



## Disability rights are human rights

With the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the world started a new chapter for the one billion people living with a disability. It formalized the obligation of Member States to guarantee the rights of persons with a disability, and provided a framework for people to claim their equal human rights and inclusion in society.

The CRPD was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2006. During the past ten years, remarkable progress has been made in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in society and development. For the first time ever, the Convention provided a strong impetus for the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society and development, by emphasizing equal access for persons with disabilities to opportunities to contribute to, and share in, on an equal footing with others, the rewards of social and economic progress.

Ten years on, there are 168 States that have ratified the Convention. It has provided an international normative framework for mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities. In line with the goals and objectives of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, disability-inclusive strategies are increasingly

becoming an integral part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the outcomes of other global development commitments, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the World Humanitarian Summit, and most recently the New Urban Agenda that was adopted at Habitat III this October.

Yet, it has to be acknowledged that the much expected transformations are not reaching everyone at the same pace. There is a large gap between the entitlement to equal opportunities based on the Convention and the conditions and support necessary for persons with disabilities to participate and fully enjoy their rights, in both developed and developing countries.

As Lenni Montiel, UN DESA's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development noted at a High-Level Panel Meeting in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the CRPD, "Under the current realities, many persons with disabilities continue to face aggrieved forms of discrimination, in particular women with disabilities, persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with albinism, who have been historically and tragically left behind in development and subjected to atrocious human rights violations".

Moving forward, concrete steps are required to promote the universalization of the Convention, and to address the continuing gap between policy and practice on the ground. Drawing on the experiences and good practices across the world, the international community can work together to secure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis with others, and to achieve Sustainable Development Goals for all.

The celebration of the CRPD 10-year anniversary will take place on 2 December, coinciding with the observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

For more information:

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

10th anniversary of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development

## Enabling inclusive and sustainable growth



Today, the Internet seems to have an impact on just about every walk of life. It has undeniably sparked innovation and entrepreneurship, created new forms of public engagement and economic activity that helps people connect, organize and act towards a common purpose. However; two out of three households in developing countries lack Internet access

and 200 million fewer women than men have access to browse the web. Security, privacy and human rights online need to be protected.

The 2016 Internet Governance Forum (IGF): 'Enabling Inclusive and Sustainable Growth', set to take place from 6 to 9 December 2016, in Jalisco, Mexico, aims to address the challenges of the digital age and intensify efforts towards building an open, reliable, safe, secure, stable and inclusive Internet. More than 2,500 participants (see list of registered participants [here](#)) will participate on-site with thousands more expected to engage online.

More than 150 sessions (schedule) will take place throughout the week. The 2016 overall programme and IGF community inter-sessional activities were built in a bottom-up manner in consultation with the growing IGF multistakeholder community, with an aim to enhance participation from stakeholders from developing countries, youth and those joining the IGF online.

The 2016 IGF marks the first IGF following its 10-year mandate renewal by the General Assembly at the WSIS+10 High Level Event last year. The four-day 11th IGF meeting will feature interactive dialogues and debates, addressing a broad range of themes and issues including Internet and Sustainable Development; Access and Diversity; Youth and Gender Issues; Human Rights and Freedom of Expression Online; Cybersecurity; Multistakeholder Cooperation; Critical Internet Resources; Internet Governance Capacity Building and Emerging Issues.

The fast-growing IGF community inter-sessional activities will be featured at the 11th IGF. These activities, including IGF Best Practice Forums (BPFs), work on the Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion(s) initiative and IGF Dynamic Coalitions, offer unique multi-stakeholder platforms for substantive collaboration on a wide array of Internet governance themes and issues. This community work will be showcased, and open for further consultation, during the 4-day annual meeting.

Many of the outcomes of discussions emerging from the growing number of National and Regional IGF Initiatives (NRIs) will be reported to the global IGF meeting as part of the broader effort of the IGF to enhance linkages and leverage the synergies among them and with the IGF. The 11th IGF will also aim to enhance linkages among discussions, recommendations and policy options from other relevant Internet Governance discussion fora and institutions. Furthermore, Governments, UN organizations, NRIs and other relevant Internet governance organizations and stakeholders are encouraged to bring forward key ideas raised within the IGF.

