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Agenda item 68

Promotion and protection of human rights

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 2022

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/77/L.37](#))]

77/240. Promoting and mainstreaming easy-to-understand communication for accessibility for persons with disabilities

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,² the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,³ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,⁴ the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁵ the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination⁶ and all other relevant international human rights instruments,

Reaffirming also the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,⁷ which was adopted on 13 December 2006 and entered into force on 3 May 2008, a landmark convention affirming the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities,

Recalling its resolution [76/154](#) of 16 December 2021 and its previous relevant resolutions, and relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council and of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions,

Noting with appreciation the contributions of the Steering Committee on Accessibility to improving the accessibility of United Nations premises, conferences and meetings, and information and communications,

¹ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

² See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

³ Ibid.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

⁵ Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁶ Ibid., vol. 660, No. 9464.

⁷ Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.



Noting with appreciation also the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy launched by the Secretary-General on 11 June 2019,

Recalling that persons with disabilities include those who have long-term mental, intellectual, psychosocial or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, including in relation to information and communications technologies and systems,

Emphasizing the need to incorporate a gender perspective in all efforts to promote the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities,

Reaffirming that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations should be consulted closely and actively involved in decision-making processes at all levels and in the development and implementation of legislation and policies and programmes, including those specifically related to persons with disabilities or concerning them directly,

Recognizing the importance of inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities in all aspects of life, including information and communications, stressing the urgent need to close digital divides, including with regard to such issues as the affordability of the Internet, and to ensure that the benefits of information and communications technologies, including new technologies, are available to all and the need to identify and eliminate prejudice, discrimination, obstacles and barriers that limit the access of persons with disabilities to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, including transfer of technologies, on mutually agreed terms, on an equal basis with others,

Reaffirming the importance of accessibility resources, processes and technologies, including easy-to-understand communication, and emphasizing that accessibility is a precondition for persons with disabilities to live independently in the community, participate fully, meaningfully and equally in all aspects of life, including in political and public life and decision-making processes, and fully enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others, including through the use of universal design and assistive technologies, as a means of investing in society as a whole and as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁸

Expressing concern that insufficient, or lack of, communication accessibility can have a disproportionate effect on persons with disabilities, and affects the fulfilment of their human rights, and their inclusion in society, on an equal basis with others,

Recognizing that individual support may be required for persons with disabilities to understand information, even when accessible information is provided, and recognizing also the need to improve the affordability of information and communications technologies, as well as to facilitate cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge in order to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities,

Recognizing also that persons with intellectual disabilities should have a leading role in the development and implementation of policies and in the development and production of facilities and products for easy-to-understand communication, including through their representative organizations,

⁸ Resolution [70/1](#).

Recognizing further that there is no one type of easy-to-understand communication, which includes different formats, depending on specific need,

1. *Reaffirms* the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its key role, including in promoting the development, implementation, dissemination and mainstreaming of accessibility resources, tools and solutions, as well as information and communications, for all persons who may need them, including for persons with intellectual disabilities, with a view to ensuring the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities, especially intellectual disabilities, on an equal basis with others;

2. *Urges* Member States to redouble efforts to address obstacles and barriers to accessibility in information, communications and other services, including electronic services, emergency services and assistive technologies, to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, including in public, political, economic, cultural, social and family life;

3. *Highlights* the global concerns about the rapid spread and proliferation of disinformation, and underlines the need for the dissemination of factual, timely, clear, accessible, multilingual and evidence-based information, and the importance of providing and promoting access to such information as a tool to counter disinformation;

4. *Calls upon* Member States to take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others, and through all forms of communication of their choice, including by providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and using technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities, such as easy-to-understand communication, in a timely manner and without additional cost to those using those formats;

5. *Underlines* that information presented in easy-to-understand communication can benefit everyone, in particular persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with reading difficulties, including persons belonging to minorities;

6. *Decides* to hold a half-day meeting, to be convened by the President of the General Assembly, within existing resources or through voluntary contributions, on the margins of the sixteenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to exchange views and identify and discuss good practices on the role of easy-to-understand communication in enabling persons with disabilities to live independently and to fully, equally and meaningfully participate in all aspects of life, including in political and public life, and fulfil all their human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others, with the participation of persons with intellectual disabilities and their representative organizations;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General, within existing reporting obligations, and within existing resources or through voluntary contributions, to address the development, use and implementation of easy-to-understand language as an accessibility resource and tool for persons with disabilities and to present recommendations on guidelines and best practices, to be submitted during the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, in consultation with and ensuring the active engagement and participation of persons with intellectual disabilities and their representative organizations, as well as relevant United Nations entities, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Special Envoy

of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, and other stakeholders such as civil society and representative organizations;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Governments, regional intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system, and processes including the Steering Committee on Accessibility and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly;

9. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to produce a version of the present resolution in an accessible format and with easy-to-understand language, in close consultation with Member States and with persons with intellectual disabilities and their representative organizations.

*55th plenary meeting
16 December 2022*