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Inclusive social development for all: Parliamentary strategies to promote the rights and empowerment of persons with disabilities

Draft resolution submitted by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights*

Rapporteurs: Ms. C. Mumma (Kenya), Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland) and Ms. F. Öncü (Türkiye)

The 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Noting* that there are 1.3 billion persons with disabilities globally, making up approximately 16% of the world's population, and *reaffirming* that the inclusion and equal participation of persons with disabilities is a human right and a matter of human dignity, equal citizenship, democratic representation, the rule of law and sustainable development, and not simply of social policy or welfare, and is essential to building more inclusive societies, stronger economies and democratic resilience, and to achieving social development for all,
- (2) *Recalling* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol, and the commitments of States under other major international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,
- (3) *Underscoring* that the CRPD requires States Parties to integrate the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities into all policies and programmes, eliminate discriminatory laws and practices, ensure accessibility, provide reasonable accommodations, adopt effective facilitative laws and appropriate administrative and other measures, utilize the maximum of their available resources to ensure implementation, and closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, notably through their representative organizations, thereby promoting their empowerment as active agents of social, economic, cultural and political development,
- (4) *Noting* relevant United Nations resolutions, initiatives and guidance documents, including the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, UN General Assembly resolution 80/197 (2025) on *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: amplified barriers in diverse contexts*, and UN Human Rights Council resolution 58/22 (2025) on *The impact of anti-personnel mines on the full enjoyment of all human rights*,
- (5) *Expressing concern* that, despite near-universal ratification of the CRPD, persons with disabilities continue to face significant structural barriers and discrimination, including in the context of education, healthcare, employment, social protection, access to justice, political participation, digital services, independent living, transportation, and access to buildings, public spaces and services, owing in part to gaps in the development and monitoring of effective implementing policies, laws, regulations and strategies at the national level, to limited or non-existent budgetary allocations and oversight on enforcement, and to persistent stigma, prejudice, harmful stereotypes, beliefs, and discriminatory attitudes and practices that undermine the rights, dignity and participation of persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls with disabilities,

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(6) *Acknowledging* that rights often remain unfulfilled aspirations in the absence of adequate budgetary allocations, and of reliable, up-to-date and disaggregated data to inform evidence-based parliamentary decision-making, effective institutional coordination, the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, and robust oversight, accountability and enforcement mechanisms,

(7) *Noting* that “nothing about us, without us” constitutes a fundamental democratic and legal principle that requires the meaningful, regular and effective participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, including through their representative organizations, which in turn provides decision-making bodies with a deep understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities and of the challenges and barriers they face,

(8) *Recognizing* that persons with disabilities in all their diversity, particularly women and girls, children and young persons, older persons, persons living in rural areas or in poverty, persons affected by conflict and disasters such as those injured by landmines and other explosive remnants of war, and persons with psychosocial disabilities or in other vulnerable or marginalized situations, may experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination arising from age, sex, gender, type of disability, socioeconomic status, geographic location and other personal or situational circumstances,

(9) *Recognizing also* that early identification, early intervention and inclusive family and community-based support are essential to ensuring the rights, development and well-being of children with disabilities,

(10) *Expressing concern* that women and girls with disabilities are disproportionately exposed to gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation, including within institutional and domestic settings, and that they continue to face particular barriers in accessing healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health services, and exercising their reproductive rights, as well as in bodily autonomy, access to justice, economic independence, and political and public participation, on an equal basis with others,

(11) *Recognizing* that young persons with disabilities encounter particular barriers in education, specialized vocational training, employment, political participation and digital accessibility, and that such barriers are compounded by the inadequate physical accessibility of infrastructure and of public buildings, spaces and services, and *recognizing further* that psychosocial disabilities and mental health conditions are becoming an increasingly pressing reality among young people, requiring targeted and inclusive policy responses,

(12) *Noting* that the political representation of persons with disabilities is essential for democratic legitimacy and inclusive and effective decision-making, but that persistent legal, physical, sensory, communication, digital, economic and societal barriers limit the ability of such persons to vote, stand for election, campaign, participate in political parties, access parliamentary premises and resources, and exercise elected office, and that women with disabilities in particular may face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination,