As underlined in the Tunis Agenda (2005), the IGF is a multistakeholder, inclusive and transparent forum, which facilitates discussions on public policy issues related to Internet governance. The IGF is convened by the United Nations Secretary-General and as such welcomes all stakeholders in the Internet ecosystem, including all entities accredited by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), as well as other institutions and individuals with relevant expertise, experience and interest.

UN DESA has been entrusted by the Secretary-General to oversee the Secretariat support to the Internet Governance Forum and attaches great importance to the open and inclusive process of the IGF and the multistakeholder policy dialogue on Internet governance.

The event will be streamed live and to follow the conversation via social media, use #IGF2016.

**For more information:**

[IGF Website](#)

[Mexico Host Country Website](#)

[Social Media at the 11th IGF \(#IGF2016\)](#)

[Participate Online](#)



### Moving forward on international tax cooperation

The 13th session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters will be held in New York from 5 to 8 December 2016, followed by the ECOSOC special meeting on international cooperation in tax matters on 9 December. This upcoming session of the Committee will focus on the issues related to the

next update of the United Nations Model Double Taxation Convention between Developed and Developing Countries.

In particular, the meeting will review possible changes to articles and commentaries of the Model following, where appropriate and relevant to developing countries, the recommendations contained in the OECD/G20 final reports on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS).

Other important issues on the agenda include the review of the editing process for the update of the UN Practical Manual on Transfer Pricing for Developing Countries, and environmental tax issues for developing countries.

Some important aspects of extractive industries taxation, such as value added tax, permanent establishment, mutual agreement procedures among others, will be discussed as well. Moreover, the session will feature a report on progress made in developing and implementing the United Nations capacity development programme on international tax cooperation, including in the area of double tax treaties, transfer pricing and protection of tax base of developing countries.

The ECOSOC special meeting on international cooperation in tax matters, on 9 December 2016, will feature an update on the work of the Committee with a view to increasing the engagement of the Committee with the Council and enhancing intergovernmental consideration of tax issues at the United Nations.

To this end, the morning session will be structured around several panel discussions on current issues in international tax cooperation including tackling international tax evasion and avoidance, broadening the tax base of developing countries, and instruments for implementation. Each panel will be followed by an interactive dialogue between Committee members, delegations, national tax authorities and other stakeholders.

The afternoon session will be an opportunity to further discuss the recommendations contained in the July 2016 report entitled “Enhancing the Effectiveness of External Support in Building Tax Capacity in Developing Countries”, submitted by the inter-agency Platform for Collaboration on Tax to the G20 Finance Ministers.

Central to the report is a set of recommendations put forth by the four participating international organizations on the key elements of effective tax capacity-building

programmes. The afternoon session, therefore, will be an interactive dialogue between the UN, IMF, OECD and the World Bank Group and regional tax organizations, delegations, and other stakeholders.

Both these events will be broadcast live via UN Web TV.

For more information:

13th session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters  
ECOSOC special meeting on international cooperation in tax matters

## GET INVOLVED



### Help us turn the tide – engage in the 2017 UN Oceans Conference

During one full week in June 2017 (5-9 June 2017), the United Nations will devote special attention to the health of our oceans and seas by organizing a Conference dedicated to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

At the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development – partnerships will play a crucial role. The theme of the Conference is set to “Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”.

During the week, governments, United Nations agencies, major groups and other stakeholders will gather to collectively identify ways and means to support the implementation of SDG 14, build on existing successful partnerships, and stimulate innovative and concrete new partnerships to advance the implementation of this Goal.

The Conference will comprise of plenary meetings, seven partnership dialogues, and a special event commemorating World Oceans Day.

Only by mobilizing all stakeholders – governments, the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, private sector, philanthropic organizations – are we able to find ways to drive actions that are needed to conserve and protect our oceans and seas for future generations.

#### **How to engage in this Conference**

A two-day preparatory meeting for this Conference will be held in New York on 15-16 February 2017, where the themes of the seven partnership dialogues will be

discussed, as well the elements for a “Call for Action” – the inter-governmentally agreed declaration of the Conference.

