

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022

Jakarta and online, 19–21 October 2022

Report on the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022**I. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission**

1. The following decision adopted at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, is brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP):

Decision

The participants in the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, decide to submit the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023–2032, to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-ninth session for its consideration and endorsement.

II. Organization**A. Opening, duration and organization of the Meeting**

2. The Meeting, which was held in Jakarta and online from 19 to 21 October 2022, was opened by the Executive Secretary and the Coordinating Minister of Human Development and Cultural Affairs of Indonesia, Mr. Muhadjir Effendy. Video messages were delivered by the Minister of Health and Welfare of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Cho Kyoo Hong, and the Chair of the China Disabled Persons' Federation and President of Rehabilitation International, Ms. Zhang Haidi. A representative of civil society organizations, Ms. Maulani Agustiah Rotinsulu, made a statement.

B. Attendance

3. Representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP attended: Armenia; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan;

Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Fiji; French Polynesia; Georgia; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Micronesia (Federated States of); Mongolia; Nepal; New Zealand; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Türkiye; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

4. Representatives of Finland attended.

5. A representative of the Development Coordination Office of the Secretariat attended.

6. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds also attended: International Labour Organization; International Telecommunication Union; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; United Nations Population Fund; World Food Programme; and World Health Organization.

7. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended: Asian Development Bank; Asian Productivity Organization; Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); and Eurasian Economic Commission.

8. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also attended: American Uzbekistan Association; ASEAN Disability Forum; Asian Blind Union; Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Foundation; Asia-Pacific Women with Disabilities Network; Assistive Technology Development Organization; Australia-Cambodia Cooperation for Equitable Sustainable Services; Beyazay Association of Türkiye; Beyond Education Development Organization Inc.; Boleh Space, Malaysia; CBM India Trust; CBR Global Network; Center for Inclusive Policy; Centre for Accessibility in Built Environment Foundation; Centre for Disability in Development; Challenges Foundation; Culture Centre of the Deaf; Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) Consortium; Disabled Peoples International Asia-Pacific region; Disabled People's Organization of Bhutan; DP Hanoi; Eden Social Welfare Foundation; Foundation for Older Persons' Development; Hayot; Hope of Persons with Disabilities; Indonesian Association of Women with Disabilities; Indonesian Disability Working Group; Indonesian Mental Health Association; Indonesian Society for the Care of Children with Disabilities; International Foundation for Electoral Systems; International Union of Organizations of the Disabled; Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples International; Koei Research and Consulting, Inc.; Korea Disabled People's Development Institute; Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation; Marshall Islands Disabled Persons Organization; Millennium; National Association for the Blind, Delhi; National Council for the Blind Malaysia; National Early Childhood Intervention Council; National Federation of the Disabled Nepal; Pacific Disability Forum; Parent Federation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities; PROSPERA Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Economic Development; Rehabilitation International, Asia-Pacific region; Sacred Military Constantinian Order of Saint George; Samarthyam; Shanghai Access Information Service Co., Ltd.; Sharoit Plus; Shuchona Foundation; Sightsavers; South Asian Disability Forum; Special Talent Exchange Programme; Thailand Association of the Blind; Transforming Communities for Inclusion; Union of Disabled Persons of Kazakhstan; UniquelyMeInitiatives; Viet Nam Blind Association; Visually

Impaired People's Society; Wipro; World Blind Union – Asia-Pacific; and World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, Asia and the Pacific.

9. In accordance with rule 12 of the rules of procedure of ESCAP, the Chair and Vice-Chairs examined the credentials of all the representatives and found them to be in order.

C. Election of officers

10. The participants in the Meeting elected the following officers:

Chair: Ms. Tri Rismaharini (Indonesia)
 Vice-Chairs: Ms. Rosy Akbar (Fiji)
 Ms. Aishath Mohamed Didi (Maldives)

D. Agenda

11. The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening of the Meeting:
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Review of progress and challenges in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.
3. Forward-looking policies and strategies for disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific during the period to 2030, focusing on key and emerging regional issues and opportunities:
 - (a) Harmonization of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
 - (b) Innovative partnerships and engagement of persons with disabilities;
 - (c) Emerging issues and opportunities;
 - (d) Tracking progress towards the achievement of disability-inclusive development.
4. Adoption of the report on the Meeting and the outcome document.

