

Twenty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council

Annual Discussion on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities Statement by Ireland

19 March 2014

Thank you Mr. President.

Ireland aligns itself with the intervention made earlier by the EU.

Ireland welcomes this important discussion on the human rights of persons with disabilities, and its particular focus on education. We thank the Office of the High Commissioner for the preparation of the Thematic Study on the right of persons with disabilities to education.

Ireland notes the emphasis placed within the Study on the realisation of the right to education as a precondition for social and economic inclusion and full participation in society for persons with disabilities. We agree that education is a fundamental driver in ensuring full and effective achievement of all other human rights. Education facilitates the empowerment of all persons to realise and claim the fulfilment of the full extent of their individual human rights.

As the Study notes, people with disabilities often face serious barriers to inclusion in educational settings as a result of stigmatisation and discrimination. For this reason, we welcome in particular the conclusion that inclusive education is essential to achieving universality of the right to education including for persons with disabilities.

Ireland has made great progress in integrating the needs and rights of persons with disabilities into our national domestic policy and legislative framework. Our National Disability Strategy guides Ireland's 'whole of government' approach to ensuring the rights of persons living with a disability are reflected in all aspects of public policy. This includes a commitment to provide every person with access to appropriate education and training in conformity with their needs and abilities.

In 2013, we also adopted a new international development policy 'One World, One Future' in which we outline our clear commitment to the rights of persons with disabilities and their family. The Policy also reflects our commitment to devoting more resources to disability by continuing and increasing our support to specific initiatives and by ensuring that a focus on disability is mainstreamed in all of our development programming work.

In this context, and as the international community moves towards formulating a Post 2015 Development Framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals, Ireland views the present discussion as particularly timely. Ireland is committed to ensuring agreement on an ambitious post-2015 framework that reflects the rights and priorities of the almost 1 billion people who are currently living with disabilities around the globe. *In this regard, we would welcome the panellists' views as to how the post 2015 development agenda could best address the concerns of persons with disabilities, in particular as regards ensuring the right of all persons to education?*

