



## Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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### Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Sixteenth session

#### Summary record of the 284th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 25 August 2016, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Cisternas Reyes

### Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35 (*continued*)

*Initial report of Italy (continued)*

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35**

*(continued)*

*Initial report of Italy (continued) (CRPD/C/ITA/1; CRPD/C/ITA/Q/1 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Italy took places at the Committee table.*

*Articles 11-20*

2. **Mr. De Martino** (Italy), referring to the topic of supported decision-making, said that the support administration system put in place in 2004 was fully in line with the Convention. Moreover, a new biennial disability action plan, which had been drawn up by the National Observatory on the Status of Persons with Disabilities and would be adopted by the end of the year, called for the elimination of the legal measures of *interdizione* and *inhabilitazione*, whereby persons with disabilities could have their legal capacity removed or restricted.

3. The National Observatory was closely monitoring the implementation of the first biennial disability action plan, adopted in 2013. The Observatory included representatives of all levels of government and also representatives of civil society. The various ministries at the central Government level were responsible for policies that fell within their area of competence, but direct service provision to the population was the responsibility of the regions and municipalities. Central Government was working with the regions to ensure that social and assistance policies were applied and social services provided in a uniform manner throughout the country. If approved by referendum in late 2016, proposed amendments to the Constitution would give central Government greater responsibility for coordinating the implementation of social policies at the regional level.

4. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, together with regional governments and national organizations of persons with disabilities, was engaged in some 250 experimental projects for independent living launched in 2013. Consistent with article 19, deinstitutionalization was the cornerstone of the approach being applied, which promoted autonomy and independent living in small groups for persons with disabilities. Some €400 million per year were being invested in a new autonomy fund for persons with disabilities, one of the principal aims of which was to enable persons with disabilities, including those with severe disabilities, to remain in their homes. A recently adopted law also provided support for that purpose.

5. **Ms. Menichini** (Italy) said that draft legislation that would have officially recognized sign language had been put forward in 2007. The bill had been the result of an agreement among relevant organizations of persons with disabilities and had reflected their various perspectives in a balanced manner. Currently, several related bills were before Parliament. Their adoption would depend largely on the ability of the Government and the organizations concerned to overcome their differences and reach agreement. The Government would continue working towards that objective.

6. With regard to accessibility, there had been several judicial and administrative proceedings for violations of the relevant rules. Complete data on how municipalities ensured respect for those rules were not available. The Government was aware of the need for a monitoring system to collect and analyse data on the matter and expected that the National Observatory could fulfil that function. The Government was also aware that accessibility was a key issue in cities all over Italy. It had learned a valuable lesson about accessibility from the construction of the Calatrava bridge in Venice and would take care to ensure that that experience was not repeated. The city of Milan, on the other hand, provided

an example of good practice. As a result of its efforts to improve accessibility, over 35,000 persons with disabilities had been able to enjoy the 2015 World's Fair in that city. The city of Matera, which had been designated the 2019 European Capital of Culture, had appointed an accessibility manager in preparation for the activities to take place in that year.

7. **Mr. De Martino** (Italy) said that there was no provision for forced abortion in the Italian legal system. Subjecting a woman to an abortion against her will was an offence. In the case of women with mental impairments who had been placed under legal guardianship, abortion was considered only where the woman's condition was deemed incompatible with pregnancy, such as when medicines that she was receiving would have to be withdrawn in order to avoid harm to the fetus.

8. Italy had participated actively in the negotiation and adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Government was in the process of translating the framework to the national level, including in the context of its development cooperation strategies. Within the European Union, Italy had been active in promoting attention to the topic of disability and humanitarian aid and had worked to ensure that emergency preparedness plans took into account the needs of persons with disabilities. In line with the Sendai Framework, the Government paid special attention to the Council of Europe's ethical principles on disaster risk reduction, which called for the involvement of persons with disabilities in disaster preparedness and response. Under the Italian Development Cooperation Disability Action Plan, a technical working group on humanitarian aid and emergency situations involving persons with disabilities had been set up. Among other activities, the group had drafted a vade mecum entitled "Disability and humanitarian aid", which provided guidelines for assisting persons with disabilities in disaster and emergency situations, with due regard to their particular vulnerabilities. The vade mecum also put forward concrete suggestions and examples of best practice for the inclusion of disability in humanitarian aid programmes. The delegation would be pleased to provide the Committee with additional written information on the guidelines and criteria in place for supporting persons with special needs in emergency situations. He wished to note in that connection that the needs of persons with disabilities were being taken into account in the response to the earthquake of the previous day.

