



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Summary record of the 2nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 17 July 2013, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Rahman (Vice-President) (Bangladesh)

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In the absence of Mr. Kamau (Kenya), Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Matters related to the implementation of the Convention (continued)

(a) General debate (continued)

1. **Mr. Tremiño** (Spain) said that his Government had taken several measures to improve the living conditions of all its citizens, especially those with disabilities, including the establishment of a State housing plan calling for the suspension of all evictions of persons with disabilities or of families with persons with disabilities for a period of two years, and the reservation of seven per cent of all specialized health-care professional positions for persons with disabilities. It had adopted a decree to enable persons with disabilities who had never worked or who did not have enough working hours to qualify for social welfare to be considered as full contributors to and beneficiaries of the social security system. The Government also worked in close cooperation with organizations of persons with disabilities and all relevant stakeholders to raise awareness and promote the social inclusion and employment of persons with disabilities.

2. At the international level, his delegation had been involved in the preparation of the outcome document of the High-level Meeting on Disability and Development, to be held in 2013, and had been advocating the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. Spain would also receive the Franklin D. Roosevelt International Disability Rights Award in 2013, in recognition of its achievements in promoting the objectives and ideals of the Convention as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

3. His delegation welcomed the efforts made by the European Union to ensure that persons with disabilities were able to participate fully in and express themselves at the current Conference of States Parties to the Convention.

4. **Mr. Sunesson** (Sweden) said that the Convention provided a solid framework for his country's efforts to promote human rights in general and the rights of persons with disabilities in particular. His Government welcomed the increased attention afforded to the rights

of persons with disabilities in the United Nations and had participated actively in the preparation of the outcome document of the upcoming High-level Meeting on Disability and Development. He hoped that that meeting would address not only the rights of persons with disabilities, but also human rights, poverty reduction and sustainability in the development agenda beyond 2015, and would recognize women and children as actors and special target groups for policy development.

5. It was important to improve statistics through standardized data collection, in order to facilitate benchmarking and monitoring of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, and to ensure that civil society organizations played a full and active role at future Conferences of States Parties.

6. **Mr. Kamara** (Israel) said that his Government had ratified the Convention in 2012, marking a new phase in the lives of persons with disabilities in Israel, a country inspired by Moses, who had led his people from slavery to freedom despite having a stutter. The Israeli Commission for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities was responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, raising public awareness and promoting accessible environments through legislation and enforcement.

7. Accessibility was a major challenge that required financial investment as well as behavioural and attitudinal changes and policies to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in housing, employment and education. Despite its progressive efforts, the Government of Israel was well aware that much remained to be done to create a less segregated and more inclusive society. People with disabilities would become full and equal members of society only when the rest of society started seeing them as equals.

8. **Mr. Laursen** (Denmark) said that the Institute for Human Rights, the Disability Council and the Parliamentary Ombudsman were the institutions responsible for promoting, protecting and monitoring the Convention in Denmark. It was of utmost importance that civil society, particularly persons with disabilities and organizations representing them, should participate fully in the monitoring process. The Government was finalizing a new national disability action plan to support the continued implementation of the Convention and other principles that had always been part of Denmark's disability policy, such as

inclusion, respect for diversity, equal opportunity, accessibility, empowerment and self-determination for persons with disabilities.

9. His delegation had been concerned at the manner in which the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities had been handled in the lead-up to the Conference. Their active involvement should form part of the Convention and should be one of the main principles of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention.

10. **Mr. Awasthi** (India) said that his Government recognized the need for specific policy intervention to support persons with disabilities. The country's Constitution mandated the State to ensure equality, freedom, justice and dignity for all individuals, but specifically to secure, within the limits of its economic capacity, the right to work, education, public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disability. The Government had enacted several laws to provide persons with disabilities with equal opportunities, to protect their rights, to enable them to participate fully in society, and to mainstream disability in its programmes and policies.

11. The Government of India remained committed to building an enabling environment to allow persons with disabilities to enjoy their rights and realize their full potential. India was a signatory to the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia Pacific Region and to the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities.

