



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Check against delivery

Thank you, Mr Chairman

I would first of all like to congratulate the members of the Committee elected today and wish them every success in their work.

Cyprus wishes to align itself fully with the statement to be made by the representative of the European Union.

Cyprus has ratified the UN Convention since 2011 and has submitted its first Report and National Action Plan on Disability to the UN Committee on the 27th of July 2013. The year that has passed since then has been dedicated to the implementation and monitoring of the actions Cyprus has undertaken through the National Action Plan.

Some of the actions that have already been fulfilled concern several different fields of the rights of persons with disabilities. Concerning statistical data and raising awareness, all Ministries are now obligated to maintain statistical data regarding persons with disabilities of all ages served by the specific Ministry.

Educational programs that introduce the legal framework of the rights of persons with disabilities are being held with the association of the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration and are directed to all Ministries / Departments and Services of the public sector.

Studies have taken place that evaluate if the accessibility requirements are being met in all the public buildings. All public websites are being transformed to meet the accessibility standards needed and all important documents that the Public Sector publishes will be printed in Braille form and in Easy to Read form.

In the field of education the educational goal of 2015 has been set to be the awareness-raising in schools about the rights of persons with disabilities and this will be accomplished through programs promoting equal opportunities and rights in the school curriculum.

Regarding health matters, new policies concerning the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities are being studied and discussed in order for Cyprus to create its first public Rehabilitation Centre. Also, a very big step is being undertaken to de-institutionalize eight persons with intellectual disability from a psychiatric hospital where they have been kept for years. Lastly, an organisation that will have the responsibility to educate, train and enter persons with disabilities in the work force is being created along with the legal framework of social enterprises.

Our experience this last year has shown that the Thematic Technical Committees created in 2012 by the Focal Point and the Coordination Mechanism of Cyprus and consist from representatives of the Public and Private Sector and also from organisations of persons with disabilities are working successfully towards the implementation of the CRPD and all people involved have the willingness and strength to continue working towards the goal of successfully including persons with disabilities into the Cypriot society in every way.

Finally, Mr Chairman, my delegation wishes to express its firm support for the active involvement of civil society representatives in all actions concerning persons with disabilities. In this respect, we would like to reaffirm our strong support for the full and effective participation of representatives of organisations of persons with disabilities in the Conference.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.