9. With regard to public procurement, Italian law required that all public works meet accessibility requirements. Although there was currently no explicit provision in the law requiring that tenders address accessibility, proposals for public works could not be approved if they did not comply with the legislation. The new biennial action plan developed by the National Observatory on the Status of Persons with Disabilities called for the inclusion of an accessibility clause in the public procurement code, which made accessibility one of the criteria for the evaluation of tenders and would award additional points to those that complied fully with the requirements.

10. As for health care and social benefits for foreigners, foreigners, including those whose immigration status was irregular, were entitled by law to receive both urgent health care and essential continuing care, including prolonged hospitalization, if needed, for illness or injury. Foreign women received the same care for pregnancy and childbirth as Italian women and all foreign children and adolescents under the age of 18 were registered with the National Health Service and had access to preventive and other care. Health-care providers were barred from requesting patients' immigration documents or reporting illegal immigrants to law enforcement authorities. All the regions in the country had signed an agreement requiring homogeneous interpretation of the legislation on the matter.

11. Foreigners with regular status had the right, and the obligation, to register with the National Health Service the first time they renewed their residence permits. All European citizens residing and working in Italy, and their family members, had the same right. With regard to access to social benefits, Italy applied the relevant European Union directives,

which provided that foreigners residing legally in the country were entitled to the same benefits as Italian citizens.

12. By decision of the Constitutional Court, migrants with disabilities were entitled to certain social benefits and protections, regardless of their immigration status. Migrants who were rescued at sea received health care initially at the point of disembarkation and their health continued to be monitored thereafter. Asylum seekers had the right to the same health services as Italian citizens and were not required to pay for health care. If they had disabilities for which they required specific treatment, including hospitalization, those services were provided through the national health system. The Government did not have data disaggregated by age and disability on migrants arriving in Italy.

13. There were no specific rules requiring the removal of architectural barriers at first-level migrant reception centres, but if a particular centre was not accessible to a person with a disability, that person would be transferred to another facility that was accessible. At the second level, a network of 430 facilities had been constructed in 2015, of which 30 were specifically intended for persons with disabilities, including mental disabilities or mental trauma; 280 places in the network were allotted to such persons. Financing had been allocated in 2016 for the construction of an additional 15 facilities intended specifically for migrants requiring specialized health services; those facilities would be able to accommodate 300 people. Most of the migrants referred to such facilities required care for a psychological condition. Specialized cultural mediators assisted medical personnel in establishing a relationship with their patients. There were programmes to facilitate the provision of prosthetic aids to migrants and also to facilitate access for those with permanent disabilities to the same economic benefits as those received by Italian citizens with disabilities.

14. His country was not a signatory to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, but it had adopted all the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization. There was no discrimination against foreign workers. The Department for Equal Opportunities conducted awareness-raising campaigns on discrimination against women, including women with disabilities, and organized an annual campaign in cooperation with the National Anti-Racial Discrimination Office. The Office received complaints about discrimination and problems in obtaining access to justice, which it referred to the legal aid fund of the National Forensic Council. In 2014-2015, the Office had received 30 complaints about access to justice. No disaggregated data were available on the specific problems encountered. The 2016 National Action Plan on Childhood included a target on the integration of children with special needs and made reference to poverty and disability.