### **NGOs already in consultative status with ECOSOC**

NGOs that enjoy consultative status with ECOSOC, previously accredited to either WSSD (2002), Rio+20 (2012), or the SIDS Conference (2014), may now pre-register to attend the two-day preparatory meeting in February at: [http://bit.ly/SDG14ConfPrep\\_Reg](http://bit.ly/SDG14ConfPrep_Reg)

Don't know if your organization is accredited? Search here: <http://esango.un.org/civilsociety/login.do>

*Deadline: 16 January 2017*

### **NGOs and organizations with no previous accreditation**

Non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the scientific community who do not have any consultative status or previous special accreditation, but whose work is relevant to the Conference, may apply for a special conference accreditation at: [http://bit.ly/SDG14ConfPrep\\_SA](http://bit.ly/SDG14ConfPrep_SA)

Eligible private sector organizations and philanthropic institutions may apply for special accreditation for the Conference and the preparatory meeting through the UN Global Compact by emailing [oceans@unglobalcompact.org](mailto:oceans@unglobalcompact.org) to begin the registration.

*Deadline: 8 January 2017*

For more information:

United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

June 2017 United Nations Oceans Conference announced at COP22

## **EXPERT VOICES**



### **Protecting the rights of persons with disabilities**

In December 2016, the world will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). We spoke with Daniela Bas, Director of UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, on the impact that the CRPD has had for people with disabilities worldwide.

**Why is the CRPD important for persons with disabilities?**

“There are one billion people with disabilities in the world, that is 15% of the world's population. In 2006 the United Nations adopted a very important international treaty

to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities to ensure their full participation and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others. The CRPD is an important development tool to guide the work in realizing this end.”

**How does CRPD impact the day-to-day experiences of persons with disabilities?**

“The CRPD has been very powerful and helpful in terms of obligating the States Parties in improving their policies and practices in matters impacting persons with disabilities and empowering individuals with disabilities as subjects who can claim their human rights and equal opportunities in society. Initiatives and progress in this regard can be easily seen in many parts of the world.

For example, they can now vote in many countries, where voting booths and technology have been made accessible. Many Governments have mandated that websites be made accessible and that television programming include closed captioning or sign language. Even here at the UN, we are implementing a new policy on the employment and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workplace.”

**What are some of the concrete examples of positive outcomes in the past 10 years?**

“Over the past ten years since its existence, the CRPD made radical changes in the understanding and perception of disability. People with disabilities are no longer viewed as objects of charity and welfare rather as rights-holders and contributors to the societies in which they live.

Many good experiences and examples existing in both developing and developed countries illustrate that the Convention has also a great potential to be further explored to guide the work of the Government and the international development community to create enabling conditions and to empower persons with disabilities to fully and effectively participate in development and all aspects of society.

For example, last year in Sendai Japan, disability was included in the new disaster risk reduction framework and this year at Habitat III in Quito Ecuador, disability was also included in the New Urban Agenda.”

**What are some of the areas in which the implementation of the CRPD still needs room for improvement?**

“Overall, there exists a gap between policy and practices in terms of promoting development to be fully inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities. There are already many good practices and initiatives to promote inclusive development and mainstream disability in development, that can be further promoted as an effective way to address disability issues. With the adoption and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, mainstreaming the rights, needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities, concrete work can be accomplished. For instance, we need to improve the data and statistics related to persons with disabilities. After all, we need to know well the numbers in relation to persons with disabilities when monitoring and evaluating development policies and programmes at all levels.”

**How has the adoption of the 2030 Agenda changed things for persons with disabilities?**

“Disability is referenced throughout the targets of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and specifically in parts related to education, employment, accessibility of human settlements and others related to addressing inequality, as well as data collection and monitoring of the SDGs themselves. This is momentous.



