

**Statement by Ms. Lenita Toivakka
Minister for Foreign Trade and Development of Finland**

**Special Session on
Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities into Humanitarian Action
23.5. klo 16.00-17.00**

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to participate in this ground-breaking special session on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities into Humanitarian Action.

I am sure we all agree that addressing the situation of people with disabilities in humanitarian response is an issue that is long overdue. This Summit is an excellent opportunity to correct this and to put people with disabilities at the center of humanitarian action, while fully taking into account the specific needs and capacities.

Finland endorses the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities into Humanitarian Action. We fully commit to its implementation. We will work hard to make this a key priority for all humanitarian operations and actors.

We support the development of global standards and guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. We are ready to provide support and technical expertise to the process and participate in the steering group developing the guidelines. We will also support the development of advocacy and awareness raising tools on how to include people with disabilities into humanitarian action.

Finland has been the forerunner for technological change and new solutions at the global level.

Finland requires that humanitarian organizations supported through Finnish funding will incorporate disability issues into their policies and operations, and ensure that their humanitarian programming is disability responsive.

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And we will actively use our influence in the Executive Boards of UN Funds and Programmes as well as in the international financing institutions and other multilateral fora to ensure that their programmes are responsive to the rights and needs of people with disabilities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Last but not least, Finland will support the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in all phases of humanitarian response. This is very important for me. And we will make sure that special attention will be paid to the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities as well as other persons that easily fall victim of multiple discrimination.

Thank you for your attention.