

News Release

Myanmar Delegation attends the consideration of Myanmar's initial report to the CRPD held at the UN in Geneva

The consideration of the initial report of Myanmar on the measures taken to implement the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was held at the United Nations in Geneva from 28 to 29 August 2019, during the 22nd Session of CRPD.

Myanmar delegation, headed by Permanent Representative of Myanmar U Kyaw Moe Tun, accompanied by U Win Naing Tun, Director-General of Rehabilitation Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD) and Permanent Mission of Myanmar in Geneva, participated in the dialogue with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Myanmar ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2011. All States parties are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights of the persons with disabilities are being implemented. Myanmar presented its initial report to the Committee in May 2015.

The dialogue started with the opening statement of the Head of Myanmar delegation, the Permanent Representative. In his statement, he mentioned that the realization of human rights is one of the top priorities of the current democratically elected civilian government, along with achieving peace and sustainable development. He said Myanmar is making its utmost efforts to fulfil its obligation as a state party to the Convention and to realize the enjoyment of the fundamental rights of the persons with disabilities despite various challenges of a developing country including capacity constraint. The Permanent Representative further expressed his conviction that, through this dialogue, Myanmar will be able to find ways to overcome

the challenges and to create better conditions for persons with disabilities. He stressed that challenges can be overcome by working together.

Next, the Director-General explained the developments on the implementation of the Convention after the submission of initial report in 2015 including the enactment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law in 2015 and By-Laws in 2017, the formation of Committees such as National Committee in 2017 with the inclusion of relevant stakeholders, establishment of Department of Rehabilitation under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Myanmar National Development Strategy for persons with disabilities (2020-2025), cooperation with partners at the bilateral, regional and international levels, social programs and activities for persons with disabilities and their participation in electoral process and peace process, as well as the challenges existing in the country.

Then, the dialogue continued with a series of questions from the Committee members which were divided into 3 parts based on the Articles of the Convention and Myanmar delegation responded the questions.

In the ensuing discussion, Myanmar delegation underscored the government's efforts to strengthen legislative and institutional frameworks. It also explained measures taken to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities including inclusion of persons with disabilities in the legislation review of the law, participation in electoral process and peace process, awareness raising on the rights of persons with disabilities law, education program, preparation for disaster situation, job opportunities and employment, tax reduction for businesses, access to education and health, access to justice, standardization of sign languages, citizenship, birth registration, sexual violence, gender equality, assistance and rehabilitation for those who are trafficked, opening of one-stop crisis centres, activities of sports and athlete as well as measures taken by the non-governmental organizations of persons with disabilities.

In his concluding remarks, Permanent Representative expressed that the discussion would contribute to enhance Myanmar's cooperation with the Committee and to take further steps, in the right direction, in promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. He thanked the Committee members for being "on the same page" with Myanmar in having passion and genuine goodwill for the betterment of people with special needs. He underscored that, despite challenges and constraints, Myanmar is "resolute with strong determination" and genuine will to enhance its efforts for the betterment of persons with disabilities. He stated that Myanmar would continue to remove all barriers – structural, institutional, cultural – that may cause sense of discrimination and to protect and promote the rights of more than 2 million persons with disabilities in the country. "We will continue to take strides to turn their disability to ability", he said.

He concluded by stating that the international community and the Committee to render constructive support and technical assistance to Myanmar to take bigger steps forward.

The meeting was attended by the representatives from non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations of persons with disabilities in Myanmar.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Nay Pyi Taw.

31 August 2019