(13) *Acknowledging* that parliaments have a responsibility to ensure the equal and adequate representation, and meaningful participation, of persons with different disabilities, including through consultation with their representative organizations, and to integrate issues affecting such persons into all sectoral policies and laws, into budgetary allocations and into parliamentary oversight activities, and *recognizing* that parliaments are uniquely positioned to advance disability-inclusive social development through their legislative, budgetary, oversight and representative functions,

(14) *Noting* that digital technologies, artificial intelligence and assistive technologies offer significant opportunities for persons with disabilities, while also posing risks of new forms of exclusion and discrimination, and *emphasizing* the importance of ensuring accessibility, affordability and digital literacy so that technological innovation contributes to empowerment and inclusion rather than widening inequalities,

(15) *Emphasizing* that persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, terrorism, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters, especially in the context of climate change, which in turn often result in newly acquired disabilities and in displacement, and that disability inclusion should constitute a core component of policies on disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and crisis management, and *recalling* Article 11 of the CRPD and UN Security Council resolution 2475 (2019) on the protection of persons with disabilities in armed conflict,

(16) *Emphasizing also* that the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, including those who are displaced and those who are veterans, during armed conflicts and humanitarian crises should not be limited to emergency response, but must extend to conflict prevention, peacebuilding, reconstruction and recovery efforts, thereby ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are not overlooked across all stages of crisis response and beyond,

(17) *Recognizing* that, owing to compounded forms of discrimination and harmful social norms, caregiving responsibilities in many countries fall disproportionately on women and girls, and that strengthening approaches centred on independent living, community-based support services, personal assistance, respite care, caregiver support, social protection, and accessible public services both upholds the autonomy of persons with disabilities and reduces the burden of unpaid care, while fostering the social and economic empowerment of such persons and their participation in community life,

1. *Urges* parliaments to use their legislative, budgetary, oversight and representative functions, within their respective constitutional and legal frameworks, to translate the obligations of their States under the CRPD into tangible laws and policies that promote, protect and ensure the rights and empowerment of persons with disabilities, with particular attention to the situation of women and girls with disabilities, and to ensure that domestic laws and national political actions do not contravene the CRPD;
2. *Calls upon* all parliamentarians to advocate strongly for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, to raise public awareness of their rights and capabilities, and to contribute to changing societal attitudes regarding persons with disabilities, including the stereotypes to which women with disabilities are subjected, in line with a rights-based approach;
3. *Calls upon* parliaments to review and, where appropriate, reform legislation to ensure full alignment with the CRPD, to remove restrictions on the rights, freedom, independence or participation of persons with disabilities, including restrictions on legal capacity and restrictive laws or practices that perpetuate guardianship regimes or institutionalization, to prevent unnecessary institutionalization and promote community-based alternatives, and to prohibit all forms of discrimination on the basis of disability;
4. *Also calls upon* parliaments to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, including through procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, accessible legal information and legal aid, accessible complaint mechanisms, and appropriate training for judicial and law-enforcement personnel;
5. *Urges* parliaments to: mandate disability inclusion and disability-responsive budgeting across all public policies; systematically mainstream disability across all sectoral laws, policies and budgets; establish dedicated budget lines to support persons with disabilities, including in terms of accessibility, assistive technologies, inclusive education systems, independent living, individualized support, family and community-based support mechanisms, and social protection for such persons and their families, as well as the effective participation of representative organizations of persons with disabilities; and ensure that such support systems advance the equitable sharing of caregiving responsibilities and do not entrench disproportionate reliance on unpaid care provided by women and girls;

