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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by ANO “Organization” “Vector of Friendship”, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 May 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Inclusive camps as efficient tools to promote rights to rest and leisure of children with disabilities

Nowadays persons with disabilities often face discrimination and barriers that restrict them from participating in life of society on an equal basis with others. They are denied their rights to be included in the general school system, to be employed, to live independently in the community, to move freely, to vote, to participate in sport and cultural activities, etc.

In recent years, there has been a revolutionary change in approach, globally, to close the protection gap and ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy the same standards of equality, rights and dignity as everyone else. The protection guaranteed in other human rights treaties, and grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, should apply to all. Persons with disabilities have, however, remained largely ‘invisible’, often side-lined in the rights debate and unable to enjoy the full range of human rights.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted in 2006 and entered into force in 2008, signaled a ‘paradigm shift’ from traditional charity-oriented, medical-based approaches to disability to one based on human rights. Obviously, human rights of persons with disabilities have to be respected from their early childhood.

Childhood is recognized globally as the most important milestone in everyone's life. Our top-priority is to prepare children for fulfilling life in society, to develop children’s socially significant and creative active lifestyle and to plant high moral standards. Children are the basis for all dimensions of sustainable development. As such, children are at the center of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Children’s growth and development is profoundly shaped by the educational, social, and economic opportunities afforded them by adults in a range of contexts.

On November 20, 1989 member-states signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a human rights treaty which sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. The Convention deals with the child-specific needs and rights. It requires that the "nations that ratify this convention are bound to it by international law". Ratifying states must act in the best interests of the child. In all jurisdictions implementing the Convention requires compliance with child custody and guardianship laws as that every child has basic rights, including the right to life, to their own name and identity, to be raised by their parents within a family or cultural grouping. A child needs to be prepared to independent life in society and has to be brought up in respect with the basic principles of the United Nations Charter: peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equity and solidarity.

Every state takes care of its young citizens’ welfare, aspires to protect their rights efficiently. One of those rights are the following: the right to rest and leisure, to participate in cultural life. Everybody needs to rest in order to be efficiently engaged in any type of activity. Leisure is free time, which is usually used to educating and personal enhancement. Culture includes all forms and ways of people’s self-actualization and expression; it promotes intellectual development of a child. The above mentioned is recorded in **Article 31** of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

“1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity”.

These rights also apply to children with disabilities who are the part of inclusive societies, which are at the core for sustainable development.

Lack of the wide spectrum of working tools for social adaptation of children and youth with disabilities is one of the most important issue of social policy in the Russian Federation. Nowadays there are no efficient platforms for joint leisure activities of children and youth with disabilities and their “healthy” peers.

Disabled children usually spend their free time at home, being home-school students. Thus, they have a very low level of social adaptation, small social network, no hobbies and interests. Children with disabilities have no skills for self-service; they face challenges in ordinary life situations. In this situation, the importance to create an efficient platform for children with disabilities and their "healthy" peers become obvious. In such camp, children with different levels of physical and mental abilities interact in inclusive teams, communicate, and develop their skills, talents and capabilities.

Inclusive camp is a unique platform for interaction of children and youth with different levels of physical and mental abilities. Participants of camp session are children and youth with different forms of disability, their parents (if the child is not capable of self-service), and also children without disabilities. The inclusive camp realizes its programs during vacation time for comfortable and full-fledged participation in the changes of schoolchildren of any physical characteristics.

Such inclusive camp called "Friendly" was opened in March 2016. "Friendly" is one of the few inclusive platforms in Russia for the complex and effective socialization of children and youth with different types of diseases in integrated groups with healthy peers. Author's programs of the camp are implemented through the following profiles:

- Creative socialization;
- Sports-interactive rehabilitation;
- Career orientation.

"Friendly" is a unique platform for creativity, communication, overcoming fears and getting rid of complexes in the company of friends with different levels of physical and mental abilities. Participants in camp sessions are immersed in a variety of events for the disclosure of internal potential, the acquisition of communication skills.

The camp goals are the following:

1. Create conditions for live communication of children with different forms of diseases and healthy peers in creative realization, sports rehabilitation, and vocational guidance;
2. To create conditions for professional and creative fulfillment of parents of children with different forms of disability through personal participation in the programs of an inclusive camp;
3. To create conditions for training professional competencies and mastering the practices of specialists who are ready to work in the system of inclusion;
4. To draw the attention of the relevant ministries and departments to the urgency of training professional staff in the field of inclusion and the relevance of system programs for the socialization of children and youth with disabilities.

According to the monitoring of inclusive camps in Russia today in our country there are several types of camps: a camp for children with disabilities, for children with disabilities and their parents, or a special detachment in a particular camp.

Apart of erasing social barriers between disabled children and their «healthy» peers, Friendly camp erases overcome geographical borders: in August 2017, a session of the Friendly camp will take place in the Czech Republic. Thus, «Friendly» has reached international level.

We would like to suggest this camp as a unique barrier-free forum for promoting rights of people with disabilities and important issues of the United Nations agenda.
