

The Special Session on Disability -- Monday 23rd May

2 minute intervention from the floor

I'm Sarah Costa, Executive Director of the Women Refugee Commission. We improve the lives and protect the rights of women, children and youth displaced by conflict and crisis, including those with disabilities. We research their needs, identify solutions and advocate for programs and policies to strengthen their resilience and drive change in humanitarian practice.

The WRC is committed to identifying positive practices and approaches for the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in gender-based violence and women's empowerment programs in humanitarian settings.

While humanitarian organizations increasingly recognize persons with disabilities in policies and guidelines, there are still significant gaps in operationalizing this at field levels for women and girls with disabilities. Their specific needs and capacities are often under-represented in humanitarian response.

The Women's Refugee Commission endorses the Charter on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and is making a range of commitments in keeping with our work. In particular:

- The WRC will serve as an active member of the inter-agency group developing globally endorsed guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. Furthermore, we will provide technical expertise and leadership on gender equality, gender-based violence prevention and response, and women's protection and empowerment in the guidelines development and implementation process.
- The WRC will also partner with local and national organizations of women with disabilities in our advocacy and research, providing capacity development and mentoring, thereby increasing their ability to participate in humanitarian responses, as

well as supporting us to both meets the needs of women and girls with disabilities and to meaningfully involve them in our program design, delivery, and monitoring.

We urge those attending this Summit to ensure that the implementation of the Charter both **includes** and **benefits** women and girls with disabilities displaced by crisis and conflict.