Side event to the Protection of Civilians week


Monday 23 May, at 10,00-11,30 AM EST

Register in advance for this virtual meeting on Zoom at this link. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The event will aim to mobilize Member States and organizations to:

- Share existing practices and challenges to the implementation of Security Council resolution 2475;
- Support the formulation of concrete commitments at national and international level to make progress towards the implementation of the resolution.

Co-chairs: Poland and United Kingdom

Co-sponsors: Dominican Republic, European Union, France, Guatemala, New Zealand, Norway, United States, Humanity & Inclusion (HI), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Disability Alliance (IDA), Women Enabled International (WEI), Women Refugee Commission (WRC), Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Background and purpose of the event

According to UN data and based on global estimates, 41 million persons with disabilities around the world are expected to be affected by humanitarian crisis in 2022.¹ This figure tends to be higher in conflict situations, as social, health and economic structures collapse and access barriers top up to structural inequalities. Additionally, injured people, facing psychological trauma, might lack access to medical care and essential services further increasing impairment loads. In conflict settings, women and men, boys and girls with disabilities are often disproportionately affected and exposed to numerous risks and barriers, including difficulty to flee using accessible evacuation options, being deliberately targeted, being exposed to higher levels and different forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and abuse. Persons with disabilities are also subject to various barriers to have safe and dignified access to principled humanitarian assistance, including shelter, food, water, and medical support. In the aftermath of armed conflict, people with disabilities experience difficulties accessing justice and are often excluded from peace processes. Across the conflict and post-conflict setting persons with disabilities are widely seen as passive victims and are yet to be recognized and empowered as agents of change. Evidence reveals that persons with disabilities face a broad range of disability specific environmental, institutional and attitudinal barriers that are amplified by the lack of inclusive program design and delivery, and intersection of factors of discrimination based on age and gender among others.

In June 2019, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2475 on the protection and rights of persons with disabilities in armed conflict – the first ever Resolution of this body dealing specifically with this issue. The Resolution acknowledges the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on persons with disabilities, while reinforcing the obligations of parties to the conflicts, Member States and the UN in line with the Geneva Conventions and the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Three years after the adoption of this milestone resolution, enormous challenges remain with respect to the promotion and protection of the rights and agency of persons with disabilities in humanitarian crisis, in particular in conflict and post-conflict settings. Moreover, threats posed by new and existing conflicts, the extensive use of armed violence and explosive weapons in populated areas, climate change, and the global health crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbate existing challenges.

Program

- **Opening remarks**: The path to UNSC resolution 2475, Poland
- **Case study**: Status of implementation of UNSC Resolution 2475 in Yemen, Dr. Raja Abdullah Almasabi, Chairwoman of the Arab Human Rights Foundation in Yemen

• **Concrete avenues for implementation of the resolution:**
  - When humanitarian actors act in line to the CRPD in conflict settings, Sabreen Al Dweib, Inclusive Humanitarian Action Specialist, Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
  - Implementation of SCR 2475: perspectives of the UN DPO Rule of Law and Security Institutions office, Abigail Hartley, Chief of Policy, Advocacy, Donor Relations and Outreach, UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
  - Efforts towards incorporating protection of civilians with disabilities in military practice, Gergey Sebastien Pasztor, Senior Inclusive Programming Advisor, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

• **Open floor with Member States**, opened by the UK

Member States and other organizations are invited to share good practices and challenges, with specific attention to the following Operational Paragraphs (OPs) of the Resolution 2475:
  - OP 1: preventing violence and abuses against civilians with disabilities;
  - OPs 3 and 4: allowing and facilitating safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access, which is inclusive of persons with disabilities;
  - OP 5: Equal access to basic services;
  - OP 6: Meaningful participation and representation of persons with disabilities, including their representative organizations, in humanitarian action and in conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction and peacebuilding;
  - OP 8: Eliminate discrimination and marginalization on the basis of disability in situations of armed conflict;
  - OP 11: State party compliance with obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

• **Closing remarks**, Yasmine Daelman, Advocacy and Humanitarian Policy Advisor, HI

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