15. Under the law, written consent was required for medical treatment or surgery. In an emergency, in the case of loss of consciousness, action could be taken without consent in order to save the patient's life. Parents provided consent for the treatment of their children. Presidential Decree No. 439/2001 and Legislative Decree No. 211/2003 established respect for human dignity and mental and physical integrity in clinical experiments, for which written consent was required. The approach taken to intersex persons was based on an understanding that sexual disorders were linked to a person's genetic background at birth and chromosomal conditions that impaired growth and the construction of gender identity. The law provided for parental consent to surgical intervention in such cases and the National Bioethics Committee had issued guidelines on preventing the loss of reproductive capacity and avoiding unnecessary mutilation. The Ministry of Health was financing a project to collect data on violence against children in first aid centres in eight cities, which would involve training health professionals. Information on violence and disabilities would be collected through patient surveys as part of that project.

16. Under Act No. 81/2014, psychiatric hospitals were being closed. Persons who were required to remain in custody for reasons of criminal justice would be moved to residences for the execution of security measures (REMS), which were managed by the National Health Service. Transfers to those residences would be monitored every six months by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice. A database indicated the clinical and legal situations of persons being transferred. Although there had been a €2 billion contraction in the National Fund of Social Policies, the overall funding allocated to persons with disabilities had increased.

17. **Mr. Ferrante** (Italy) said that many regions were promoting the formal recognition of care work, in particular that performed by women, and a parliamentary bill had been presented on that topic. The National Fund for Non-Self-Sufficient Persons provided for a system of contributions and benefits for caregivers, which helped to relieve the burden on families and enable persons who needed care to live at home. The key issue, however, was to move towards a system of public social services to care for persons with disabilities, thereby freeing women from those duties and allowing them to remain in work.

18. **Mr. De Martino** (Italy) said that legal capacity was determined by a judge, who also decided whether a given individual should be hospitalized for his or her own benefit. Access to justice was guaranteed to all, without discrimination, including persons without disabilities. Remedies existed within the system, ensuring that non-compliance with the law could be met with enforcement action.

19. The use and duration of mandatory medical treatment was minimized wherever possible. Under Act No. 833/1978, mandatory treatment was given only to persons who presented a danger to themselves or others, in the absence of alternative options and on the advice of a physician. A permit for such treatment was issued by the mayor of the city and approved by a judge within 48 hours. Mandatory treatment should not usually last more than one week. Mental health problems were treated through a network of community-oriented facilities. Acute problems were treated in general hospitals on psychiatric wards. Care establishments included hospital psychiatric services, day centres and residential facilities. The aim was to tailor intervention to the individual, strengthen his or her capacity and promote the highest possible level of autonomy.

#### *Articles 21-33*

20. **Ms. Quan-Chang** noted that the closure of psychiatric hospitals did not amount to the full elimination of institutionalization. She asked whether the State party intended to provide care in the community to all persons and children with disabilities and how it ensured that children were cared for separately from adults. She was concerned at the lack of access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, for persons with disabilities, and the prejudice displayed by staff regarding the sexual and reproductive rights of persons with disabilities. Regional inequality in social protection for persons with disabilities was a further cause of concern. She wished to know how the State party would improve social assistance for persons with disabilities, particularly those without work or a fixed income, who found themselves living in poverty. The delegation should explain how persons with disabilities were provided with an adequate standard of living and dignified care. Information should be provided on action to review the role of the independent monitoring mechanism stipulated in article 33 of the Convention and to move towards the establishment of a national human rights institution.

21. **Mr. Lovász** said that, in view of the reported provision in schools of general communication assistants rather than sign language interpreters for deaf children, he wished to know what sign language qualifications were required for those assistants. Information should be provided on the application in the State party of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. The delegation should give details of the incentives

available to persons with disabilities, particularly women, in the labour market; provide information on changes in the labour market relevant to persons with disabilities; describe ways of increasing the employment of persons with disabilities through current strategies and action plans; and provide information on employment practices concerning persons with disabilities in the agricultural sector. He suggested that a specific provision on acoustic signal systems for traffic lights should be included in the next action plan to be developed by the National Observatory on the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

22. **Mr. Ruskus** asked whether the State party planned to change its approach to inclusive education and make the culture of schools inclusive for all children, instead of categorizing and labelling children with disabilities as having special educational needs. He wished to know what measures the State party would take to enhance teachers' and teaching assistants' skills, knowledge and attitudes, and whether it planned to employ more teachers with disabilities. It would be useful to hear about any plans to set up a national system to monitor inclusive education in line with the requirements of the Convention. He enquired how the State party ensured that quality health services, including health-related rehabilitation, were accessible to persons with chronic diseases, such as epilepsy and multiple sclerosis, and other so-called "invisible disabilities".

