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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[04 February 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Egypt: Constitutional and legal amendments in the act of "capable in different"

The amended Egyptian Constitution, in article 81, provides for the rights of persons with disabilities; whereas "The State is committed to ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities and the dwarfs, health, economic, social, cultural, recreational, educational providing them with job opportunities, with a proportion of them allocated, creation of public facilities and the environment around them, their exercise of all political rights and integration with other citizens, in accordance with the principles of equality, justice and equal opportunities. The Constitution also provided for the formation of a National Council for Persons with Disabilities in article 214 and for their adequate representation in the House of Representatives. The Egyptian Parliament also issued the Disability Act in December 2017, while its executive regulation was issued on December 24, 2018. The presidency of the Republic in 2018 was considered the year for persons with disabilities.

With regard to languages, the new law recognized the sign language as an official language of hard hearing people, Braille for the visually impaired, and the introduction of the audio commands feature for persons with visual disabilities as an alternative to the signature process. In the event that this is not possible, the person with disabilities is entitled to be authorized to act in accordance with the assistance of an accredited interpreter for hard hearing people. The law also provided for the use of languages in their various forms and types, including information and communication technology, speech and sign language, Braille, presentation of written and audio texts, and by simplified language, reading by human beings and others.

Institutional: A general movement towards promoting rights of persons with disabilities

The Egyptian Government has taken a number of steps, even if they appear to be sporadic, but in the context of promoting the cultural, social, artistic and sports rights of persons with disabilities, the most important of which are:

The Ministry of Education includes the sports championships for those with special abilities within the Republic's championships for schools, and thus their entitlement to the degrees of sporting motivation as well as their peers of natural persons. The first Arab gathering for the activities of integration schools and special education schools, which was inaugurated by the President of the Republic in Sharm El-Sheikh, was held and about 110 students with special needs and integration students participated in the conference.

With regard to their rights to the enjoyment of technology, the Technical Center for Services of Persons with Disabilities was established with the aim of training and qualifying persons with special needs to deal with technology. The University of Alexandria has also decided to launch two centers to support people with special needs and distance education, using modern technologies.

The Governor of Luxor also decided to allocate 7 acres for the establishment of an integrated center for the disabled in Luxor, which would include an intellectual school and special needs training, rehabilitation and care for disabled persons. The Ministry of Awqaf has announced the establishment of accessible mosques in the governorates, suitable for use by persons with special needs, whether entering or leaving it or using toilets and ablution units, and making visual signals to the challenge of hearing disabilities.

Regarding the file of access to archaeological sites, in Luxor, the development of the Karnak project has witnessed many things to suit the disabled, setting up paved roads and slopes to climb and land, so as to facilitate the movement of wheelchairs for persons with mobility disabilities. Disability code guides were placed in the direction of designated corridors and translation of film materials displayed at the Visitor Center in the sign language for hard hearing people, as well as the development and processing of toilets. The Sound, Light and Tourism Development Company also provided free chairs for disabled and elderly visitors in

the Karnak district of Luxor. Within the plan to make Luxor the most accessible city for people with special needs.

On the subject of arts, Cairo University witnessed the second session of "Awladna international forum for the arts of special needs", in which 29 Arab and foreign countries participated in cooperation with UNICEF, the ministries of tourism, youth, sports, migration, social solidarity, culture and monuments.

As for participation in official events, there was concern about the participation of people with special needs in governmental conferences "youth conferences" at the different governorate level, and one conference did not affect the representation of people with special needs and the presentation of their different opinions and opinions on all issues discussed.

In the recent referendum on constitutional amendments in Braille, cards were also printed so that visually impaired people could vote directly without assistance.

Despite these developments in the disability file, or as the Government has called them "capable of different", to serve their cultural rights, a number of points should be mentioned:

The period between the promulgation of the Law on Disability by Parliament and the promulgation of its executive regulation was a whole year, causing a number of problems, to understand, interpret and apply the articles of the law. This is a relatively long time. A number of objections to the Regulations were subsequently raised because of the classification of disabilities, and the withholding of certain privileges approved by the Act in many cases, such as polio in one foot, or blindness in one eye, by getting the dwarfs out of classification, which contrary to the Constitution and the law. In addition, the inclusion of anemia in beans, spina bifida defect, and the dome also, the definition of visual impairment caused by the loss of vision and weak vision, it did not mention the visual impairment, while it did not mention the loss of vision with one eye (cecum). All these classifications are excluded from the enjoyment of the cultural rights provided by the State.

The committee formed by the National Council for Disabled Persons limited the benefits granted to the family to only 3 persons, while it deprived more, meaning that the fourth disability within the family would not have his rights. which prevents families with more than three people from enjoying the cultural rights of the State. In addition, the code for making available the technology, space and culture provided for in article 83 of the Act has not yet been circulated to all archaeological sites. The file of availability has not entered into force, and there are still obstacles to its implementation, in the country with the most important monuments of the world! In terms of languages, the sign language in the executive regulation has left it the responsibility to provide signal translation in government agencies of civil society organizations without restrictions regulating and censoring the profession and its employees.

Recommendations:

- Reconsidering of the classification of disabilities in the executive regulation, and the restoration of the disabilities that have been excluded, in keeping with the State's orientation in the service of persons with disabilities, and the promotion of their cultural rights.
- Reconsidering of the decision of the Special Committee on Disability to support only three persons, one with disabilities, in order to allow all persons with disabilities to enjoy full cultural rights.
- The dissemination of the code of availability to all archaeological sites in Egypt and the removal of obstacles to its implementation in the country with the most important monuments of the world.
- Further regulate the work of translators for sign languages and Braille, in a more systematic and reliable manner, ensuring that their rights are protected from any counterfeiting or fraud.