



Human Rights Council**Forty-third session**

24 February–13 March and 15–23 June 2020

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 22 June 2020****43/23. Awareness-raising on the rights of persons with disabilities, and
habilitation and rehabilitation***The Human Rights Council,**Recalling* the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto,*Recalling also* the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed the full enjoyment of their human rights and freedoms without discrimination,*Reaffirming* all of its previous resolutions on the rights of persons with disabilities, the most recent of which was resolution 37/22 of 23 March 2018 on equality and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities to access to justice, and welcoming the efforts of all stakeholders to implement those resolutions,*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 74/144 of 18 December 2019 on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto,*Reaffirming* that discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity and worth of the human person, and in this regard recognizing that awareness-raising plays a key role in promoting respect for human rights, empowering persons with disabilities and their families, and addressing the underlying attitudes, values and beliefs that can be a cause of human rights violations and abuses, including discriminatory laws, State policies, discourse and conduct,*Mindful* of the need to incorporate a gender perspective and to take measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in all efforts to promote the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of human rights and fundamental freedoms,*Recalling* the general principles reflected in the Convention, namely, non-discrimination, full and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity, individual autonomy and independence of persons, equality between men and women and respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities,

Recognizing that participation, accountability, non-discrimination and empowerment are fundamental principles of a human rights-based approach to disability, and recalling article 3 of the Convention in that regard,

Recalling that article 8 of the Convention calls upon States parties to adopt immediate, effective and appropriate measures to raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life, and to promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities,

Stressing the importance of awareness-raising in tackling deeply rooted stereotypes, negative attitudes and stigma, which can lead to discrimination against persons with disabilities, and in this regard stressing the importance of addressing harmful practices and belief systems, including ableism, which is described as a value system that considers certain characteristics of body and mind as essential for living a life of value,

Recalling in particular that article 26 of the Convention, on habilitation and rehabilitation, calls upon States parties to take effective and appropriate measures, including through peer support, to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life, and also calls upon States parties to organize, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly in the areas of health, employment, education and social services, and to promote the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies, including those designed for persons with disabilities, as they relate to habilitation and rehabilitation,

Recognizing that habilitation and rehabilitation are a set of interventions that include community-based health and non-health interventions designed and tailored to optimize the function of individuals with impairments in context-specific situations and contribute to the independence of the individual, their full inclusion and participation in society and their full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, including where necessary early interventions for children with disabilities,

Concerned that persons with disabilities also face restrictions in their access to habilitation and rehabilitation services owing to lack of accessibility of buildings, equipment and services, and that the distance to and from those facilities in rural and remote areas constitutes a significant barrier to persons with disabilities owing to poverty and the absence of accessible and affordable transport,

Acknowledging the importance of taking measures to raise awareness of the rights of women and girls with disabilities in order to eliminate stereotypes, prejudices and violence, including harmful practices that seriously violate and impair or nullify the enjoyment by women and girls with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and that constitute a major impediment to their full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making, and their access to health, including sexual and reproductive health, employment, education and social services,

Noting the cross-cutting nature of equality and non-discrimination in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has an impact on all the Sustainable Development Goals, noting in particular target 3.8, on achieving universal health coverage, and target 17.18, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by, inter alia, gender, age, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, as a means to measure the advancement under the 2030 Agenda and to ensure that no one is left behind,

Welcoming the progress made towards mainstreaming disability, including the rights of persons with disabilities, in the work of the United Nations, and welcoming also the launch of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy and the leadership of the Secretary-General to bring about transformative and systematic change on disability inclusion across the United Nations system,

Welcoming also the work of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, and taking note with appreciation of her reports,¹

Welcoming further the work of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and taking note with appreciation of its general comments,

Welcoming the work undertaken by the task force on secretariat services, accessibility for persons with disabilities and use of information technology,

Recalling Security Council resolution 2475 (2019) of 20 June 2019, in which the Council addressed the disproportionate impact of armed conflict and related humanitarian crises on persons with disabilities,