12. **Mr. Mazariegos** (Guatemala) said that Guatemalans with disabilities suffered from social exclusion, illiteracy, unemployment and limited access to education. In response, the Government had established a national council of persons with disabilities, made up of people from both the public sector and civil society organizations, to promote the implementation of the Convention. It had adopted a national disability policy to ensure that persons with disabilities were incorporated into society and that they had access to employment in both the private and the public sectors; and had passed laws to address the interests of persons with disabilities, including laws on special education and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in national and local institutions.

13. While progress had been made to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, much remained to be done. The Government and civil society organizations must work together to ensure that persons with disabilities participated fully in all aspects of life within the country.

14. **Ms. Anjum** (Bangladesh) said that the inclusion of specific references to persons with disabilities in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, was a positive step towards disability-inclusive development. As one of the first countries to ratify the Convention, Bangladesh attached special priority to persons with disabilities. Despite its resource constraints, the Government had taken steps to ensure that persons with disabilities had an adequate standard of living. It had adopted legislation to protect the rights of persons with disabilities well before the Convention was even adopted. It had taken several initiatives to address the needs of persons with disabilities, including the provision of free physiotherapy, hearing aids, visual test counselling, training and related equipment to persons with disabilities in remote areas; establishment of specialized schools for children with disabilities; skills development and vocational training programmes; and interest-free loans to enhance the employment potential of persons with disabilities.

15. Nonetheless, persons with disabilities still faced endless challenges, including limited access to disability-friendly infrastructure. Sufficient resources should therefore be mobilized through international cooperation to address those challenges, particularly the least developed countries. While States bore the primary responsibility for ensuring an adequate standard of living for and empowerment of persons with disabilities, other stakeholders should also contribute by giving persons with disabilities equal opportunity of access in their areas of responsibility.

16. **Ms. Toliėkiene** (Lithuania) said that her country's legal framework contained the institutional mechanisms for implementing the Convention in both the private and the public sectors. Her Government had established programmes for the integration and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities, in order to facilitate their inclusion and full participation in political, social, cultural and economic life. After submitting its report on the implementation of the Convention to the United Nations in 2012, Lithuania planned to nominate a candidate for election to the

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014.

17. Her Government was developing a national programme to establish a consistent and structured system of assistance that would help to create opportunities for disabled children in foster care and disabled adults to receive customized services and assistance. It was seeking opportunities to enable fully or partially independent persons with disabilities to live in and receive non-hospital care in their homes. It protected the right of persons with disabilities to freely choose their employment and workplace and their right to professional rehabilitation, professional training and job-search assistance.

18. Nonetheless, for some persons with certain types of disability, institutional care was often the only possible option. In that connection, adequate infrastructure and relevant professionals in care facilities were of the utmost importance.

19. **Ms. Lee** (New Zealand) said that helping to ensure that persons with disabilities were gainfully employed or ran their own businesses was one of the most important ways of improving their standard of living. To that end, her Government was making adjustments to its welfare system to focus more on supporting the abilities of persons with disabilities. It was also working with organizations of disabled persons and employers to develop opportunities for persons with disabilities to gain skills and work experience. In that connection, it had developed a web-based resource to provide easily accessible information in order to improve the process of hiring persons with disabilities, including through reasonable accommodation.

20. The Government was also increasing funding for its campaign to support local and national initiatives that promoted positive attitudes and behaviours towards persons with disabilities. It was reforming its disability support system to give disabled people and their families greater choice and control over their lives so that they could do everyday things in everyday places in their communities. It was also improving its collection of data on outcomes for disabled people, including redeveloping its household labour survey to cover disability screening questions.

21. The Government had ensured that persons with disabilities were involved in the development of all those initiatives and would continue to use their

opinions as a yardstick to determine whether it was on track to providing them with an adequate standard of living, full empowerment and participation in society.

(b) Round table 1: Economic empowerment through inclusive social protection and poverty reduction strategies

22. **The President** said that economic empowerment was a key factor for enhancing the status of persons with disabilities and their full participation in society. Poverty alleviation, income generation through decent employment and social protection were useful for implementing the Convention and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Access to education, health care and employment were particularly important in improving the well-being of persons with disabilities and moving them out of poverty. Building national social protection floors and comprehensive social protection systems that included persons with disabilities and responded to their specific needs would contribute to the realization of human rights and the fostering of inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and society.

