The Honourable Vice-President’s Country Statement

High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the
Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 Beijing, 27
November – 1 December 2017

Ministerial Segment (30 November - 1 December 2017)

The rights and needs of I-Kiribati with disabilities have largely been ignored in
the overall development policies of past governments and various non-
government stakeholders. However, since the election of our new government
there has been increased government commitment to persons with disabilities as
reflected in our government’s manifesto. The limited resources is major challenge
in the implementing of disability development in Kiribati. Although, our efforts
is ongoing and have experienced success in some areas.

Disability Data Collection:

To ensure effective policy development and decision making, the Kiribati
Government included the Washington Group Questionnaires within its 2015
National Census and including on-going capacity building of local statisticians
for improved inclusive data collection methods.

Legislative and Policy Compliance with CRPD

Kiribati has amended various legislations and policies to adhere to Articles 4 of
the CRPD and Goal 9 of the Incheon Strategy including;

a) The passing of the Kiribati National Building Code in February 2016,
mandating that public buildings be disability accessible. This is evident in
churches and schools increasing the physical accessibility of their
infrastructure.
This government will look at strategies to increase accessibility of its infrastructures. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy will re-look at its Building Code to strengthen identified gaps.

b) Inclusive Education Policy

The IE Policy was developed to ensure quality education for all children regardless of gender and disability. The policy continuously rolls out school rehabilitation programs and transitioning of disability students into a mainstream government school. The government increase its technical and financial support to the Kiribati School and Centre for Children with Special Needs.

c) The Employment and Industrial Relations Code 2015 (EIRC 2015)

Recently the Employment and Industrial Relations Code 2015 was amended to protect employees on the basis of gender and disability, this is further reflected in their Disability Inclusive Policy 2015.

d) Finalising of the first Kiribati National Disability Policy 2018 – 2021

As part of this government’s commitment and support people disability, my ministry is now aiming to launch the very first Kiribati National Disability Policy this year. The policy encourages strong partnerships for disability development across all sectors and will be the national document mandating stakeholders to include disability development efforts in their strategies.

e) Amending and Updating of the Mental Health Ordinance 1977
The outdated Mental Health Ordinance 1977 is currently undergoing review by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to improve health care and treatment for mental health patients.


The government of Kiribati plans to have a disability act aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of people with disabilities in Kiribati. Further to this, my ministry will take steps to align local legislations with the CRPD. The assistance of the UNESCAP will be sought to assist in the implementation of this audits and the provision of recommendations for changes.

**Employment and Social Protection Measures:**

The Government of Kiribati is currently places a strong focus on empowerment and sustainable measures to support the independence of people with disability. My ministry is finalising initiatives Disability Employment Quota and a Disability Support Allowance.

The Disability Employment Quota is aimed for government ministries and state owned enterprises to employ at least one employee with an impairment. These employees and their employers will have access to support at the out-set of the program.

Those people unable to successfully gain employment due to the severe nature of their impairment will be considered for the Disability Support Allowance.

My ministry will require support in the technical assessment of applicants based on the severity of their impairments. My ministry will be interested in seeking the technical support of the UNESCAP and that of other partners.
Absorption of the Disability Inclusive Unit and Operations:

I am happy to announce that the Kiribati Government has taken steps to absorb operational costs of the Disability Inclusive Unit from 2018 onwards. I would like to sincerely express gratitude to the Government of Australia for providing technical and funding support at the outset. The disability inclusive unit will monitor, manage, co-ordinate and advocate for inclusive development across ministries and civil society. Continuous support is always welcomed and appreciated from development partners. The disability inclusive unit will monitor, manage, co-ordinate and advocate for inclusive development across ministries and civil society.

Domestic, Regional and International Partnerships

The implementation of disability development programs through the CRPD, Incheon Strategy and local disability policies requires co-operation and partnership by all stakeholders domestically, regionally and internationally. The sharing of knowledge and skills for development is vital and one which the UNESCAP can further support by providing platforms such as this mid-point reviews for regional discussions to learn from and support each other in a common effort to implementing the Incheon Strategy in our respective sovereign nations.

With this words, I would like to bestow upon you our traditional I-Kiribati Blessing of Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Taboomoa – Peace, Health and Prosperity to you all.

Thank You.