Noting with appreciation the Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action launched by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in 2019,

1. *Welcomes* the fact that, to date, 180 States and one regional integration organization have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which has 163 signatories, and that 94 States have signed and 96 States have ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, and calls upon those States and regional integration organizations that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention and the Optional Protocol to consider doing so as a matter of priority;

2. *Encourages* States that have ratified the Convention and have submitted one or more reservations to it to initiate a process to review regularly the effect and continued relevance of such reservations and to consider the possibility of withdrawing them;

3. *Welcomes* the reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the thematic studies on awareness-raising under article of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities² and habilitation and rehabilitation under article 26 of the Convention,³ and calls upon all stakeholders to consider the findings and recommendations made in those studies with a view to implementing them, where appropriate;

4. *Calls upon* States to take immediate, effective and appropriate measures to raise awareness regarding persons with disabilities, applying a gender-responsive and human rights-based approach, recognizing the capabilities and contributions throughout society of persons with disabilities, fostering respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities and addressing stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices, including those based on gender and age, at all levels of society and in all areas of life, such as by:

(a) Initiating and maintaining effective public campaigns, media, education systems and training programmes;

(b) Reviewing laws and policies that perpetuate the outdated understanding of disability present in charity and medical models and ableism, and incorporating a human rights-based approach to disability;

(c) Taking effective measures to raise awareness of the rights of women and girls with disabilities in order to eliminate stereotypes, prejudices and violence, including harmful practices;

(d) Ensuring that public awareness-raising campaigns promote a positive portrayal of persons with disabilities, and taking all measures necessary to eliminate attitudinal barriers that prevent or restrict the effective participation of persons with disabilities in society;

(e) Developing awareness-raising programmes, including in accessible formats, to provide information about the rights of persons with disabilities, and information regarding access to justice, accountability mechanisms and remedies, where rights are not respected, including but not limited to complaint mechanisms, judicial remedies and legal aid services;

(f) Providing training to professionals, including judges and law enforcement officials, health-care professionals, teachers and personnel working with persons with disabilities to raise their awareness of the rights under the Convention, and addressing the

¹ A/HRC/40/54 and Add.1; A/HRC/43/41 and Add. 1-3.

² A/HRC/43/27.

³ A/HRC/40/32.

intersecting forms of discrimination that affect persons with disabilities in the enjoyment of their rights;

(g) Working with media and other stakeholders to encourage the positive portrayal of persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the Convention and to modify harmful views of persons with disabilities, including through the production of disability-sensitive content that promotes diversity and combats disability-based discrimination;

(h) Refraining from supporting, through funding or as part of public-private partnerships, campaigns that perpetuate stigmatization or stereotyping;

(i) Ensuring that media regulatory and monitoring bodies have clear mandates to establish and encourage mandatory accessibility standards that allow persons with disabilities to access media content and digital environments on an equal basis with others;

(j) Ensuring the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of awareness-raising programmes and media-related legislation and regulations, including institutional frameworks;

(k) Conducting, promoting and funding research and data collection, and monitoring the evolution of attitudes towards persons with disabilities;

5. *Calls upon* States to take effective and appropriate habilitation and rehabilitation measures that are person-centred and age- and gender-responsive, and address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life, such as by:

(a) Establishing and strengthening policy and legal frameworks and other measures that provide for comprehensive, high-quality habilitation and rehabilitation services that are voluntary and guarantee equal access for persons with disabilities, while promoting a rights-based and participatory approach to rehabilitation;

(b) Developing and strengthening coordination mechanisms for a comprehensive approach between State agencies in implementing high-quality habilitation and rehabilitation services, given their cross-sectoral nature, including agencies working in the fields of public health, social protection, employment and education;

(c) Promoting and developing a multidisciplinary and trained habilitation and rehabilitation workforce, including by requiring and providing initial and continuing training that takes a human rights-based approach to disability and promotes the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies;

