

**General Assembly
Security Council**

Distr.: General
14 August 2020
English
Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-fourth session
Agenda item 25
Social development

Security Council
Seventy-fifth year

**Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Chargés d'affaires a.i. of
the Permanent Missions of Poland and the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General**

With reference to the letter on the statement on the anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution [2475 \(2019\)](#) of 11 August, we would like to ask for the present letter and the attached statement to be circulated to the Security Council and the General Assembly. The statement refers to issues in the competence of both of those bodies and encourages further actions by the Security Council members, as well as the wider United Nations membership.

We would like to request that the present letter and the attached statement be distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 25, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mariusz **Lewicki**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations

(Signed) Jonathan **Allen**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Chargés d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Missions of Poland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement on behalf of 79 countries on the anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution [2475 \(2019\)](#)

On 20 June 2019 the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2475 \(2019\)](#), the first resolution on the impact of armed conflict on persons with disabilities. The Security Council urged Member States to address the unique challenges persons with disabilities face during situations of armed conflict, enable their meaningful participation in humanitarian action, conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction and peacebuilding efforts, and ensure that they have access on an equal basis with others to basic services and humanitarian assistance.

We welcome the steps taken by Member States to date to strengthen their commitments to ensuring the equal treatment of persons with disabilities in contexts of armed conflict. We emphasize the importance of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy in fulfilling the ambition of resolution [2475 \(2019\)](#). However, we are aware that a year after its adoption there is still a critical need to strengthen data collection and information on the specific needs of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict, and to improve capacity-building and other actions to empower persons with disabilities in such settings.

In this context, we express our deep concern regarding both the urgent and long-term impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on persons with disabilities during armed conflicts and humanitarian crises. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic could be catastrophic in settings such as refugee camps or camps for internally displaced persons where people displaced by conflict or humanitarian emergencies live in close proximity and often lack access to basic services. Persons with disabilities living in these conditions, in particular, can face severe obstacles to accessing basic services such as shelter, water, sanitation and medical care.

We remain concerned that during armed conflict and other humanitarian emergencies, persons with disabilities can face unique risks, including abandonment by support networks and specific difficulties in accessing basic humanitarian services such as food, sanitation and medical assistance. Women and girls with disabilities are at increased risk of sexual violence in such settings, while children with disabilities can also face additional barriers to receiving an education on an equal basis with other children.

We express our concern that persons with disabilities continue to face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, which can exacerbate their specific protection needs in situations of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies, and their exclusion from efforts to prevent and mediate conflict, or to build and sustain peace.

We emphasize that measures taken to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies, including with respect to COVID-19 response efforts, must be based on accurate information. We recall, in this context, the Security Council's request to the Secretary-General to include, where pertinent, information on the situation of persons with disabilities in both thematic and geographic reports to the Security Council, and the importance of disaggregated data in this regard.

We stress the importance of continuing to strengthen capacity across the United Nations system to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities and to meet their specific requirements, including with respect to United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding actors. We encourage similar efforts on the part of national and local authorities, including national security institutions, civil society organizations and the broader humanitarian community, including through increased awareness and training.

We underline the importance of enabling the participation of persons with disabilities into peace processes and in humanitarian planning; and we encourage all Member States to strengthen their interactions with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including in the context of the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations.

We recall the obligations of States under international human rights law, in particular the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and article 11 of that Convention, on situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

We reaffirm the importance of the Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action and the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. We reaffirm our determination to ensure that humanitarian action is conducted in a manner which is inclusive of persons with disabilities, and to take all steps to meet their essential needs and promote their protection, safety, rights and dignity in situations of armed conflicts and humanitarian emergencies.

We commit to fully protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies, and we further commit to working with all partners to strengthen this agenda.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Andorra | 28. Hungary | 55. Palestine |
| 2. Argentina | 29. Iceland | 56. Panama |
| 3. Australia | 30. Iraq | 57. Peru |
| 4. Austria | 31. Ireland | 58. Poland |
| 5. Belgium | 32. Israel | 59. Portugal |
| 6. Bosnia and Herzegovina | 33. Italy | 60. Romania |
| 7. Brazil | 34. Japan | 61. Republic of Korea |
| 8. Bulgaria | 35. Jordan | 62. San Marino |
| 9. Cabo Verde | 36. Kazakhstan | 63. Serbia |
| 10. Canada | 37. Kuwait | 64. Sierra Leone |
| 11. Chile | 38. Latvia | 65. Slovakia |
| 12. Côte d'Ivoire | 39. Liberia | 66. Slovenia |
| 13. Croatia | 40. Liechtenstein | 67. Spain |
| 14. Cyprus | 41. Lithuania | 68. Sri Lanka |
| 15. Czech Republic | 42. Luxembourg | 69. Sweden |
| 16. Denmark | 43. Madagascar | 70. Switzerland |
| 17. Djibouti | 44. Malta | 71. Thailand |
| 18. Dominican Republic | 45. Mexico | 72. Tunisia |
| 19. Ecuador | 46. Moldova | 73. Turkey |
| 20. Estonia | 47. Monaco | 74. Ukraine |
| 21. Fiji | 48. Montenegro | 75. United Arab Emirates |
| 22. Finland | 49. Morocco | 76. United Kingdom |
| 23. France | 50. Netherlands | 77. Uruguay |
| 24. Georgia | 51. New Zealand | 78. United States of America |
| 25. Germany | 52. Nigeria | 79. Zambia |
| 26. Greece | 53. Norway | |
| 27. Guatemala | 54. Palau | |