E. Other events

12. The following seminars, side events and special sessions were held in conjunction with the Meeting:

(a) 19 October 2022, panel, “Enabling disaster recovery in Pakistan and beyond: towards disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction”, co-hosted with the Global Forum on the Leadership of Women with Disabilities, the Special Talent Exchange Programme, the Government of Pakistan, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the United

Nations Institute for Training and Research, UN-Women and the Women's Parliamentary Caucus;

(b) 19 October 2022, panel, "Respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of persons with disabilities through the implementation of the national action plan and the regional action plan on persons with disabilities (Minister of National Development Planning regulation No. 3 of 2021)", co-hosted with the Ministry of National Development Planning of Indonesia;

(c) 19 October 2022, publication launch, *Sign Language: What Is It? A Guide for Legal Recognition of Sign Languages in Asia and the Pacific*, co-hosted with the Nippon Foundation;

(d) 19 October 2022, panel, "'Make the Right Real', good practices by Rehabilitation International, Asia-Pacific region", co-hosted with Rehabilitation International;

(e) 20 October 2022, panel, "Bringing the hope of Incheon 2012 to Jakarta 2022: 'Make the Right Real'", co-hosted with the Disabled People's Organization of Bhutan and ESCAP Champions and Promoters of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022;

(f) 20 October 2022, panel, "High-level side event on the potential of quotas to advance the employment of people with disabilities", co-hosted with PROSPERA Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Economic Development and the National Commission for Disability of Indonesia;

(g) 20 October 2022, panel, "Closing the justice gap: innovation, evidence and action to enhance access to justice for women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in Asia and the Pacific", co-hosted with UN-Women, the International Disability Alliance, the University of Galway (Ireland), the International Commission of Jurists, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Government of Sweden;

(h) 20 October 2022, panel, "Disability inclusion in disaster risk reduction and management: key to social and economic resilience in the Asia-Pacific region", co-hosted with the Institute for Global Development and the Disability Innovation Institute of the University of New South Wales (Australia);

(i) 20 October 2022, panel, "Disability-inclusive sports for the future: from the co-knowledge creation programme to opportunities for mainstreaming social participation for individuals with disabilities", co-hosted with the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Co-Innovation Laboratory and the Government of Thailand;

(j) 21 October 2022, panel, "ASEAN Autism Network's move forward for promoting a regional autism movement for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2023–2032)", co-hosted with the ASEAN Autism Network;

(k) 21 October 2022, panel, "The forgotten people: out of our sight – the situation of persons with psychosocial disabilities in mental institutions and the urgency of deinstitutionalization in Asia and the Pacific", co-hosted with the Indonesian Mental Health Association;

(l) 21 October 2022, panel, "Progress of accessible transport as in the Incheon Strategy with the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities", co-hosted with the Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples International.

III. Account of proceedings

13. The discussions held during the Meeting have been summarized in an account of proceedings (see annex II).

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/1	Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022: key achievements, priorities and challenges	2 and 3
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/2	Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific	2 and 3
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/3	Report on the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022	
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/3/Add.1	Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023–2032	
<i>Limited series</i>		
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/L.1/Rev.1	Provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/L.2	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/L.3	Draft report	4
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/L.4	Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023–2032	4
<i>Information series</i>		
ESCAP/APDDP/2022/INF/1	Disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific and the path to 2030: perspectives of persons with disabilities and civil society organizations	2 and 3
<i>Information available online</i>		
www.unescap.org/events/2022/high-level-intergovernmental-meeting-final-review-asian-and-pacific-decade-persons	Information for participants	
www.unescap.org/events/2022/high-level-intergovernmental-meeting-final-review-asian-and-pacific-decade-persons	List of participants	
www.unescap.org/events/2022/high-level-intergovernmental-meeting-final-review-asian-and-pacific-decade-persons	Tentative programme	

Annex II

Account of proceedings

I. Introduction

1. The present account of proceedings contains a summary of the discussions and proceedings of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022.

II. Summary of discussions

A. Review of progress and challenges in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific (agenda item 2)

2. The participants in the Meeting had before them two notes by the secretariat, entitled “Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022: key achievements, priorities and challenges” (ESCAP/APDDP/2022/1) and “Implementation of the Incheon Strategy to ‘Make the Right Real’ for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific” (ESCAP/APDDP/2022/2). They also had before them the information document entitled “Disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific and the path to 2030: perspectives of persons with disabilities and civil society organizations” (ESCAP/APDDP/2022/INF/1). A special video address was delivered by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility.

3. Representatives of the following members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) made oral statements or submitted written statements: Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Fiji; Hong Kong, China; French Polynesia; India; Indonesia; Japan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mongolia; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Türkiye; United States of America; and Vanuatu.

4. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds made statements: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

5. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: ASEAN Disability Forum; Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Foundation; Culture Centre of the Deaf; Disabled Peoples International Asia-Pacific region; National Council for the Blind Malaysia; Pacific Disability Forum; Rehabilitation International, Asia-Pacific region; and South Asian Disability Forum.

6. The representatives of members and associate members of ESCAP discussed the achievements, key issues and challenges they had faced in implementing the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, during the previous decade. They underlined the importance of the Incheon Strategy

for guiding regional disability inclusion work during the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022.

7. Several representatives noted the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by their Governments and shared information on efforts made to implement the Convention by amending national legislation and developing new laws to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

8. Several representatives highlighted the establishment of institutional mechanisms to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, at the national and subnational levels, of disability-related policies. Such mechanisms often involved multiple government agencies, civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities, development partners, academic entities and other stakeholders. Multisectoral collaboration had been intensified to mainstream disability inclusion into national development processes. Moreover, some representatives stressed that specific budget allocation were essential to meet the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.

9. The meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in decision-making and development efforts was emphasized. Some Governments had taken measures to guarantee the right of persons with disabilities to vote, as well as measures to enhance their representation in government bodies and committees. In addition, some representatives underscored the engagement of persons with disabilities in communities. The close collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities and other civil society organizations was considered an essential part of the strategy to advance disability rights and inclusion. It was vital to take a whole-of-society approach to disability-inclusive development.

10. Enhancing disability-inclusive employment was a critical issue noted by many representatives. Information was shared on possible actions to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market, including by setting up quota schemes, providing employment support services such as job matching and coaching, strengthening technical and vocational education and training, supporting the entrepreneurial activities of persons with disabilities and incentivizing employers to hire workers with disabilities. Several representatives highlighted efforts made to increase job availability, diversity and satisfaction for persons with disabilities.

11. It was important to establish social protection schemes and targeted poverty alleviation programmes for persons with disabilities. During the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, allowances under social protection programmes for persons with disabilities had been increased in several countries.

12. Representatives shared examples of programmes to provide free and universal health care and community-based rehabilitation to persons with disabilities. The importance of supporting persons with disabilities to live independently was also stressed. Many countries in Asia and the Pacific had rapidly ageing societies, and a representative spoke of the need to plan to provide health-care and rehabilitation services to older persons with disabilities.

13. Several representatives highlighted the importance of inclusive education and shared information on efforts made to remove barriers to

education by providing reasonable accommodations, making school infrastructure accessible and training teachers in mainstream schools to support students with disabilities. Education needed to be inclusive throughout the life cycle, from the early years to higher education and through lifelong learning programmes.

14. As natural and biological hazards often disproportionately affected persons with disabilities, the necessity of enhancing disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management was underscored. Some representatives shared information on creating inclusive disaster management policies and guidelines, developing e-learning tools, building the capacity of rescue teams and establishing emergency centres to support persons with disabilities in disasters. During the COVID-19 pandemic, persons with disabilities had obtained access to increased social protection benefits, health care and treatment, and COVID-19-related information in accessible formats, among other forms of assistance. Several representatives stressed that the evolving pandemic and climate change highlighted the urgent need to build back better and prepare well for future emergencies and crises.

15. Progress had been made in terms of strengthening the accessibility of the built environment, transportation and information and communications technologies. For example, efforts had been made to promote the value of universal design; to develop and implement legal and technical instruments; to construct accessible public buildings, facilities and transportation systems; to make information and communications technologies more inclusive; to conduct accessibility audits; and to provide assistive devices and reasonable accommodations, such as sign language interpretation services.

16. Several representatives highlighted the need to collect more data disaggregated by disability, conduct evaluations of disability-inclusive policies, use data to design future policies and centralize databases and improve registration services for persons with disabilities. The current lack of disability-disaggregated data was noted as a challenge for achieving the rights of persons with disabilities. Some representatives shared information on achievements in terms of collecting disability-disaggregated data through censuses and other surveys.

17. The intersectional vulnerabilities faced by women and older persons with disabilities, as well as persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities, had to be addressed. A representative highlighted the importance of adopting a life-course approach to supporting the varying needs of persons with disabilities at different stages of life.

