



# 1 Billion Voices

## MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE:

### THE POWER OF SPORTS AND EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Overarching theme of the 12th session “Ensuring inclusion of persons with disabilities in a changing world through the implementation of the CRPD”; sub-theme: “Inclusion of persons with disabilities in society through participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sports”.

#### Introduction:

For many of the more than 1 billion persons with disabilities around the world, the benefits of having access to information, communication, public services, full participation and inclusion in daily and social, economic, cultural, leisure, recreation, and sport activities remain elusive.

This edition of 1 Billion Voices “Making the Invisible Visible: the power of sports and expressive arts” will discuss ways for a more active role of the private sector, give visibility, and share good practices on how sport, leisure, physical activities, culture and arts can contribute to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by focusing on Article 30 of the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities) of the 2030 Agenda and its Declaration.

**1 Billion Voices** started as an initiative of young people, committed to supporting the endeavors of the United Nations in raising awareness regarding persons with disabilities. The project engaged persons with disabilities from all over the world by bringing their voices to the United Nations through a digital exhibit entitled “I am... 1 of 1 billion voices” that received lots of recognition both at the UN Headquarters and abroad including at:

- the United Nations during the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (2016)
- the United Nations ECOSOC Chamber event on Accessible and Inclusive Cities for All (2016)
- the World Family Summit in Sao Paulo, Brazil (2016)
- the World InfoPoverty Conference (2017)
- the UN Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2017)

### **Objectives of the event**

- Raise global awareness among the private sector and engage it to find innovative solutions regarding challenges faced by persons with disabilities through participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport.
- Exchange good practices, examples, and strategies to make a world more inclusive and accessible to sports for all.
- Encourage national and international cooperation among various stakeholders.
- Inspire individuals around the world to actively participate in making the world a more accessible and inclusive place.

### **Background**

Article 30 of the CRPD establishes that persons with disabilities have the right to develop and practice their artistic, creative, and intellectual potential for both individual and societal benefit. To leave no one behind, strong social policy frameworks have to be in place to implement rights to access and use sporting and recreational facilities as well as arts to empower people of all ages and abilities to play and to participate in recreation, leisure, and sporting activities in public spaces like schools, parks, beaches and playgrounds.

At the same time, Member States, in the Declaration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognized sport as an important enabler for sustainable development, peace, promotion of respect and tolerance. Sport for all is a key tool to empower women and young people, individuals and communities. It is also a tool to reach health, education and social inclusion objectives.



Conference of  
States Parties to the  
Convention on the  
**Rights of  
Persons with  
Disabilities**

United Nations Headquarters, New York

[www.un.org/disabilities](http://www.un.org/disabilities)  
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The 2017 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Kazan Action Plan (KAP)<sup>1</sup> is an important step moving towards policy convergence for inclusion of persons with disabilities in physical education and sports, as is the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/24 of 6 December 2018 on Sport as an enabler of sustainable development. In the resolution, the General Assembly recognized “that sports, the arts and physical activity have the power to change perceptions, prejudices and behaviors, as well as to inspire people, break down racial and political barriers, combat discrimination and defuse conflict”. The resolution also recognizes the wide range of benefits of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport to individuals, communities and society at large, and “calls for actions to be taken to ensure that sports initiatives are inclusive and culture, gender-age and disability sensitive”. The same resolution also recognizes the role that the Paralympic movement plays in showcasing the achievements of athletes with disabilities to a global audience and in acting as a primary vehicle to promote positive perceptions and greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport and society.

*<sup>1</sup> “[...]the term “sport” is used as a generic term, comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms;”*



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