23. Nonetheless, in developing such policies, strategies and measures, account should be taken of possible barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities, including a lack of information about employment and training opportunities; inaccessibility of workplaces and public transport; and stereotypes and prejudices about their capabilities and contributions.

24. He hoped that the panellists would reflect on measures taken by Member States to ensure that their national development policies and programmes promoted the rights and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities; measures taken by Member States to better address the needs of persons with disabilities in poverty reduction strategies and facilitate their access to social protection where needed; elements to be included in development policies with respect to designing, implementing and monitoring inclusive social protection policies and poverty reduction strategies; and measures that might be undertaken for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities, as well as the approach for inclusion of the challenges and opportunities for persons with disabilities in the development framework beyond 2015.

25. **Ms. Bersanelli** (National Commission for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities, Argentina) said that empowerment encompassed the development and enhancement of people's potential; greater control by citizens over their lives and their environment; access to rights and resources; poverty alleviation and dismantling of barriers to inclusion; collective action to build a cooperative and inclusive society; and use of policy as an instrument to transform people's lives. In recent years, her country had adopted an economic model based on production, debt payment, activist governance, respect for human rights and establishment of a national identity. In so doing, it had abandoned the disastrous neoliberal or market-centric model of the past, which had been characterized by budgetary restrictions that caused unemployment, indebtedness, dependency and suffering among all citizens.

26. The Government's new model was rooted in shared values of human rights and social justice; promotion of social, generational, territorial and gender equity; expansion of rights; and organization and participation by the people; and encouraged decent and quality employment, full inclusion and equity for persons with disabilities. Measures taken to ensure that development policies and programmes promoted the rights and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities through social protection and poverty reduction included increasing the budget allocated to the National Fund for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. That Fund facilitated the development of various projects to improve the lives of persons with disabilities in such areas as housing, microcredit, technical assistance, rehabilitation, adapted transportation, special education and access to libraries and sports clubs.

27. The Government promoted the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market by ensuring access to social security and health services. It had established a policy of universal social protection which enabled children and adolescents with disabilities to receive a monthly allowance that helped such persons reduce their level of dependence. The Government had also instituted an allowance for pregnant women beginning after 12 weeks of pregnancy until delivery or interruption of the pregnancy.

28. Socially vulnerable persons, including the elderly, women with seven or more children and persons with

disabilities, were entitled to non-contributive allowances and full medical coverage. Technological and digital inclusion in education was ensured through the Conectar Igualdad (Connect Equality) programme to give students with disabilities access to education and relevant technologies. In 2013, through the "University for all" programme, the Ministry of Education had provided the first 135 notebook computers out of the 1,072 portable devices distributed to 35 national universities across the country to university graduates with disabilities. Broadcasters were encouraged to produce and broadcast their own programmes and to incorporate special devices adapted for persons with sensory disabilities, the elderly and other persons who might have difficulty accessing content.

29. The Argentine Government had provided funding for projects designed to improve the quality of life of students in national universities, and had established a national university scholarships programme to facilitate access and continued education for students with disabilities who had limited financial resources but had good academic performances. The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights had established a programme aimed at ensuring access, equal treatment and participation of persons with disabilities in all judicial proceedings. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security had set up a special committee on the implementation of the Convention to study the legal and regulatory norms and administrative practices for ensuring full exercise of the rights conferred under the Convention.

30. Other efforts to implement the Convention included measures taken to ensure access to public and private places, public transportation services, the Internet, health care and rehabilitation services for all persons with disabilities. Despite all those efforts, the Government was well aware that it still had a long way to go on the road to equity, equal opportunity, equal rights, justice and non-exclusion.

31. **Ms. Mukobe** (Ministry of the Interior and Coordination of Government, Kenya) said that poverty and disability were mutually reinforcing in that poverty led to disability and disability led to poverty. Poverty violated the fundamental human rights of persons with disabilities and deprived them of the basic necessities of life. To empower such persons, it was important to improve their access to education, health care, employment, transport, information and

communications technology and other facilities and services.

