



55th SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

SOUTH AFRICA'S STATEMENT: HIGH-LEVEL MAINSTREAMING PANEL

Harnessing multilateral efforts to embed, amplify and realize the rights of persons with disabilities, with a focus on full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

26 FEBRUARY 2024

GENEVA

Mr President,

Let me extend my appreciation to the members of the panel for their rich and informative presentations. We welcome the proposals for the strengthened implementation of the inclusion strategy and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities in the UN system.

We are reminded that a network of services is required to enable persons with disabilities to carry out daily tasks and participate fully in their communities. In line with the theme, our Law Reform Commission is working towards domestication of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into legislation, the new measures will replace our White Paper on the rights of persons with disabilities by the end of this year. We look forward to the adoption of a disability rights-

based approach to support and care. This will ensure that our domestic laws are in line with the values enshrined in our Constitution, on inclusivity and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

My country ensures that persons with disabilities are covered by social protection and that their integral rights are not infringed upon by intolerance and apathy by the able bodied. People with disabilities have the right to live with dignity, freedom, and independence in their chosen communities. There are measures in place to ensure that they have access to health and education facilities.

Let us be reminded that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides a comprehensive framework for this implementation and clearly articulates a range of specific obligations for support. I am pleased to announce South Africa has kept up to date on its reporting obligations towards commitments to implement the requirements of the Convention and its Optional Protocol.

My country supports partnerships with persons with disabilities and the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, to realise technical cooperation and are committed to the implementation of the UNDIS, especially related to empowering persons with disabilities of all ages, particularly women at national and regional level to advance and defend human rights.

I thank you,