6. *Calls upon* parliaments to regularly monitor the state of implementation of the rights set out in the CRPD, including by requiring governments to establish disaggregated data-collection systems based on age, sex, type of disability, geographic location, socioeconomic status, displacement status and cause of disability, including conflict- and disaster-related causes, among other criteria, while ensuring confidentiality, privacy and data protection, and to utilize the data collected via such systems in evidence-based legislative, budgetary and oversight processes;
7. *Encourages* parliaments to establish dedicated parliamentary mechanisms, including permanent or specialized committees, focal points or regular reporting procedures, to monitor the implementation of the CRPD, assess progress against measurable indicators and follow up on recommendations issued by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and *also encourages* parliaments to ensure that such mechanisms work in close cooperation with relevant parliamentary committees, recognizing that disability issues cut across multiple sectors and policy areas;
8. *Calls upon* parliaments to use their legislative, budgetary, oversight and representative functions to ensure that national frameworks designated or established in accordance with Article 33(2) of the CRPD to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the Convention are independent and adequately mandated and resourced, and that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations participate fully in monitoring processes, including by ensuring that sufficient resources are available for their participation in such processes in cooperation with the public administration;
9. *Urges* parliaments to ensure that parliamentary rules and practice respect the principle of “nothing about us, without us”, in line with the obligation under Article 4(3) of the CRPD, and to entrench regular, accessible mechanisms to consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in lawmaking, budgetary and oversight processes, through early engagement, prior and timely access to information in accessible formats, reasonable accommodations where required, and transparent feedback on how their contributions were considered;
10. *Also urges* parliaments to enhance the representation of persons with disabilities in parliaments, local governments and other decision-making bodies, including by ensuring their effective right to vote and to be elected, and by reviewing electoral legislation, parliamentary rules of procedure and political party regulations on the basis of accessibility, reasonable accommodations and non-discrimination, and to consider temporary special measures, quota systems, candidate support mechanisms and coverage of the costs of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities;
11. *Further urges* parliaments to develop specific mechanisms aimed at strengthening the political participation of women and young persons with disabilities, including: mentoring and leadership development; international networking opportunities and support for candidates, parliamentarians, activists and representative organizations; accessible and non-discriminatory candidate recruitment and selection, campaign finance and reasonable accommodation support; measures to prevent and respond to violence against, and harassment of, people with disabilities in political and public life; and mechanisms for participation in youth councils, youth parliaments and other consultative processes;
12. *Calls upon* parliaments to: adopt, adequately fund, and oversee gender- and disability-responsive laws, policies and services to prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities; ensure accessible and survivor-centred reporting, protection, health and justice services; and safeguard the legal capacity and bodily autonomy of women and girls with disabilities, as well as ensure their free and informed consent and their equal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services;

13. *Also calls upon* parliaments to ensure that parliamentary premises, proceedings, procedures and services, including documents, voting systems and digital platforms, are accessible to persons with disabilities, including through the use of sign language interpretation, captioning, Braille, audio materials, assistive technologies, and easy-to-read and plain-language formats where appropriate, as well as to promote the recruitment of persons with disabilities within parliamentary institutions, and to conduct regular accessibility audits of all aspects of parliamentary operations;
14. *Urges* parliaments to promote and oversee the progressive achievement of universal accessibility for persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others and without discrimination, across public infrastructure, transportation, housing, digital environments and essential public services, including healthcare, education, and cultural and sports facilities and activities, through enforceable accessibility standards and effective compliance mechanisms;
15. *Calls upon* parliaments to strengthen inclusive education systems by allocating sufficient resources for accessible school and higher education infrastructure, teacher training, assistive technologies, individualized support mechanisms, including appropriate psychological and mental health support, and family support systems, as well as accessible career guidance and support for the transition from secondary education to tertiary education, with particular attention to ensuring that girls and women remain in the education system;
16. *Also calls upon* parliaments to ensure that the principles of universal design and barrier-free accessibility are applied in the planning, reconstruction and development of public spaces, housing, transport and the built environment, so that recovery from conflict, disaster or crisis does not reproduce physical barriers but advances an accessible and inclusive environment for all;
17. *Further calls upon* parliaments to legislate for and adequately resource the following, through adequate public investment and accessible health infrastructure, with particular attention to surges in demand arising from armed conflict and other emergencies: disability-inclusive universal health coverage, including equitable access to quality health services; comprehensive rehabilitation, such as the provision, fitting and maintenance of assistive devices and prosthetics; mental health and psychosocial support; and affordable assistive technologies;
18. *Calls upon* parliaments to: ensure the rights of persons with disabilities to decent work are realized, including through the duty to provide reasonable accommodations and adopt anti-discrimination policies; develop measures, in accordance with respective national laws and policies, such as reservations or quotas in public employment, as well as paid internship programmes, mentoring opportunities and entrepreneurship support schemes, with particular attention to the integration of women and young persons with disabilities, and of those living in rural, remote and underserved areas, into the labour market, and to providing appropriate psychological and mental health support in the workplace; and support the socioeconomic reintegration and return to work of persons who acquire disabilities, including in the context of conflict, through vocational rehabilitation, retraining and reasonable accommodations;
19. *Encourages* parliaments to support the active participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in peacebuilding, reconstruction and post-conflict decision-making efforts, recognizing that peace and community rebuilding cannot be inclusive and sustainable unless the rights and needs of all segments of society are taken into account;
20. *Urges* parliaments to establish and strengthen legislative and oversight frameworks to ensure that artificial intelligence and digital technologies are accessible, inclusive, non-discriminatory and fully consistent with the principles of equality and human dignity, including by promoting accessibility by design and involving persons with disabilities in the design and evaluation of algorithms, while reinforcing effective human oversight and accountability mechanisms to prevent unethical, discriminatory, exclusionary or harmful outcomes affecting persons with disabilities;