32. Kenya had become a State party to the Convention in 2008 and had taken many initiatives to improve the conditions of persons with disabilities, as exemplified in its 2010 Constitution, which contained specific provisions for persons with disabilities, including the State's obligation to promote the use of sign language, Braille and other communication formats accessible to persons with disabilities (article 7 (3) (b)); the duty for public officers to implement the fundamental rights of freedoms of all persons, including persons with disabilities (article 21 (3)); and the right of equality before the law and freedom from discrimination on the basis of disability (article 27 (1) and (4)).

33. Along with the Constitution, the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003), the Children Act (2001), the Employment Act (2007), the Sexual Offences Act (2006) and the Penal Code all prohibited discrimination in all its forms and prescribed measures to be taken to protect all citizens, including persons with disabilities. Several policy frameworks had also been developed to improve the coordination, impact, scope and effectiveness of social protection interventions; promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities in all spheres of social, economic and political life; and address matters relating to the institutional capacity and special needs of children and learners with various forms of disability.

34. With regard to the economic empowerment and welfare of persons with disabilities, the Government had developed programmes for the provision of assistive devices and services, education scholarship grants, equipment and infrastructure for institutions, cash transfer funds for persons with severe disabilities, and sunscreen lotions for persons with albinism. Other initiatives included the registration of persons with disabilities and organizations representing them, mainstreaming of disability in all national development schemes, capacity-building, and training and job placement for persons with disabilities. Persons employed in the formal sector with an annual salary equivalent to less than US\$ 1,700 per month were exempted from paying income tax as well as import duty on customized motor vehicles and other assistive devices for use by persons with disabilities.

35. Lastly, there could be no meaningful intervention or effective mechanism for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities without sound policy and legislation to that effect. The duty to mainstream the special needs of persons with disabilities in African society called for the recognition, adoption and ratification of universal norms and standards prescribed in international treaties, conventions and protocols. The Government of Kenya had laid the groundwork in that regard.

36. **Ms. Murray** (International Labour Organization) said that national strategies to help persons with disabilities take part in the labour market should start with a systematic review of their economic situation. Studies showed that persons with disabilities were less likely than the general population to be participating actively in the labour market and that those that were employed often belonged to the category referred to as the "working poor". Many children and adults with disabilities had either never attended school or, if they had, received far lower grades than their classmates without disabilities. Persons with physical impairments were more likely to attend mainstream schools than those with other types of disabilities.

37. Lack of access to quality education put persons with disabilities at a greater disadvantage when competing with the general population for scarce jobs in the current knowledge society. Nonetheless, new skills development options were becoming available to persons with disabilities. Supported employment, for example, a model developed in the United States that involved placement in a job followed by training, rather than the reverse, was becoming more widespread and was particularly effective for persons with certain types of disabilities. Some countries were also providing apprenticeships and community training in rural areas for persons with disabilities.

38. However, in many cases, the training offered was not particularly effective. Separate or sheltered training centres often taught skills that were not needed in the labour market, and the quality of training provided in such institutions was sometimes wanting. While efforts were being made to provide job training for persons with disabilities alongside persons without disabilities, many job training centres were not yet prepared to accommodate persons with disabilities effectively. In addition, some working-poor persons with disabilities could not afford to take time off for training.

39. In many developing countries, employment opportunities were mostly in the informal sector. Persons with disabilities were often in part-time or informal, low-paying jobs with poor career prospects. Often they stayed at the same level in a job while those without disabilities climbed the career ladder. International Labour Organization data from 28 countries showed that persons with disabilities were often overqualified for the jobs they held. What was needed was a differentiated approach that took into account the relative disadvantages associated with different types of disabilities and recognized that women with disabilities were far less likely to have jobs than men with disabilities or women without disabilities.

40. Persons with disabilities were often reluctant to take risks and stayed in familiar, sheltered environments owing to a fear of failure or low self-esteem. Sometimes they had low levels of literacy and numeracy, low aspirations and family networks that did not favour change. Key elements of a strategy to foster the social and labour participation of persons with disabilities included effective access to health care, income security through disability benefits, non-discrimination, gender equality and enhanced accessibility to educational institutions and workplaces.

41. Employers in both the private and public sectors must be actively involved in the development of schemes to help persons with disabilities gain employment. Entrepreneurship and enterprise development should be priorities for empowering persons with disabilities in developing countries. An enabling legal and policy framework was necessary to provide them with needed access to business skills, credit and good business ideas. International standards, such as the ILO Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) and the ILO National Social Protection Floors Recommendation provided relevant guidance.

