STATEMENT

by

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on

"Forward-looking policies to accelerate the implementation of the
Incheon Strategy"

at the

High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of
the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities

30 November-1 December 2017, Beijing
Chair,

At the onset I would like to highlight the fact that the Republic of Turkey is committed to taking part and pursuing all international developments on disability, including Incheon Strategy. In the light of this fact, The Republic of Turkey attributes great importance to mainstreaming disability into all policies with a rights based approach and undertakes this task as a fundamental liability. In addition to improvements achieved in the field of disability within the last decade, ratification of the Convention and the Optional Protocol by the Government of the Republic of Turkey clearly proves the attention paid to disability. Therefore, The Republic of Turkey builds her national disability policy on the principles of mainstreaming disability in all policy fields with a rights-based approach and ensuring active participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes.

Disability policy in Turkey was shaped by Turkish Disability Act, the framework law on disability which was put into effect in 2005 and amended in 2014 in accordance with CRPD. The Act made it possible to assign care benefits (in the amount of one monthly minimum wage) to 500 thousand persons that provide care services to persons with disabilities at their home environment. Owing to quota system and various incentives applied both at public and private sectors, we have achieved great acceleration on employment of persons with disabilities during the last five years. Whereas the number of employees with
disabilities recruited in the frame of quota and levy scheme was 103,000 in 2011, we have increased this number to 152,000 persons.

As a result of the commitment to the target of achieving development and justice exactly, Turkey has made important progress in disability issues in the last decade. We believe that one of the most significant steps to be taken for the implementation of the Incheon Strategy is mainstreaming disability into national development strategies and schemes. Our Country mainstreamed disability noticeably in the 10th Development Plan and the government programme for the period of 2014-2018.

Within this period, we aim to increase the life quality while decreasing the rate of poverty among persons with disabilities through social and economic support programmes; to ensure full access to education; to improve employment opportunities; to develop community based services and to ensure accessibility of the built environment and the ICT’s (Information and Communication Technologies) so that persons with disabilities can benefit from all rights and services in equal terms with other individuals. Furthermore, we attach great importance to increasing the capacity of civil society organizations in the field of disability in order to provide active participation of persons with disabilities to decision making processes. With this purpose, the preparatory work for the National Strategy Paper and Plan of Action on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has been
initiated to mainstream disability with all its dimensions in all policies and government programmes in parallel with the Development Plan.

The Convention is attributed to be the guide for all activities of our Ministry, which is the focal point of the Republic of Turkey on disability issues, and it provides a key reference for all efforts to enhance disability studies in our country. The Ministry of Family and Social Policy works in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations in order to promote and ensure implementation of the Convention.

I would like to state that we confirm the significance and the role of regional cooperation that will facilitate the existing practices and strengthen the progress made in terms of policy making and implementation processes in Asia-Pacific Region. Within this framework, we will be open to further cooperation with all ESCAP members.

Before ending my speech, I would like state that we believe we have the power to create a world in which persons with disabilities can live as free and independent individuals who can actively participate in all fields of social life and the decision making processes about themselves and the society in general. In the light of this notion, I would like to express my thanks to the organizers and all participants of this conference that provided us the opportunity to strengthen our national efforts with international cooperation. Thank you.