

# Media Update

2 December 2018

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## United Nations

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

### International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3 December 2018

More than 1 billion people in the world live with some form of disability. In many societies, persons with disabilities often end up disconnected, living in isolation and facing discrimination.

In its pledge to leave no one behind, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents a commitment to reducing inequality and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including people with disabilities. That means implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in all contexts and in all countries. It also means integrating the voices and concerns of people with disabilities into national agendas and policies.

Today, the United Nations is issuing the UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development 2018 – Realizing the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities. The Report shows that people with disabilities are at a disadvantage regarding most Sustainable Development Goals, but also highlights the growing number of good practices that can create a more inclusive society in which they can live independently.

On this International Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to work together for a better world that is inclusive, equitable and sustainable for everyone, where the rights of people with disabilities are fully realized.

### Background:

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3.



It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

Building on many decades of UN's work in the field of disability, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 2006, has further advanced the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international development frameworks, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, the New Urban Agenda, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.

**2018 Theme:** Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring inclusiveness and equality

This year's theme focuses on empowering persons with disabilities for an inclusive, equitable and sustainable development as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda pledges to "leave no one behind". Persons with disabilities, as both beneficiaries and agents of change, can fast track the process towards inclusive and sustainable development and promote resilient society for all, including in the context of disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action, and urban development. Governments, persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, academic institutions and the private sector need to work as a "team" to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year, the UN Secretary-General will launch on the Day a flagship report, entitled "UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development | 2018 – Realizing the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities". Events at UNHQ on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities at UN Headquarters will bring together Member States, UN entities, Mayors, national and local policy makers, civil society organizations, academic institutes and organizations of persons with disabilities to discuss the way forward for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development.

Read more about [the events](#).

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