realizing the rights and Addressing the socio-economic impacts on persons with disabilities”.

AGENDA			
Segment	Speakers	Focus	Time
Welcome	Jayathma Wikramanayake, Secretary General’s Envoy on Youth	Video Message	3 Minutes
Introduction	Ramisha Ijaz, Moderator	Stage setting housekeeping etc.	2 Minutes
High level opening remarks	His Excellency, Mr. Jukka Salovaara, Permanent Representative of the Mission of Finland to the United Nations	Brief reflection on the convention/presidency and support to youth, endorse call to action and network	5 minutes
Panel discussion	Moderated by Ramisha Ijaz (Disability Rights Activist, Pakistan)	Introduction to panel and discussion	2 minutes
	<u>Youth Speakers</u> Shirley Liu Kartik Sawhney Lana Weidgenant Nujeen Mustafa	Youth present their plans for the network and seek support/how the network will engage youth/ support agency mandates	25 Minutes
	Representation from UN Agencies (Facundo Chavez Penillas, Human Rights & Disability Adviser, OHCHR)	UN agencies to endorse network/call to action and commitment of support.	7 Minutes
Closing Remarks	Werner Obermeyer, Director, WHO, NYC Office	Reflection on the success of WHO Youth Council and endorsement of network, reflect on presentations and discussions and conclusion.	5 Minutes



Q&A	Audience	Questions and comments from the audience will be addressed by relevant panellists	15 Minutes
-----	----------	---	------------

Suggested Speaker Profiles

Moderation

Ramisha Ijaz (Young Disability Rights Activist, Pakistan)

Political perspectives

- Video Message Secretary General’s Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake
- High-Level Opening Remarks by His Excellency, Jukka Salovaara, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

Panel Formations

- Perspectives from young persons with disabilities
 - Nujeen Mustafa: UNHCR High Profile Supporter; youth, disability, and refugee rights advocate
 - Kartik Sawhney: young disability rights activist and AI scientist with Microsoft, and the co-founder of I-Stem, empowering people with disabilities using technology
 - Shirley Liu: Founder, Creative Mint Digital, President, World Federation for the Deaf Youth Section, Community and Digital Advocate
 - Lana Weidgenant, Climate Activist, Zero Hour
- Perspectives from the United Nations
 - Facundo Chavez Penillas, Human Rights & Disability Adviser, OHCHR

Closing Remarks

- Werner Obermeyer, Director, WHO at the United Nations, New York