



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
PERMANENT MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK



Permanent Mission of the Co-sponsoring Republic of
Guyana to the United Nations



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations



Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Poland
to the United Nations
in New York

CONCEPT NOTE

United Nations Security Council Arria-formula Meeting

Persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict and related humanitarian crises – Heightening visibility and eliminating discrimination

Date: Friday, 6 December 2024, 3:00pm – 6:00 pm

Place: ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters

The Permanent Missions of Slovenia and Guyana to the United Nations, with the co-sponsorship of the Permanent Missions of Poland and the United Kingdom to the United Nations, are convening the Arria-formula meeting of the UN Security Council 5 years after the unanimous adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 2475 (2019) on persons with disabilities in armed conflict. The member states are invited to take stock of its implementation and provide their views on opportunities to strengthen its implementation. The meeting will also offer an opportunity to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities taking place this week.

Background

Persons with disabilities represent approximately 15% of the global population. In areas continuously affected by armed conflict, this figure may rise to as much as 30%. A significant, even if sometimes invisible part of this number are children. Women with disabilities are at higher risk of violence and older persons with disabilities may face additional challenges due to age-based discrimination. Despite these high numbers, the specific needs of persons with disabilities in armed conflicts and related humanitarian crises too often escape the attention of parties to the conflict or humanitarian aid providers.

In 2019, the UN Security Council expressed its commitment to address the disproportionate impact of armed conflicts and related humanitarian crises on persons with disabilities, and on the initiative of Poland and the United Kingdom unanimously adopted Resolution 2475 (2019).

The resolution urges the international community to address the specific needs of this vulnerable group in armed conflicts and related humanitarian crises. It emphasizes the need for Member States to ensure accessible humanitarian aid, prevent discrimination,

and promote the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly in peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts.

Today, as the number of active armed conflict zones and humanitarian crises across the world dramatically increases and their nature becomes more complex, the question of disproportionate impact of conflicts and humanitarian crises on persons with disabilities calls for even greater attention of the international community. Everyday hardships that persons with disabilities face, such as discrimination, abandonment, violence, exclusion and lack of access to basic services, are even more exacerbated in armed conflicts. In addition, as many as three out of four persons with disabilities affected by armed conflict report significant barriers in accessing humanitarian assistance such as water, shelter, food or health services.

Children with disabilities remain one of the most marginalized and excluded groups of the population. This vulnerability is amplified during situations of armed conflict when they are left with little or no access to services, which results in deepening social marginalization, exclusion and poverty. In addition, women and girls with disabilities face increased risk of sexual violence. Addressing these challenges requires integrating disability-inclusive approaches in conflict response efforts.

Member States, the United Nations System, and other international stakeholders should recommit to the full implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2475 (2019) by mobilizing an inclusive and coordinated response to armed conflicts and humanitarian emergencies that specifically focuses persons with disabilities, especially the most vulnerable among them. By ensuring their inclusion in all stages of humanitarian action, from planning to implementation, and providing adequate training and capacity building targeting all those involved, we can better protect and address the unique challenges and needs of persons with disabilities face in conflict settings.

Objectives

- To reflect on and strengthen the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2475 (2019) with the goal of increasing the visibility of persons with disabilities within existing framework on the protection of civilians;
- To enhance understanding of the impact of armed conflict on persons with disabilities and the specific dynamics affecting them;
- To recognize the importance of ensuring the specific requirements and needs of children with disabilities in conflict situations, including access to health care, psychosocial support and education;
- To support the mainstreaming of disability inclusion into the implementation of relevant UN Security Council established mandates and other relevant UN entities, including by strengthening the data collection on persons with disabilities in conflict situations;
- To acknowledge the critical role of organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and encourage all stakeholders to engage with them in a sustained dialogue to gain relevant knowledge and expertise.

Briefers

- **Ms. Heba Hagrass**, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities
- **Ms. Laetitia Courtois**, Permanent Observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations
- **Human Rights Watch Representative (tbc)**

Modalities

The Arria-formula meeting will be chaired by H.E. Mr. Samuel Žbogar, Ambassador, Representative of Slovenia to the UN Security Council. All UN Member States and Permanent Observers, as well as UN agencies are invited to participate. High-level attendance is encouraged.

The sign language interpretation and CART/closed captions, and interpretation into the six official languages of the UN will be provided (2 hours of the meeting).

Delegations are kindly invited to inscribe to the list of speakers by Wednesday, **4 December 2024 COB** at slomission.newyork@gov.si. To facilitate participation by as many delegations as possible, interventions **should not exceed three minutes**. Time management will be closely observed.

The meeting is scheduled to last three hours. Speaking slots will be prioritized for UN Security Council members, followed by other interested delegations and organizations, time permitting. If the list of speakers is not exhausted, those unable to speak orally are encouraged to submit written statements.

Organizers will prepare an informal summary of the discussion, incorporating both oral statements and written submissions, to be shared with participating delegations.