We cannot lose their contributions to tackle global challenges we face today. Here, I would add a word since the Division that I am leading, also deals with issues concerning not only persons with disabilities, but also older persons, youth and indigenous peoples etc. In the context of the changing development landscape, we really need to take a people-centered and responsive approach. For example, ageing has been a remarkable demographic trend in many parts of the world and will continue in the next decades to come. Making sure that the development agenda and efforts to be fully inclusive of people of all ages, with all abilities or disabilities, is critical to the success of the 2030 Agenda.”

For more information:

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
UN DESA Division for Social Policy and Development

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



## “Sustainable transport solutions are key to leaving no one behind”

The first-ever United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference concluded in the Turkmen capital on 27 November, with more than 50 countries endorsing the “Ashgabat Statement on Commitments and Policy Recommendations,” with a view to supporting cleaner, greener transportation –

from local transit systems to worldwide multimodal networks.

“The Conference has reinforced the importance of sustainable transport and has shown it is a shared global task,” said Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, at the closing ceremony.

“Sustainable transport solutions are key to leaving no one behind, securing prosperity, enabling access to services and protecting the environment,” concluded Mr. Wu, noting that “without sustainable transport, there will be no lasting progress on climate action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”

Noting the many encouraging success stories delegates had shared at the two-day conference, Mr. Wu said more needed to be done, including mobilizing trillions of dollars in investments and implementing legal, regulatory and governance frameworks. He also underlined the need to continue and strengthen capacity-building to developing countries.

“We have identified areas for regional and international cooperation and shared far-reaching policy recommendations,” he said. “We have, collectively and individually, identified concrete actions to move the world towards the new and essential paradigm of sustainable transport. Looking ahead, we must use our shared understanding to advance sustainable transport for all, by delivering on our commitments, forging new alliances and transforming our policies.”

He added that policy decisions needed to meet the needs of all in a low-carbon manner, requiring integrating transport modes and tapping into technological opportunities to bring the fundamental, transformative changes.

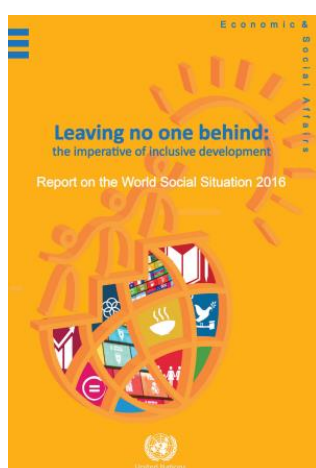
Concluding the two-day conference with the so-called “Ashgabat Statement,” participants stressed the need to promote the integration of science, technology and innovation into sustainable transport systems by tapping into technological opportunities in the decades to come, in order to bring about fundamental, transformative changes to transport systems.

*Source: UN News Centre*

For more information:

Global Sustainable Transport Conference

## MORE FROM UNDESA



## Leaving no one behind: the imperative for inclusive development

To meet the pledge to leave no one behind, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires identifying who has been left behind and in what ways. The latest Report on the World Social Situation shows that virtually everywhere, some people and groups confront barriers that prevent them from fully participating in economic, social and political life.

Drawing on data from censuses and surveys, the report shows that access to opportunities, resources and voice are systematically affected by one's ethnicity, age, gender, disability, migrant status and place of residence. This includes health and education services, jobs, income as well as participation in political and civic life. The report also highlights the role of discrimination as a particularly pervasive barrier to social inclusion.

The report argues that a universal approach to social policy is key to inclusive development as it addresses the underlying causes of exclusion and social injustice. Leaving no one behind, however, also requires special or targeted measures that address the unique needs and vulnerabilities of excluded groups. Moreover, leaving no one behind also calls for institutional change. Inclusive institutions can provide all citizens with opportunities to participate in public life on equal terms.

