

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**INTERVENTION BY HON. NETUMBO NANDI
NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND
MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND
COOPERATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA ON
SPECIAL SESSION ON INCLUSION OF PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES INTO HUMANITARIAN ACTION**

23 MAY 2016

ISTANBUL

(check against delivery)

Moderator

Statistics have shown that persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by disasters and conflicts because of barriers that restrict their access to available services, physical environment, transportation and information and communication services, and most importantly their physical inability. These people are vulnerable and are often overlooked, neglected and forgotten in humanitarian actions, including in disaster relief and humanitarian responses. Their magnitude of vulnerability increases if they are women, girls, children and elderly.

The convention on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities obliged all state parties to abide to its provision and mainstream disabilities in all their national policies and programmes. Article 11 and 32 of the convention particularly requires that persons with disabilities benefit from and participate in disaster relief, emergency response and disaster risk reduction strategies.

As such, it is vital that in situations of humanitarian crises and disasters, service providers and all stakeholders from all sectors take the needs, concerns and abilities of persons with disabilities into account when designing and implementing their programs and activities in order to promote access, inclusion and their full participation. In Namibia, our inclusive policies have culminated in people living with disabilities represented in all decision making process, and disability mainstreamed in national development programs.

Moderator,

Disability doesn't in any way mean inability, hence there is an urgent need to bridge the existing gap to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in all aspects of humanitarian responses, including the designing, planning, coordination, and implementation and monitoring of humanitarian programmes , and that they are consulted and directly involved through their representative organizations. To be effective,

these programmes must adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, rather than focusing on traditional, charity-oriented, medical-based, segregated and patronizing approaches and interventions.

We further need to device and integrate a gender perspective in all phases of disability-related humanitarian action, and to consider specific interventions to respond to the explicit needs of the diversity of persons with disabilities.

Moderator

Its Namibia's conviction that the charter we are to launch today reaffirm our determination to make humanitarian action inclusive of persons with disabilities and to take all steps to meet their essential needs and promote the protection, safety and respect for the dignity of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.

The time is now that we develop comprehensive inclusive strategies for persons with disabilities in all stages of humanitarian emergencies, and develop strong partnership between humanitarian organization and organization of people with disabilities.