INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY ALLIANCE (IDA)

Member Organisations:
Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities, Down Syndrome International,
European Disability Forum, Inclusion International,
International Federation of Hard of Hearing People,
Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and
their Families, Pacific Disability Forum,
World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf, World Federation of the DeafBlind,
World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

Statement by Nagase Osamu on behalf of IDA at the opening of the 14th session of the
CRPD Committee, 17 August 2015

My name is Nagase Osamu, I am a council member of Inclusion International which is a member of IDA and I am making this statement on behalf of IDA.

Since the Committee’s last session, there have been many milestones on the global agenda of the rights of persons with disabilities:

Post- 2015 development agenda

It is an historic achievement that the rights and participation of persons with disabilities as actors for sustainable development are now included in the final agreed text of the Post 2015 Development Framework to be adopted in September during the Post 2015 Summit. IDA, in collaboration with IDDC and other stakeholders, has been engaging in intense to ensure that there are explicit references to persons with disabilities therein. In recognition of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Agenda, IDA’s Chair has been invited by the President of the General Assembly to speak on behalf of civil society on the topic of inequalities in an interactive dialogue during the Summit.

Another remarkable development is the establishment of persons with disabilities as a formal Stakeholder, which, together with Major Groups, will feed into the monitoring process of the implementation of the Post 2015 framework by supporting the High Level Political Forum to work in a regulated, transparent, inclusive and open manner. This is an historic opportunity: persons with disabilities are now to be seriously considered in every negotiation and consultation process as one of the other Stakeholders. 109 organisations of persons with disabilities jointly prepared and supported the first official submission of persons with disabilities to the third session of the Forum. Now it is time that we all jointly coordinate our participation in the future High Level Political Forum.

There is indeed much to celebrate concerning the achievements of the disability movement in securing references within the framework and a role within the process of monitoring its implementation. Yet, one significant drawback reflected in the introduction of the final text is the declared commitment to the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases, including behavioural, developmental and neurological disorders which is cited as constituting a major challenge to sustainable development. This was introduced at the last moment when the paragraph was already agreed for adoption and without any opening to influence it. This is a reminder that we must remain vigilant and continue to build alliances and work together against attacks on our rights as enshrined in the Convention. Despite this language which figures in the introduction, the framework will ultimately stand on the sustainable goals and targets and their implementation which envisage a rights based and participatory approach. Nevertheless, we are committed to ensuring that no such reference passes into the SDGs’ indicators.
The next challenge ahead concerns these indicators. The Statistical Commission’s new Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDGs released a revised set of indicators in June which included just one reference to persons with disabilities. We recognise that there remains significant work ahead and together with IDDC, we are strategising on how to engage with members of the UN Statistical Commission and the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDGs and we hope to join forces widely in shaping the indicators to concretise commitments to, and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

**Treaty bodies and others**

There is enormous potential for the Committee and other treaty bodies to play a pivotal role in contributing to monitoring the SDGs and particularly to highlight the situation of persons with disabilities. IDA welcomes the joint statement of the Chairpersons of treaty bodies calling for an institutionalised flow of information in an effort to ensure synergies between existing monitoring mechanisms, including the treaty bodies, and the post 2015 monitoring and review framework. IDA is committed to facilitating this flow of information in order for the Committee’s jurisprudence and Convention standards to feed into and guide the monitoring of the SDGs.

While there are some good examples of CRPD standards being incorporated by other treaty bodies, for example most recently, the CEDAW Committee’s general comment on access to justice, the CRC Committee’s statement on children’s rights and digital media, and the upcoming CESCR Committee’s General Comment on just and favourable conditions of work, there continue to be departures from the Convention standards. Namely, it is a concern that the draft Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (the Oviedo Convention) endorses the medical model and foresees and validates violations of the rights of persons with disabilities including forced treatment and involuntary hospitalisation. Concerning the latter, we would encourage the Committee to reach out to this Council of Europe body to open a dialogue for increased understanding and awareness of the Convention.

Despite these grave developments, it is at least heartening to see a submission made by the European Network of NHRIs which strongly calls on this Committee of Bioethics to adopt a CRPD compliant approach in letter and in spirit and to engage with your Committee.

**General Comments**

We would like to conclude by directing members’ attention to IDA’s position paper on the right to education which was recently adopted in July. Following on from last session’s day of general discussion, this paper was developed in consultation with our members and reflects IDA’s current position relating to Article 24 of the CRPD. We hope that this will serve the Committee in your work to draft the general comment. In addition, we call the Committee’s attention to IDA’s submission on the draft general comment on women and girls with disabilities.

Finally, we would like to remind members of the private side event on Portugal taking place at lunchtime today.

Thank you for your attention and we wish you a successful session.