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Secretary-General Calls for Inclusive World Embracing All Humanity's Diversity, in Message on International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Following is UN Secretary-General's Ban Ki-moon's message on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, observed on 3 December:

Ten years ago this month, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. One of the most widely ratified international human rights instruments, with 169 Parties, the Convention has spurred significant progress in commitment and action for equality, inclusion and empowerment around the world, with disability being increasingly incorporated into the global human rights and development agendas.

This year, United Nations Member States have embarked on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our blueprint for peace, prosperity, dignity and opportunity for all on a healthy planet. With its 17 interdependent Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda is based on a pledge to leave no one behind. Achieving this requires the full inclusion and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society and development.

Much remains to be accomplished before persons with disabilities can realize their full potential as equal and valued members of society. We must eliminate the stereotypes and discrimination that perpetuate their exclusion and build an accessible, enabling and inclusive environment for all. For the 2030 Agenda to succeed, we must include persons with disabilities in implementation and monitoring and use the Convention as a guide.

On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, I urge national and local Governments, businesses and all actors in society to intensify efforts to end discrimination and remove the environmental and attitudinal obstacles that prevent persons with disabilities from enjoying their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Let us work together for the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in an inclusive and sustainable world that embraces humanity in all its diversity.