23. **Mr. Buntan** asked whether the State party planned to take any steps to address the lack of public recognition and standardization of Braille, as they were currently hampering the development of Braille teaching and usage. He would welcome information on any measures in place to provide support for the families of persons with disabilities that required it. He would also be interested to know whether persons with disabilities could adopt children in the State party. He asked how the State party interpreted and intended to put into practice the inclusive education system while meeting the requirement in article 24 (3) of the Convention to meet the needs of specific groups, such as blind, deaf and deaf-blind persons. He wished to know how the State party intended to mainstream disability issues into the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure that the implementation of the Goals was disability-inclusive.

24. **Mr. Basharu** asked what specific measures the State party had implemented to reduce the effects of poverty on persons with disabilities. He wished to know what steps had been taken since the submission of the State party's report to guarantee that all persons with disabilities had access to all polling booths. He would welcome additional information on ways in which the State party made the entire voting process accessible to persons with disabilities, for example, by providing information in Braille, audio formats and sign language, and ensuring that sign language interpreters were present in all polling stations.

25. **Mr. Langvad** requested details of the financial resources that had been allocated for the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities who were currently residing in institutions and the type of data that were being used to allocate such resources. It would be useful to know whether action was being taken to revise the concept of incapacity of persons with disabilities to make decisions and to replace substitute decision-making with a supported decision-making system and, if so, what that action was. He asked whether any national legislation supported persons with disabilities in the conduct of their parental obligations and rights. He requested details of how the State party monitored the quality of education and the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream schools and how it monitored the quality of teacher training, including pre- and in-service training on inclusive education.

26. He wished to know what initiatives were taken to ensure that persons with disabilities could obtain at least a minimum level of social security. He asked why persons with disabilities who were over working age were entitled to different subsidies from those to which persons of working age were eligible. He requested data on the average income of persons with disabilities compared to the rest of the population in the State party. It would

be interesting to know why quality data disaggregated by disability, sex and age was not available in surveys and censuses on the general population. He echoed the concern raised by 22 States during the universal periodic review about the lack of an independent national human rights institution and joined their recommendation that the State party establish such an institution, as set out in A/HRC/28/4, paras. 145.26-145.48.

27. **Mr. Tatić** asked how many television news bulletins were broadcast a day with sign language interpretation and how many other programmes had sign language interpretation. He would be interested to learn of any moves on the part of national and local private television broadcasters to provide sign language interpretation. It would be useful to know how much had been invested directly in reasonable accommodation for inclusive education. He enquired whether the works of Umberto Eco were available in accessible formats, such as Braille and audio formats. He wished to know whether there were any websites that provided specific information for tourists with disabilities on places that were accessible to wheelchair users, had sign language interpretation or included information in formats accessible to blind persons and persons with intellectual disabilities.

28. **Ms. Peláez Narváez** asked the delegation to provide an example of an awareness-raising campaign on violence against women that was accessible to persons with disabilities or that made reference to women with disabilities. It would be useful to know what form the State party's commendable recognition of the work of mothers of persons with disabilities took. Did mothers who cared for a child with disabilities enjoy the same level of protection as all other persons? It would also be useful to know about the protection regime for personal assistants of persons with disabilities.

29. The legislation providing for mandatory medical treatment described in paragraph 29 of the State party's replies to the list of issues was a clear contravention of articles 12 and 25 of the Convention. She would welcome information on when the State party planned to bring that legislation into line with the Convention. She asked whether there were any restrictions on access to assisted reproduction programmes for persons with disabilities.

30. The Committee would welcome additional information on the degree to which the State party guaranteed that all persons with disabilities were able to study and train in any discipline they wished and take up employment in that discipline. What reasonable accommodation was made to guarantee that persons with disabilities enjoyed the right to work in all domains?

