



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

21 November 2016

Excellency,

In my letter dated 28 October 2016, I informed you of the high-level panel meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aimed at promoting its universalization.

The meeting will be held on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on Friday, 2 December 2016, from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm, in Conference Room 4.

The anniversary of the adoption of the Convention is an opportunity to review the positive impact of the Convention's first ten years into force and to discuss ways in which the rights of persons with disabilities can be advanced at all levels and by all stakeholders over the next decade years.

The program and the concept note of the meeting are attached. There will be no list of speakers for the meeting circulated in advance and Member States are encouraged to engage in an interactive discussion with the panelists. Interventions from the floor should not exceed 3 minutes.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

To All Permanent Representatives and  
Permanent Observers to the United Nations  
New York

## Concept Note

### **High-level panel meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Friday, 2 December 2016, from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm, Conference Room 4**

#### **Background**

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/145 of 17 December 2015, the President of the General Assembly will convene a high-level panel meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aimed at promoting its universalization.

The meeting will be held on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on Friday, 2 December 2016, from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm, in Conference Room 4.

The 10-year anniversary of the adoption of the CRPD is an opportunity to celebrate one of the most quickly and widely ratified international treaties put forth by the United Nations to date. The Convention provides Member States a concrete framework to ensure persons with disabilities are able to enjoy their rights on an equal basis with others.

The anniversary provides Member States, the UN system, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations the opportunity to take stock of progress since the Convention's adoption and to review the impact of the 168 ratifications on the implementation of the Convention thus far. The high number of ratifications confirms the will of Member States to adopt binding commitments to achieve equality, and to eliminate all barriers to the full participation of all persons with disabilities in society.

The rights and freedoms reflected in the CRPD are no less relevant today as they were 10 years ago. Achieving universal ratification would help ensure that the rights of all persons with disabilities are promoted, respected and protected worldwide.

As a universal and legally binding document, the CRPD promotes, protects and ensures the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by persons with disabilities. Crucially, the CRPD recognizes the importance of closely consulting and actively involving persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the development and implementation of legislation, policies and other decision-making processes specifically relating to persons with disabilities and the implementation of the Convention.

The adoption of the CRPD in 2006 greatly inspired the recent global efforts to further advance disability inclusive policies and practices around the world. This trend has been witnessed in the Outcome Document of the General Assembly's High-Level Meeting on Disability and Development, the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk

Reduction in Sendai, the World Humanitarian Summit and also in the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito as well as in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, thus, expressing the determination of the international community to move from commitment to action in implementing policies that are inclusive of the rights of persons with disabilities.

### **Panel Discussion**

The panel discussion will provide the opportunity to:

- 1. Review the positive impact of the CRPD's first ten years at the global, regional and national levels;**
- 2. Discuss ways in which the rights of persons with disabilities can be advanced at all levels and by all stakeholders over the next ten years; and**
- 3. Encourage universal ratification of the CRPD.**

### **Programme**

**Opening:** 10.00am – 10.20 am

Statement by the President of the General Assembly

Statement by the Secretary-General

**High-Level Panel:** 10.20am – 11.00 am

Presentations by the Panelists

**Interactive Discussion:** 11.00am-1.00 pm

Interventions by Member States, UN system and civil society.

### **Format**

The format of the panel will be interactive and involve different stakeholders. After the presentation by the panelists, Member States, UN system and civil society will be given the floor for interactive discussion with the panelists. The moderator will give floor in a mixed order. Interventions from the floor should not exceed 3 minutes. There will be no list of speakers for the meeting in advance.

**High-level panel meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the  
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
Friday, 2 December 2016, from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm,  
Conference Room 4**

**Opening Remarks (10.00-10.20)**

- H.E. Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly
- H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General

**Panel Discussion**

Moderator: Ms Maria Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**Presentations by the Panellists (10.20-11.00)**

- Mr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF
- Dr. Mercedes Juan López, Director General of the National Council for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, Mexico
- Mr. Lenni Montiel, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development
- Mr. Andrew Gilmour, Assistant-Secretary General for Human Rights
- Ms Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/Video Message
- Mr. Vladimir Cuk, Executive Director of International Disability Alliance

**Interactive Discussion (11.00-13.00)**

Presentations of the panellists will be followed by interventions from Member States, UN system and civil society.