



## PRESS STATEMENT

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### STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**KABUL, 3 December 2024** - Today, on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations in Afghanistan joins communities across the globe in celebrating the resilience, achievements, and leadership of persons with disabilities.

We call on the de-facto authorities to support the initiative and to recognize the contribution of persons with disabilities for the sustainable development of Afghanistan.

This year's theme, "*Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future*," highlights a critical truth: inclusive societies thrive when persons with disabilities are at the forefront of decision-making, policy development, and community leadership.

In Afghanistan, despite enduring significant challenges, persons with disabilities continue to inspire us all with their determination, capacity for transformative change, and commitment to advocating for their rights and the rights of all marginalized groups. Yet, many still face barriers to education, employment, healthcare, and participation in public life.

Women and girls with disabilities are especially impacted, often facing multiple forms of discrimination and violence. Research shows that women and girls with disabilities are more likely to experience domestic violence, emotional abuse, and sexual assault than those without disabilities. They may also feel more isolated and feel they are unable to report the abuse, or they may be dependent on the abuser for their care.

There is no excuse for allowing this state of affairs to continue. On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we call on their leadership and resilience to amplify the global campaign to end all forms of violence against women- 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

The UN invites you to jointly reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that persons with disabilities in Afghanistan are empowered to lead, contribute, and shape a sustainable and inclusive future. This means:

- Advocating for the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Law of Rights and Benefits of Persons with Disabilities (Afghanistan Disability Law);
- Strengthening partnerships with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and Civil Society Organizations to amplify their voices and leadership;
- Addressing systemic barriers that hinder the inclusion of persons with disabilities, especially women and girls



- Highlight the essential role of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy in fostering meaningful change across UN programme and operation in line with UN commitment to the rights, dignity and inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- Promoting inclusive policies that leave no one behind in the pursuit of humanitarian action, durable solutions and the provision of basic human needs.

On this day, we call on the *de-facto* authorities, humanitarian and basic human needs actors, civil society, and the donor community to recognize and support the leadership of persons with disabilities. We urge all stakeholders to ensure that their voices are not only heard but drive the dialogue, action, and policies shaping Afghanistan's future.

Together, let us build a society where persons with disabilities can lead, innovate, and inspire in a future that is inclusive and sustainable for all.

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