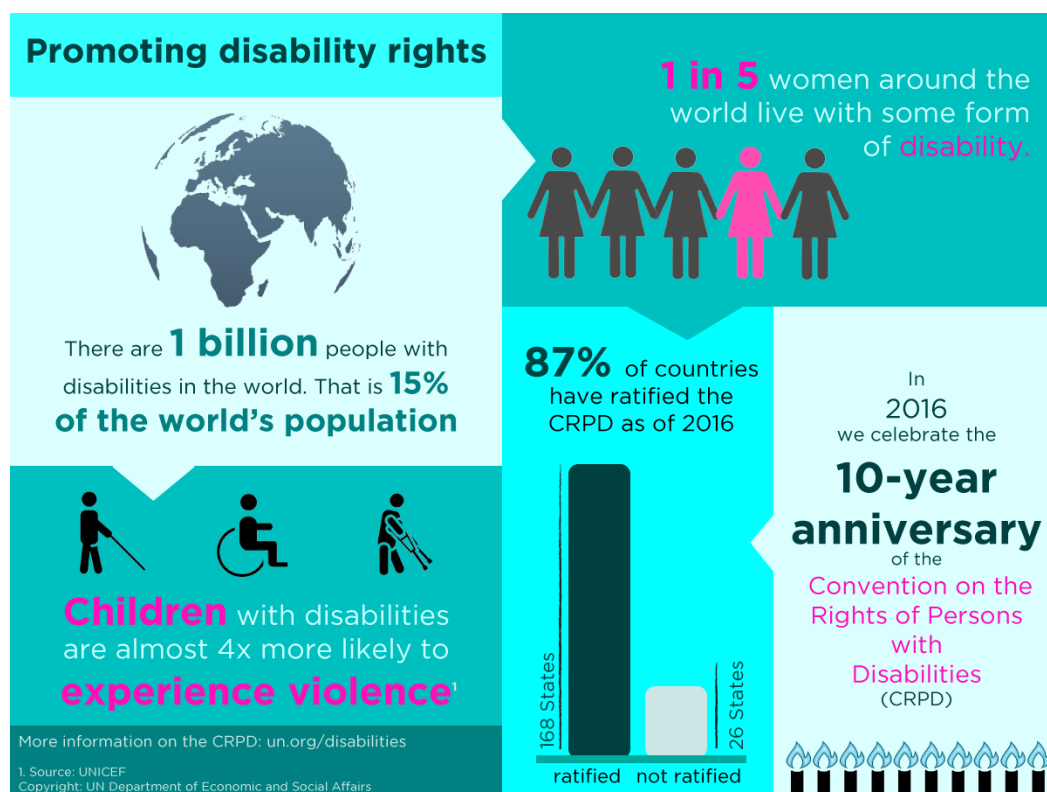
At an event last month, UN DESA's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development Lenni Montiel underlined one of the central messages of the report.

"Changing the social, cultural and political norms and institutions that underpin or perpetuate unequal power relations, while necessary, is often a long-term process, dependent on national and local circumstances," Mr. Montiel noted. "However with political will, governments can influence and help transform them."

For decades, the Report on the World Social Situation has served as the main reference on global social trends produced by the United Nations. The first report was published in 1952 and has been issued at two and three-yearly intervals since then.

For more information, and to download the latest edition of the report: [Report on the World Social Situation](#)

## Promoting disability rights



Around the world today, it is estimated that approximately one billion people live with some form of disability. To protect and promote their rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 December 2008. It is the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and is the first human rights convention to be open for signature by regional organizations. The Convention entered into force on 3 May 2008.

While the Convention does not establish new human rights, it does set out with much greater clarity the obligations on States to promote, protect and ensure the rights of persons with disabilities. Thus, the Convention not only clarifies that States should not discriminate against persons with disabilities, it also sets out the many steps that States must take to create an enabling environment so that persons with disabilities can enjoy real equality in society. For example, the Convention requires States to take measures to ensure accessibility of the physical environment and information and communications technology. As of November 2016, 168 member States had ratified the CRPD.

To celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the Convention, events will take place at UN Headquarters in New York on 2 December.

For more information:

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
10th Anniversary of the adoption of the CRPD

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>2 December,<br/>New York</b>         | 10th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities              |
| <b>5-8 December,<br/>New York</b>       | Thirteenth Session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters |
| <b>6-9 December,<br/>Guadalajara</b>    | Internet Governance Forum (IGF)  |
| <b>12-15<br/>December,<br/>New York</b> | Seventh Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing                                  |
| <b>14-16<br/>December,<br/>Vienna</b>   | Expert meeting in preparation for HLPF 2017  |

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