(d) Developing and ensuring adequate resources for funding mechanisms to provide equitable and adequate access to habilitation and rehabilitation services through a combination of evidenced-based solutions, such as public funding, health insurance, social insurance, public-private partnerships for service provision, and the reallocation and redistribution of existing resources;

(e) Raising the awareness of public officials and other professionals and staff working in habilitation and rehabilitation services of the rights of persons with disabilities through immediate, effective and appropriate measures, with all campaigns focusing on a human rights-based approach to disability and not framing persons with disabilities as patients or objects of charity and care;

(f) Strengthening habilitation- and rehabilitation-related research and the collection of data, disaggregated by people's habilitation and rehabilitation requirements, types and quality of habilitation and rehabilitation services provided, sex, age and disability, especially in the priority areas identified by the World Health Organization, with systematic dissemination of the results to support the development and provision of services;

6. *Urges* States to take all appropriate measures, including through awareness-raising campaigns, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities, stereotypes and other harmful stigma based on gender and disability, and to promote gender equality in order to ensure the equal enjoyment by women and girls of their rights;

7. *Calls upon* States to engage in international cooperation efforts at all levels aimed at enhancing their national capacities to raise awareness about persons with disabilities, to provide habilitation and rehabilitation services and to encourage the mobilization of public and private resources on a sustainable basis to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in development, and invites the Office of the High Commissioner and relevant United Nations agencies, and other donor mechanisms and partnerships to consider ways to foster international cooperation activities in that regard, in close consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations;

8. *Encourages* States to integrate in their reports to the high-level political forum on sustainable development the advances made with regard to the rights of persons with disabilities as reflected in laws, policies and practices developed relevant to the commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to develop human rights indicators and collect data disaggregated by age, sex and disability to inform those indicators using the Washington Group on Disability Statistics short set of questions for disaggregation;

9. *Calls upon* States to ensure that all international cooperation is inclusive of persons with disabilities and does not contribute to creating new barriers for them;

10. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to present an oral report to the Human Rights Council on the implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy across its programmes and operations at its forty-seventh and fiftieth sessions, and also requests the Office to make its report to the Secretary-General on the Strategy publicly available in an easy-to-read version and in an accessible format;

11. *Decides* that its next annual interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities will be held at its forty-sixth session and will focus on participation in sport under article 30 of the Convention, and will have international sign interpretation and captioning;

12. *Also decides* that an interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities will be held at its forty-ninth session and will focus on article 31 of the Convention, on statistics and data collection, and will have international sign interpretation and captioning;

13. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare its next annual thematic study on the rights of persons with disabilities on participation in sport under article 30 of the Convention, and to prepare its subsequent study on statistics and data collection under article 31 of the Convention, in consultation with States and other relevant stakeholders, regional organizations, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities, and national human rights institutions, requiring contributions to be submitted in an accessible format, and requests that such stakeholder contributions, the studies themselves and an easy-to-read-version of them be made available on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner, in an accessible format, prior to the forty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council;

14. *Encourages* the task force on secretariat services and accessibility for persons with disabilities to report orally to the Human Rights Council on its work and on the progress made in the implementation of its accessibility plan;

15. *Urges* States to consider further integrating and mainstreaming the perspective and rights of persons with disabilities into the work of the Human Rights Council;

16. *Encourages* representative organizations of persons with disabilities, civil society, national mechanisms as described in article 33 of the Convention, and national human rights institutions to participate actively in the debates referred to in paragraphs 11 and 12 above and in regular and special sessions of the Human Rights Council and its working groups;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner and United Nations offices to continue to work collaboratively on the progressive implementation of standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services of the United Nations system, taking into account relevant provisions of the Convention, and underlines that the Human Rights Council, including its Internet resources, should be fully accessible to persons with disabilities;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that the work of the Office of the High Commissioner with respect to the rights of persons with disabilities and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are adequately resourced for the fulfilment of their tasks;

19. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*45th meeting
22 June 2020*

[Adopted without a vote.]