42. **Mr. Abidi** (Disabled People International) said that in 2001, following a very active campaign by the disability movement, the Indian census, which had been conducted once per decade since the nineteenth century and had long gathered data on everything from gender, religion, caste and vegetarianism to bicycle and television ownership, had for the first time included a question on disability. Nonetheless, data on the number of persons with disabilities in the country were not

reliable. While official figures indicated that persons with disabilities represented only about 2 per cent of the national population, United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organization put that number at close to 10 per cent.

43. Government data from India's neighbours such as China and Sri Lanka showed that persons with disabilities represented an average of 5 per cent to 6 per cent of their populations. However, even using those figures as conservative estimates, in the case of India, that still represented some 70 million to 80 million people.

44. It was therefore important to obtain accurate data, because policy flowed from data, and everything else, including education, employment and accessibility, flowed from policy. While education, skills development and self-employment were all important, the correlation between employment and education, on the one hand, and accessibility, on the other, was just as significant, but rarely discussed. If persons with disabilities were unable to leave their homes or enter institutions of learning and workplaces, there could be no empowerment. Accessibility included not only wheelchairs, ramps and toilets, but also universal design, Braille and other modern technologies.

45. Formal employment could not be the only solution, especially in poor countries. While hundreds of thousands of jobs were created each year in India's private sector, it was not known how many of those were going to persons with disabilities. Greater accountability was required. While there was some truth to the notion that the number of persons with disabilities with the needed education and skills was insufficient, there were also thousands of educated persons with disabilities who were unemployed owing to prejudice, lack of transport and other issues.

46. Poverty alleviation schemes overlooked persons with disabilities, instead targeting women, minorities and certain castes. One ambitious poverty alleviation scheme in India guaranteed 100 days of work to any jobless person, but its focus was on physical labour, thereby excluding persons with disabilities.

47. Although India had ratified the Convention in 2007, only a tiny portion of its budgets for social welfare, education, health, science and technology, broadcasting, information technology for youth and women and rural and urban development had been dedicated to empowering persons with disabilities.

Such persons had even been included in India's most recent national five-year plan only after advocates for persons with disabilities had lobbied policymakers on the matter. The Government still had a long way to go to fully address the concerns of persons with disabilities.

48. **Mr. Goldstein** (Acción Center for Financial Inclusion) said that the provision of quality financial services through microfinance institutions was a proven and sustainable poverty reduction strategy. However, such services had to date failed to reach persons with disabilities. If that failure was not addressed, it would be impossible to achieve the new development goals currently being crafted.

49. It was important to establish social protection floors in order to foster self-employment and independent living rather than having the unintended consequence of pushing persons with disabilities into servility and dependence. Acción had helped to build 63 microfinance institutions in 32 countries on four continents, most of which were sustainable commercial institutions. Through its Center for Financial Inclusion, Acción worked to understand the obstacles to the full financial inclusion of poor people who had no bank accounts, and sought ways of making economic citizenship a reality for all.

50. Persons with disabilities, who represented 15 per cent of the global population, were the largest underserved minority in the world. They were still overlooked by mainstream microfinance providers. According to a recent study, only 0.5 per cent of current clients of microfinance institutions had a disability. Provision of quality credit, savings and other financial services to the self-employed poor could help them improve their quality of life and reduce their poverty.

51. Disability was part and parcel of the human condition, and every person was only one auto accident, stroke or disease complication away from disability. For that reason, those who were currently able-bodied should do everything possible to create just societies based on non-discrimination, equal opportunity and universal design. Microfinance institutions that had disability-friendly policies would have a competitive edge in the future, because persons with disabilities were excellent clients.

52. The Center was testing a set of guidelines for disability inclusion by microfinance institutions and

development of partnerships with local disability organizations. They included information on how to make reasonable accommodation and universal design workable and affordable, and how to provide sensitivity training to loan officers and other staff. The Center was also working with partners to introduce new ethical standards in microfinance and include non-discrimination as a principle of client protection.

