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| image1.png | **PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF**  **BULGARIA**  **TO THE UNITED NATIONS** |

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**Sharing national experiences of persons with disabilities regarding multiple & cross-cutting discrimination as core issues contributing to poverty**

**New York, 13 July 2017, 1.15 pm - 2.30 pm, CR 5, UNHQs**

**H.E. Mr. Georgi Panayotov, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the UN and President of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD**

**Opening Remarks**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

I am honoured to address you today first on behalf of the Government of Bulgaria and also in my capacity as President of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Bulgaria is strongly committed to promoting the human rights of persons with disabilities and to ensuring their participation in society on an equal basis with others.

The Government of Bulgaria has developed the necessary legislation that provides legal guarantees of non-discrimination and equal opportunities to all. All national policies and strategies related to the implementation of the CRPD follow a human rights based approach and are developed in close consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

A number of legislative changes have been introduced for the full alignment of the national legislation with the provisions of the CRPD. Most recently, a draft law on legal capacity of persons with disabilities was adopted by the Bulgarian Government which introduces the model of supported decision-making as an important prerequisite for the realization of all other human rights of persons with disabilities.

As President of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD I am committed to further advancing the human rights of persons with disabilities by promoting the full implementation of the Convention.

The CRPD is one of the most quickly and widely ratified of all the international human right treaties with 174 States Parties already which is indicative of the magnitude of the global commitment to the human rights of persons with disabilities who represent 1/7 of the world’s population and are very often among the most vulnerable and marginalized in the society experiencing the worst forms of discrimination and poverty.

The CRPD marked a true paradigm shift for persons with disabilities to a human rights-based approach where persons with disabilities are viewed as subjects entitled to the same set of human rights as everybody else and are capable of claiming those rights. The CRPD recognizes the role of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in decision-making processes that impact their lives.

The implementation of the CRPD is further strengthened by the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which recognizes persons with disabilities as agents for achieving sustainable development and not as mere recipients of policies designed by others. And I believe that the key to sustainable development is the full inclusion of persons with disabilities as partners in the design, implementation and review of all relevant policies and in decision-making at all levels.

The implementation of the SDGs from the perspective of the human rights of persons with disabilities in line with the CRPD is instrumental for delivering on the promise of the Agenda to leave no one behind. It is essential to translate this tremendous global commitment into effective policy and action on the ground by adopting a transformative approach that focuses on the furthest behind first.

My message to you today is inclusion and participation as I believe that the success of the 2030 Agenda would largely depend on how we manage to ensure the full inclusion and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all processes related to the implementation and review of the Agenda both at national and global level.

**Thank you!**