



THE PERMANENT MISSION
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Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ms. Julia Farrugia Portelli, Minister for
Inclusion, Voluntary Organisations and Consumer Rights

President,

Malta aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and the
statement of the UN LGBTI Core Group.

While promoting the rights of disabled people, the Government of
Malta works to assert the full participation and inclusion of all
disabled people.

We believe in decent work and livelihood. Malta launched the “Way
to Work programme,” to facilitate the entry into employment for
persons with disabilities. It aims to provide the necessary training,
towards developing soft skills and independent living strategies, to
enhance employment possibilities.



This is complemented by training for employers, and efforts to better bridge between education and employment. These are some of the challenges that persons with intellectual disabilities, in particular, are facing.

Independent living is a priority for Malta. A study was carried out by the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability, aimed to provide the basis for a national de-institutionalisation strategy. Malta strongly believes that persons with disabilities should embrace independent living, and we will remain committed to strive to fulfil this goal with a smooth transition.

A public consultation document on the national reform of Personal Assistance and Personal Budgets, developed together with local stakeholders and ENIL, the European Network on Independent Living, was launched last October. Practical measures, including strong legislation, are now being developed, reflecting feedback received.



Furthermore, changes to Malta's disability assessment reform system, in line with a government pledge, saw the Social Security Act recently amended, to set up Inter-professional Panels that assess claims in a holistic and functional manner.

Finally, Malta became the 10th EU country to comprehensively criminalise forced sterilisation. By doing so, Malta answered various calls from activists and civil society, to ensure that disabled people hold the ultimate right to consent or not to consent to such procedures, at all times, and saving exceptional scenarios, under all circumstances.

This complements legislation recently introduced in Parliament to repeal outdated laws discriminating against persons affected by leprosy, and a scheme introduced to compensate survivors of thalidomide injury.



Malta also continued its strong commitment to international cooperation, being proud to support the adoption of a first-ever Commonwealth Disability Inclusive Action Plan, while concluding a Letter of Understanding with UN ESCWA enabling academic exchanges.

This Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities aims to rethink disability inclusion prior to the Summit of the Future. As also expressed by the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, we believe that it is imperative for the Pact of the Future to refer to disabled people. Let us commit to ensuring that this Summit does indeed contribute to not leave persons with disabilities further behind.

Thank you.