18. More needed to be done to continue the shift towards a rights-based model of disability inclusion (moving away from a medical model of disability inclusion), ensure the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, end discrimination and change social norms and mindsets. While the phrase “make the right real” had successfully drawn attention to the rights-based model, the importance of including persons with disabilities was encapsulated in the phrase “nothing about us without us”. A representative stated that persons with disabilities should be included not only in decision-making related to disability-specific policies, and shared the phrase “nothing without us”. The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Sustainable Development Goals commitment to leave no one behind was emphasized by several representatives.

19. Bilateral and regional cooperation were important means of realizing disability-inclusive development. Some representatives noted the financial and

technical support provided by their Governments to other countries and territories during the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, to advance the rights of persons with disabilities. Subregional development frameworks on disability inclusion such as the ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had been developed. The role of the ESCAP secretariat in mobilizing assistance and expediting disability-inclusive development was noted with appreciation. Representatives expressed a strong willingness to deepen exchanges and cooperation to fulfil the regional vision of achieving disability-inclusive development.

20. While progress had been made during the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, more efforts were needed to achieve the goals and targets of the Incheon Strategy. The ineffective implementation of laws and policies, limited institutional capacities and resources, the lack of data on disability, negative social perceptions of disability and the marginalization of some disability groups were some of the remaining challenges in achieving disability-inclusive development. Representatives reaffirmed their Governments' commitment to implementing the Incheon Strategy, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

21. The representatives of United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds focused on the rights of children with disabilities and disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction. A representative shared information on efforts to enhance sustainable systems and structures to address the immediate and long-term needs of children with disabilities, such as mainstreaming disability perspectives into programming, strengthening synergies with partner organizations at the regional level and establishing formal partnerships on disability inclusion. The full engagement and leadership of persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of programmes and in investments for disaster risk reduction were emphasized. A representative highlighted the lack of necessary preventive measures and disability-disaggregated data and called for increased investment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation initiatives. Moreover, the representative stressed that a gender-transformative, disability-inclusive and human rights-based approach could reduce the negative impact of disasters. In that regard, the upcoming high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 would be an important opportunity to highlight the concerns of persons with disabilities.

22. Representatives of non-governmental organizations noted the progress made during the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, towards disability inclusion, including the implementation of universally accessible guidelines and guidelines on the accessibility of digital content. They expressed appreciation for the continued support of ESCAP towards disability-inclusive development.

23. Representatives of non-governmental organizations also noted that, although the COVID-19 pandemic had accelerated digital accessibility, it had also undermined access to services and many responses to the pandemic had failed to account for the needs of persons with disabilities. In the face of the current crises of the pandemic, climate change and global food shortages, disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction planning and management was needed.

24. It was necessary to eliminate the remaining forms of discrimination and barriers and to ensure the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region in the coming decade. The potential benefits of multisectoral collaboration, South-South cooperation and twin-track approaches to accelerate inclusion were highlighted, as was the importance of adopting a life-cycle approach to address the changing needs of persons with disabilities from infancy to old age and the need to shift from a medical model to a social and rights-based model. The private sector too could play a key role in advancing disability inclusion through disability-inclusive businesses, services, employment and entrepreneurship development.

25. The importance of the engagement and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities was underlined, in particular in respect of persons with disabilities belonging to groups that tended to be marginalized, including indigenous peoples, women, persons living in rural areas, care partners and persons with dementia. Persons with disabilities were a diverse group and the intersectional forms of discrimination that they faced needed to be recognized, as did the contributions and the value of the different experiences of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities should participate in politics and in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

26. Representatives of non-governmental organizations called for monitoring and evaluation structures to ensure the quality of disability-inclusion programmes, noting the need to ensure sufficient budget allocations, involve persons with disabilities and civil society organizations in these structures and create accessible feedback mechanisms. Tools should be created to measure the results and a platform for sharing good practices should be established.

B. Forward-looking policies and strategies for disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific during the period to 2030, focusing on key and emerging regional issues and opportunities (agenda item 3)

Harmonization of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (agenda item 3 (a))

27. The participants in the Meeting benefited from a panel discussion on agenda item 3 (a). The panel discussion was moderated by Emeritus Professor of International Law and Human Rights, University of New South Wales, Australia, Mr. Andrew Byrnes. The panellists were: Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms. Miyeon Kim; Joint Secretary of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, India, Mr. Rajesh Kumar Yadav; member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms. Risnawati Utami; and Senior Disability Rights Advisor, New Zealand Human Rights Commission, Ms. Frances Anderson. The discussants were: member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms. Saowalak Thongkuay; and Director General for Human Rights, Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Indonesia, Mr. Mualimin Abdi.

