Session title: “Review of progress in implementing the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific”

Expected outcome: Member States will gain an overview of the progress made during the past five years, 2013-2017, in the implementation of the Incheon Strategy. Deliberations under this agenda item are expected to feed into the report of the Meeting.

Speech time: 4 minutes

Your excellencies, honorable chair of the session, distinguished delegates and guests. Assalaamu alaikum.

On behalf of our delegation, I am authorized to present to you the official statement of the Government of Bangladesh with respect to Agenda Item #3.


In 2013, the Government repealed the 2001 Disabled Welfare Act and enacted the Persons’ with Disabilities Rights & Protection Act, which is harmonized with UNCRPD.

In the same year, the Government also enacted the Neurodevelopmental Disability Protection Trust Act that mandates the formation of an official government body comprised of experts, caregivers and government officials to specifically safeguard the rights of persons with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Since then, the Government has ensured that disability issues are thoroughly incorporated in its Five Year Plans.

Aside from the Ministry of Social Welfare, which is the official government entity mandated to address the needs of persons with disabilities, disability-focused work is also done by the Ministries of Health & Family Welfare, Education, Primary & Mass Education, Women & Children Affairs, Youth & Sports, Local Government and ICT, to name a few.

With respect to the Incheon Strategy, the Government has made several strides towards all 10 goals but, due to the time limit, we shall only highlight achievements towards Goals 1, 4 and 7.
In 2012, the Department of Social Services conducted a nationwide door-to-door survey to identify and register all available persons with disabilities.

After the survey, we set up a website for persons with disabilities to voluntarily register, either by themselves or through a proxy.

To date, just over 1.5 million persons with disabilities are registered with the Department of Social Services and the information we shall be presenting here today is largely based on data pertaining to these 1.5 million individuals.

For Goal #1 – reducing poverty and enhancing work and employment prospects – we find from our database that 96% of all registered persons with disabilities are living below the international poverty line.

However, we believe that this percentage should actually be lower as we do not have data about the total household incomes of such individuals.

Our database also shows us that there are 273,022 persons with disabilities in employment, which means that about 0.45% of the total workforce are in fact persons with disabilities.

We are certain that this percentage is higher because not all persons with disabilities are registered with the Government.

Since 2013, the Government has delivered skill, vocational or employment training to 3,878 persons with disabilities, which is a negligible percentage of the total number of people who received government-sponsored training during this period.

What the above data also shows us is that even though there are people with disabilities who have jobs, they are not earning enough in those jobs to bring them above the international poverty line.

To combat this poverty, the Government has set up a Social Safety Net Programme that includes monthly living allowances for persons with disabilities.

As of now, 825,000 persons with disabilities are each receiving a monthly allowance of USD 8.32.

 Furthermore, 80,000 students with disabilities are receiving social assistance stipends ranging between USD 5.96 to 14.31 per month.

Also, all registered persons with disabilities have fast-tracked access to free healthcare at all government hospitals and clinics with the help of their disability ID card.
Additionally, they can avail some free therapeutic services at 103 Integrated Disability Service Centers and 32 Mobile Therapy Vans.

Some of these services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-and-language therapy, psychosocial counseling and parent counseling.

To date, 296,738 distinct persons with disabilities have availed services at the IDSCs and 238,253 persons with disabilities have availed services at Mobile Therapy Vans.

The Government has also donated assistive devices to 20,229 persons with disabilities since 2013.

These are some of the programs of the Government that are aimed towards Goal #4 – to provide social protection for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh.

For Goal #7 – ensuring disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management – the Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief organized a highly successful conference on disability and disaster risk management in December 2015, which led to a Dhaka Declaration that has been widely praised and adopted.

Currently, 15% of Bangladesh’s 3,900 cyclone and flood shelters have been made disability-accessible.

Moreover, 225 governmental and non-governmental personnel have been trained on delivering psychosocial support to disaster victims, including those who have disabilities.

We currently do not have any data about disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction plans and trainings for disaster responders, but we know for a fact that several NGOs are conducting work in these areas.

With that, I conclude the official statement of the Government of Bangladesh and I thank all the delegates for their patience and attention.