



World Blind Union
Union Mondiale Des Aveugles
Unión Mundial de Ciegos

29/11/19

WBU Statement on International Day of persons with disabilities, December 3, 2019

The World Blind Union (WBU) joins the UN, members of the International Disability Alliance and the rest of the world in observing International Day of persons with disabilities on Tuesday 3rd December 2019.

The theme for this year is "promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 development agenda". The UN designated the observance of this Day, in 1992, to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

In keeping with our advocacy efforts to ensure the full and equal participation of blind and partially sighted persons in all spheres of society and in accordance with the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD), we take this opportunity to urge governments, policy makers and all who are mandated to ensure that the sustainable development goals (SDGs) are met in their respective territories. Inclusive development agenda must consider the voice of persons who are blind and partially sighted. This will ensure that their rights and needs are clearly understood, and that legislation, policies, infrastructure and other initiatives are not just planned, developed and implemented for them, but with their input.

WBU also takes this opportunity to encourage countries to comply and effectively implement the UNCRPD as well as recommendations of the CRPD Committee for all countries reviewed, as disability is a cross cutting issue referenced in the sustainable development goals and they must be used together in order to experience any major successful development in any country. SDG 4 and article 24 of the CRPD on education, promotes equal access to all levels of education and vocational training and calls for the building and upgrading of education facilities to ensure that they are disability friendly,

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and to ensure that learning environments are safe, effective and inclusive for all: SDG 8 and CRPD article 27 aims to achieve full and productive employment, decent work for all and equal pay for work of equal value for everyone, including persons with disabilities: SDG 11 and article 9 of the CRPD mandates member states to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, to improve road safety in keeping with the needs of persons with disabilities, and to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, particularly for persons with disabilities: and SDG 17 where member states are called upon to enhance capacity building support to developing countries, including least developed countries (LDCs) and small Island developing states, to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data also disaggregated by disability.

The 2030 agenda for sustainable development “pledges to leave no one behind”. In order to ensure that there is equitable, inclusive and sustainable development, the UNCRPD must be ratified and implemented and blind and partially sighted persons must be empowered with the voice and opportunities to participate, contribute and benefit equally and meaningfully in the implementation of the 17 sustainable development goals. Synergy between the CRPD and SDG’s will strengthen the quest to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities, including blind and partially sighted persons, are acknowledged, respected and considered by governments and policy makers.

The World Blind Union (WBU) is the global organization that represents the estimated 253 million people worldwide who are blind or partially sighted. Members consist of organizations of blind people advocating on their own behalf and organizations that serve the blind, in over 190 countries, as well as international organizations working in the field of vision impairment. Visit our website at www.worldblindunion.org

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