21. *Calls upon* parliaments, through legislation, budgetary allocations and oversight, to ensure that national and local civil protection, disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness systems, including in the context of conflicts, humanitarian crises and climate change, are inclusive of persons with disabilities and developed in close consultation with their representative organizations, in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 2475 (2019);
22. *Affirms* the obligation of a State responsible for internationally wrongful acts, including serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to make full reparation for the injury caused, and *also affirms* that persons who acquire disabilities as a result of such violations should have effective access to remedies, rehabilitation and compensation, including through internationally established compensation mechanisms;
23. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that persons with disabilities who are internally displaced or who are refugees enjoy full and equal access to accessible humanitarian assistance, protection, healthcare, rehabilitation and the replacement of assistive devices, are included in registration and data systems on an equal basis with others, and are supported in achieving durable solutions, including voluntary, safe and dignified return;
24. *Condemns* the unlawful forcible transfer and deportation of persons with disabilities, including children, from their families, communities or places of habitual residence, in particular in situations of armed conflict or occupation, as a grave violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and *urges* parliaments and the international community to take all measures within their power to secure the immediate cessation of such practices and the safe return and reunification of such persons with their families and communities, without delay;
25. *Encourages* IPU Member Parliaments to include parliamentarians with disabilities in IPU meetings and international parliamentary delegations, and to provide for the inclusion of parliamentarians with disabilities beyond existing delegation size limits in order to ensure the presence of disability perspectives;
26. *Encourages* parliaments to promote the meaningful participation of parliamentarians with disabilities in international parliamentary cooperation efforts, election observation missions, parliamentary diplomacy activities and leadership positions within regional and global parliamentary organizations, ensuring the provision of reasonable accommodations and accessibility measures where required;
27. *Invites* the IPU, within its existing mandate, programme of work and available resources, to: organize regular meetings, thematic workshops, parliamentary networks and regional experience-sharing mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of good practices among Member Parliaments concerning the rights of persons with disabilities; and provide, upon request, capacity-building support;
28. *Urges* the IPU to establish, under the authority of the Governing Council, a permanent forum, standing committee, partnership group, focal point or similar standing institutional mechanism, in which parliamentarians with disabilities are meaningfully represented, to ensure the sustained representation, visibility and participation of persons with disabilities across all areas of the IPU's work, strengthen institutional continuity on disability rights and parliamentary inclusion, assess the implementation of this resolution by national parliaments, support the exchange of good practices and promote the effective participation of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in parliamentary processes.

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- The Islamic Republic of Iran expressed a reservation on the preambular paragraph 15.
- The Russian Federation expressed a reservation on the operative paragraph 22.