



General Assembly

68th Session

Third Committee

5th meeting

New York, 8 October 2013

Social development (item 27) b)

"Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family"

Ms. Iselin Hebbert Larsen

First Secretary

Mr./Ms. Chair,

Norway strongly supports the outcome document from the High Level Meeting held on the 23rd of September. The High Level Meeting stresses the importance of the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and of including persons with disabilities in the new development agenda beyond 2015. Norway will work together with others to achieve this.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a crucial framework in this regard. The CRPD is based on the concept of universal human rights. We cannot pursue sustainable development without the meaningful involvement and active participation of persons with disabilities.

Equality for persons with disabilities must be included in the different policy sectors. When viewed as a side issue, it is not taken into account.

(Check against delivery)

Data on disability is essential in order to monitor progress. There is an immense need to improve the quality of disability data and statistics, including internationally comparable approaches.

All children deserve opportunities to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to society. Education is the key! Children with disabilities are disproportionately denied their right to education. Of the 57 million children in the world who do not attend school, an estimated 24 million are children with disabilities. Efforts must be stepped up to ensure that all children receive proper high quality education.

Women and girls with disabilities are often exposed to double discrimination, and are at a higher risk of experiencing gender-based violence and other forms of abuse. Activities targeting women and girls must include women and girls with disabilities.

Norway maintains a human rights based approach to its international development cooperation, and we thus believe it is important to secure inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of our development cooperation. Ensuring the protection of persons with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies is of essence.

We will never reach the development goals if disability is not properly addressed and visible in the way forward. Development goals leaving out the needs and rights of one billion people can never be sustainable.

Thank you, Mr./Ms. Chair.



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Ms. Rode Margrete Skullerud

Youth Delegate

Mr/Mrs Chair, distinguished delegates,

It is an honour and pleasure to be taking part in the General Assembly of the UN as young people.

We stand in a moment of time with exceptional possibilities, a moment where sustainable development, fulfilment of basic human rights and freedom to live a dignified life for all, have moved within our reach.

With this in mind I wish to address two issues pertaining to the needs of young people.

During the landmark United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, member states of this General Assembly reaffirmed the importance and support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as one of the key principles to attain sustainable development. Young people consist of more than 1.8 billion of the world's population. Progress of our communities is based, among other elements, on capacity to incorporate the contribution and responsibility of youth in the building and designing of the current and the future. Hence enabling the economic, social and political participation of youth, is of outmost importance.

(Check against delivery)

Meaningful involvement of youth in society can only take place when member states commit to allocate resources for empowering and creating space for young people to take part in, and influence decision making processes. Member states must recognize the value of young people's participation when prioritizing, designing, implementing and evaluating local, national and international policies and activities.

Dear Mr/Mrs Chair,

Speaking on behalf of the children and youth of Norway we would like to point out the importance of enhancing the capabilities of young people in order to seize the extraordinary opportunity of human development. Inadequate health services and human rights violations greatly diminishes those capabilities.

Still in many places today, young people do not have access to adequate health services, as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 24. Health has been defined by World's Health Organization (WHO) as "not merely the absence of disease or infirmity", but "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being".

Issues related to mental health disorders, which is the leading cause of disability among young people, impacts 20 % of the world's children and youth according to WHO. Some of the preventable causes of mental disorders among adolescents are related directly to human rights violations such as involving children in armed conflict, either as child soldiers or as witnesses, child prostitution, child labor, displacement from home and other forms of violations.

Such human rights abuses does not only endanger the mental well-being of worlds youth, but is also a sincere threat to the universality of the human rights that we all have sworn to protect

Mr/Mrs Chair,

We strongly recommend member states to build sustainable, long term solutions for effective and meaningful youth participation in local, national and international forums, including but not limited to exploring the possibility of a permanent forum on youth.

Furthermore, we request member states to commit to provide access to quality assured health services for children and youth, with an increased focus on addressing the burden of mental health disorders.

Finally, we call for member states to act boldly against any kind of human rights violations, especially those concerning children and youth. Such violations greatly limits the capabilities of young people and are unacceptable.

Thank you, Mr/Mrs Chair.