31. In the light of the information provided in paragraph 69 of the replies to the list of issues, she asked when the State party planned to put an end to the limitations it placed on the right to vote for persons with disabilities. In particular, the fact that the presiding officer could demand that a person submit a medical certificate in order to justify the fact that he or she had assistance was totally discriminatory. She enquired how the right to vote in secret was upheld for all persons, including those with disabilities.

32. It would be useful to learn whether the State party planned to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled. If so, had any measures been taken for its implementation? Given that the State party appeared to be producing much less sheet music in Braille and other accessible formats than in the past, she asked what steps the Government was taking to support the entities that undertook such work.

33. **Mr. Pyaneandee** asked how the State party planned to address the underrepresentation of persons with disabilities in political and public life at the federal, regional and local levels. He wished to know what steps were in place to increase the participation of women with disabilities in political life, bearing in mind articles 27, 32 and, in particular, 33 of the Convention.

34. **Mr. Al-Tarawneh** asked when the State party would establish a national human rights institution that was in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), and provide adequate funding for its functioning.

35. **Ms. Kingston** (Country Rapporteur) asked whether the State party planned to conduct an assessment of the impact of austerity measures on children and women with disabilities. She drew the delegation's attention to the fact that article 48 of the Constitution, which restricted the right to vote based on civil incapacity, was inconsistent with the Convention. Given the commitment reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance, she asked whether the State party could guarantee that it would allocate adequate funds to disability-specific rights and to mainstreaming disability rights in international development initiatives. She requested clarification on whether forced abortions took place in the State party, as the delegation's explanation had been somewhat contradictory on that point.

36. **The Chair** requested information on the State party's plans to amend its criminal legislation on declaring persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities who had allegedly committed a crime unfit to stand trial. It would be useful to know what protection measures were afforded to those persons under the current legislation. She asked what steps had been taken to implement the recommendation of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights contained in paragraph 47 (d) of document E/C.12/ITA/CO/5 that the State party provide alternative family- and community-based care systems for persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. She requested an update on the status of draft law No. 2444 on inclusive education and on the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, contained in paragraph 55 of document E/C.12/ITA/CO/5 in that regard.

*The meeting was suspended at noon and resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

37. **Mr. De Martino** (Italy) said that the State party had accepted 22 recommendations made during the universal periodic review concerning the establishment of a national human rights institution and eight proposals were currently under consideration by the Parliament. As had been noted in the written replies to the list of issues, there had been an increase in the number of support teachers and regular training was provided. Four questions related to disability had been included in the most recent census; disaggregated data would be provided to the Committee in writing. With regard to the accessibility of the courts and local authorities, the World Federation of the Deaf and the Italian Union of Blind and Partially Sighted People, which were financed by the Government, provided training and developed technologies, cooperated with public institutions at the local level and provided support when there was a need to facilitate access for persons with disabilities. The average annual income of persons with disabilities in Italy was €16,300, compared to the average national income of €18,400. Support and assistance for pregnancy and motherhood was provided to all persons without discrimination. There was a broad system of support in place for the parents and relatives of persons with disabilities; employees could take up to two years of fully paid leave to care for a member of their family who had a disability. With regard to accessible media, the national public broadcaster, Radiotelevisione italiana (RAI), provided up to 70 per cent of its television programming, and at least one news broadcast daily, with sign language interpretation. No figures were available for private television networks; although they were not contractually obliged to provide sign language, some did so independently.

38. There was no restriction on the right to vote for persons with disabilities, and persons with mental or intellectual disabilities were not required to be accompanied by another person. Persons with a physical impairment that prevented them from filling in or



submitting the ballot paper on their own could be accompanied by a person to assist them. It was at the discretion of the person in charge of the polling station whether they requested persons with disabilities wishing to be accompanied by another person to show a doctor's certificate.

39. With regard to the abortion case mentioned earlier, abortion was permitted only when the life of the mother was in danger. For example, if the mother needed to take medication that would put at risk the life of the baby, there must be an evaluation of the comparative risks, as not taking the medication for the duration of the pregnancy could severely affect the health of the mother. The decision thus had to be made of whether to limit that risk to the mother and proceed with an abortion.

