



26th Session of the Human Rights Council
Statement by Sri Lanka
**Panel Discussion on “Technical cooperation and capacity-building in
advancing the rights of persons with disabilities through legal and
institutional frameworks,
including public-private partnerships”**
25 June 2014

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka is pleased to participate in the Panel Discussion on “Technical cooperation and capacity-building in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities through legal and institutional frameworks, including public-private partnerships”. Sri Lanka was a co-sponsor of Council Resolution 24/31 pursuant to which we have the discussion today. We are appreciative of the insights provided by the distinguished panelists.

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka welcomes the activities undertaken by the OHCHR as contained in the report (A/HRC/26/24) to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, by supporting efforts by States to promote and safeguard these rights in their respective national legislation, policies and programmes, including mainstreaming disability in development efforts.

As a signatory to the CRPD, Sri Lanka has taken action to protect the rights of the Persons with Disabilities including through legislative measures. Act

No 28 of 1996 on the “Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” has been amended in order to bring it in line with the UN Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities. An Election Special Act No. 28 of 2011 is under implementation to make provision for a voter who is subject to a disability to be accompanied by a person when voting in elections. Accessibility Regulations No 1 of 2006 is also under implementation. A National Policy on Disability has been prepared with a view to creating a disable-friendly environment. Sign Language has been recognized as an accepted language in Sri Lanka. These laws are being implemented as part of the implementation of the recommendations of the LLRC.

The Government has continued to promote the right to work and employment of PWD since 1988 by allocating 3 per cent of employment opportunities for PWD in the public service. The Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations has recognized a rights-based approach to engage the PWD in productive and decent employment. It has taken several initiatives to ensure employment opportunities for disabled persons with the government, semi-government and private sectors.

Persons with disabilities in conflict-affected areas receive benefits from Government schemes including housing and livelihood support. The Government promotes the participation of disabled persons in vocational training with assistance from international partners. For example, the ORHAN Vocational Training Centre in Vavuniya in the North has a current

enrolment of 70 per cent disabled students. These steps are also being taken in keeping with the implementation of the recommendations of the LLRC.

Mr. President,

Sound and efficient technical cooperation and capacity-building initiatives need to be based on a comprehensive understanding and analysis of specific human rights situations and the multi-faceted challenges related to them. The provision of technical assistance to States should be undertaken with the consent of and in close consultation with the States concerned, in keeping with Council resolution 5/1. In the above context, the UPR process is indeed an appropriate and important avenue of provision of technical assistance, where States-under-review have the opportunity to clearly state their technical assistance needs.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

Sri Lanka reiterates its commitment to the progressive realization of rights of persons with disabilities. We commend efforts to create greater awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and universalization of the CRPD.

Thank you.