53. Lack of information was a tremendous obstacle for poor persons with disabilities and poor persons in general. Many had never heard of the Convention and the rights, benefits and employment opportunities it afforded them. In the United States, most people who collected disability benefits from the Government were poor and lacked skills, and less than 1 per cent of them ever sought employment again. Some whose conditions had become manageable wished to return to part-time work but believed that if their condition flared up again they would be unable to requalify for disability benefits. The guidelines were sufficiently ambiguous to make that fear plausible.

54. The demand for benefits in the United States was so great that funding for the social security system could run out by 2014. The developing world should learn from that and design simple, straightforward social welfare schemes where recipients of disability benefits would not lose their benefits by returning to work. Such information should be widely disseminated in alternative formats for the deaf and the blind, and Government workers should be trained to communicate policy in a way that was clear and non-patronizing.

55. Philanthropy and government commitment to social welfare floors could fall by the wayside during economic crises. Sustainable development through microfinance had the best potential for long-term success and should be part of any poverty reduction programme.

56. **Mr. Taktook** (Sudan) said that his country had adopted economic empowerment strategies for persons with disabilities that took account of such aspects as health, education, rehabilitation awareness-raising and environmental protection. The Ministry of Human Resources had established a commission for the empowerment of persons with disabilities that was headed by the Minister and included representatives of banking institutions and civil society organizations, as well as employers. Vocational training was provided to the disabled in Khartoum. Over 3,000 persons with

disabilities had benefited from loans for employment-related projects. Microfinancing was offered to poor persons with disabilities, with a set proportion of such financing reserved for women. Under national law, 2 per cent of employed persons must be persons with disabilities. The law would soon be amended to raise the quota to 5 per cent and to cover both the private and public sectors.

57. **Mr. Basharu** (Nigeria) thanked the Conference organizers for making meeting materials available in a format that could be used by the blind. He sought information about the effectiveness of various national economic empowerment policies for persons with disabilities. Information on how the judiciary could be used to enforce national employment policies and legislation for persons with disabilities and how it could cooperate with the disability movement would also be appreciated.

58. **Mr. Faty** (Senegal) said that, in his country, economic empowerment strategies encompassed legal and normative instruments, including a national law on persons with disabilities; institutional instruments, including an office charged with promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities; and programmatic instruments, including a community-based rehabilitation programme for persons with disabilities. Senegal was seeking partners to help it develop a census on persons with disabilities.

59. **Ms. Frankinet** (Belgium) said that while her country had a generous social protection system, 40 per cent of beneficiaries with disabilities were at or near the poverty line, and 34 per cent of them did not have the means to receive regular medical care. The federal and regional Governments had established a target of 3 per cent for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public service. Civil society organizations had praised those commitments, but would continue to monitor their implementation. However, those organizations should understand that they also had a role to play in providing opportunities to help persons with disabilities make the transition from receiving social benefits to employment.

60. **Ms. Setthakorn** (Thailand) said that her country's laws prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability and guaranteed persons with disabilities access to public services. A disability allowance for quality-of-life improvement and small loans for business start-up were some of the benefits available to

them. Under national law, persons with disabilities must represent at least 1 per cent of workers, in both the private and public sectors.

61. **Ms. Murray** (International Labour Organization) said that a carrot-and-stick strategy should be used to motivate employers to hire persons with disabilities. There were many ways to encourage employers to comply with the law without involving the courts.

62. **Ms. Bersanelli** (National Commission for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities, Argentina) said that disability should be seen as a human rights issue. Issues related to persons with disabilities should be mainstreamed into all aspects of public policy. There were many approaches that did not involve the courts, including training and working to change perspectives and attitudes.

63. **Ms. Mukobe** (Ministry of the Interior and Coordination of Government, Kenya) said that in poor countries, legal enforcement was weak. Many persons with disabilities were not aware of the laws and were thus unlikely to take action when there were violations. They must be made more aware of their rights and employers should also be made aware that there were laws in place to protect persons with disabilities.

64. **Mr. Goldstein** (Acción Center for Financial Inclusion) said that the Convention was not widely known, especially among the poor. Going to court was often not the best strategy. To achieve lasting change for persons with disabilities, activists must find ways to win over some of the members of the organizations they were seeking to influence.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.