40. With regard to reasonable accommodation in schools, the total budget for 2016 to support the education of students with disabilities was €24 billion. The reason that children with disabilities were required to present a certificate on enrolment was to facilitate the organization of support by special needs teachers.

41. One of the main objectives of the recently adopted law on social agriculture was to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. It contained specific provisions on therapeutic and rehabilitation services. The Department for Equal Opportunities was running a campaign to prevent violence against women and raise awareness of the services available. The National Anti-Racial Discrimination Office's contact centre was available to all victims of any form of discrimination, including persons with disabilities. Information on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health model would be sent to the Committee in writing. Current employment legislation provided for specific incentives for hiring persons with disabilities, particularly persons with mental and intellectual disabilities.

42. **Mr. De Santi** (Italy) said that the disability sector was included in the programming guidelines for Italian Development Cooperation for the period 2014-2016, which had been developed in close cooperation with civil society organizations. Italian Development Cooperation had adopted the Disability Action Plan in 2013. The policy guidelines produced by the working groups established under the Action Plan, including on accessibility, humanitarian crises and data and analysis, were available in English on the agency's website. A publication specifically on data related to projects and initiatives on disability in international cooperation between 2009 and 2014 was currently being finalized and would be shared with the Committee. A twin-track approach was adopted, which meant that there was a focus on mainstreaming disability across the development cooperation agenda as well as projects focused primarily on disability issues. Italy had actively participated in negotiating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and was involved in the follow-up review and monitoring of the Agenda. The strategy for development cooperation was currently being overhauled with a view to integrating the Agenda into the programming guidelines for the next three years, with a focus on the multidimensionality of issues such as the role of persons with disabilities in peacebuilding and development in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 16. Italian Development Cooperation also participated in the National Observatory on the Status of Persons with Disabilities and aimed to ensure a high level of policy coherence between domestic and international activities. A new development cooperation system had been introduced, involving the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the policymaking body, with strong collaboration with civil society in the new National Council for Development Cooperation. There was also a new financial institution for development cooperation.

43. **Ms. Menichini** (Italy) said that Act No. 107/2015 provided for the adoption of new decrees to better define the education system for students with disabilities, specifically the definition of minimum standards for educational, social and health services in order to guarantee homogeneous inclusion across the country. The review of criteria and procedures

for certification of students with disabilities that should be adopted focused on the specific needs and abilities of the student. The intention was to protect and not to discriminate against students with disabilities. The draft decree, on which organizations of persons with disabilities had been consulted, provided that the State and the regions guaranteed the uniformity of professional workers employed in specific educational support services, including personal assistants and communication assistants, thus addressing problems related to assistants for deaf students. The decree would guarantee assistive technology for blind and deaf students.

44. Increasing attention was being paid to accessibility in Italian tourism policies and strategies. There was a subgroup specifically dedicated to tourism in the working group on accessibility of the National Observatory on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. The Village for All website provided information in Italian and English on accessible tourist facilities around the country. Individual cities were also developing websites providing information on accessibility.

45. **Mr. De Martino** (Italy) thanked the Committee for the constructive dialogue, which came just weeks ahead of the adoption of the next plan of action by the National Observatory. The members' interesting comments and suggestions would certainly be taken into account in the formulation of future policies and programmes. The Government was aware that there were areas in which improvements could be made and future challenges of which it was not yet even aware, but it was moving in the right direction.

46. **Ms. Kingston** thanked the delegation for the dialogue with the Committee. However, she was disappointed with some of the replies and the fact that the weight given to some of the concerns raised had not been proportionate to the seriousness of the issues. The Committee did not agree that the mechanism of the support administration system was in line with the Convention. She was concerned about the definition of reasonable accommodation; there was a need for legislation explicitly recognizing that the failure to provide such accommodation was a form of disability-based discrimination. The lack of an independent monitoring mechanism in line with the Paris Principles was also regrettable. The slow pace of parliamentary debate could not be used as an excuse not to give official recognition to Italian Sign Language. On a positive note, Italy could be a trailblazer in terms of inclusive education and community-based mental health.

47. **The Chair** welcomed the contribution made by Italian civil society and organizations of persons with disabilities.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*