28. The panellists and discussants stressed the importance of accelerating the harmonization of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure its effective implementation. The panellists emphasized that urgent actions were needed to conduct legislative reviews and to amend or abolish laws and regulations that were inconsistent with the concepts, principles and spirit of the Convention and the general comments issued by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They highlighted that the States parties to the Convention should actively involve

and consult a range of groups advocating the rights of persons with disabilities throughout the law-making process; develop action plans and institutional mechanisms, including independent monitoring frameworks, to foster multisectoral collaboration; and allocate adequate financial and other resources, within the framework of international cooperation, to realize the human rights of persons with disabilities enshrined in the Convention and other international treaties. The panellists and discussants also shared information on government efforts to harmonize national laws with the Convention and to create an enabling environment for persons with disabilities.

29. Representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP made statements: Bhutan; Marshall Islands; Philippines; and Türkiye.

30. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: ASEAN Disability Forum; and CBM India Trust.

31. Government representatives noted the progress and achievements that had been made in developing disability-specific or general laws, policies and action plans to advance the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities to social protection, inclusive education, economic security and protection in disasters and humanitarian emergencies, among others. They highlighted the importance of aligning national laws with the human rights-based approach to disability inclusion. In addition, challenges to harmonizing national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, such as the continued application of the medical model of disability, were discussed.

32. The representatives of non-governmental organizations called for measures to ensure that existing and new laws were in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They noted that the legal definition of disability and concepts such as “discrimination on the basis of disability” and “reasonable accommodation” should be in line with the Convention and integrated into development policies and programmes. The States parties to the Convention were encouraged to develop human rights-based policies, strategies and action plans to implement the Convention; establish grievance redress and independent monitoring mechanisms; build the capacities of government at all levels; and ensure the meaningful and effective participation of persons with disabilities.

Innovative partnerships and engagement of persons with disabilities (agenda item 3 (b))

33. The participants in the Meeting benefited from a panel discussion on agenda item 3 (b). The panel discussion was moderated by Professor at the Research Center for Politics, National Research and Innovation Agency, and Executive Director of the Indonesian National Committee for the Management of Social Transformations Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Ms. Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti. The panellists were: Minister of Gender, Family and Social Services of the Maldives, Ms. Aishath Mohamed Didi; Senator, Parliament of Thailand, Mr. Monthian Buntan; Chairperson, ASEAN Disability Forum, Mr. Lim Puay Tiak; and Chief Culture Officer and Senior Vice-President for Human Resources, Wipro, Ms. Sunita Rebecca Cherian. The discussant was the Secretary-General of United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific, Ms. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi.

34. The panellists suggested that multisectoral partnerships among Governments, organizations of persons with disabilities and private entities

had been strengthened in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters and should continue to be strengthened, not only in times of emergency, in efforts towards disability-inclusive development. Parliamentarians with disabilities should be included and empowered and the meaningful participation of all persons with disabilities in making and reviewing legislation should be institutionalized. Moreover, the instrumental role of public procurement policies to improve accessibility and to incentivize private-sector investment in disability inclusion was highlighted as an example of innovative public-private partnerships. Panellists also underscored that persons with disabilities were an untapped source of talent and that merit-based policy incentives, in addition to job quota schemes, should be considered to stimulate proactive and innovative actions to make the private-sector workforce and businesses more disability-inclusive. Local governments too had a key role to play in promoting and implementing disability-inclusive initiatives across sectors. The central role of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the partnership nexus was emphasized throughout the discussions.

35. Representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP made statements: Bhutan; China; Hong Kong, China; Timor-Leste; Türkiye; and United States of America.

36. A representative of UNICEF made a statement.

37. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: Asia-Pacific Women with Disabilities Network; Marshall Islands Disabled Persons Organization; and Pacific Disability Forum.

38. One representative emphasized that disability inclusion benefited not only persons with disabilities but, rather, all individuals, with and without disabilities, as well as businesses, and that including this message in advocacy efforts would help to prioritize innovations and actions to make the social, cultural and economic sectors disability inclusive. Another representative pointed out that persons with disabilities were not a homogeneous community. Several representatives emphasized the value of partnerships with organizations of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Information on actions and action plans for disability inclusion at the national level and on the importance of financial commitments was shared. Representatives also highlighted the important issue of universal design-based accessibility and shared good practices for promoting universal accessibility through multisectoral partnerships that engaged persons with disabilities. One representative called for mainstreaming disability equality training.

39. The representative of UNICEF shared information on an organization-wide policy and strategy to mainstream disability inclusion, prioritizing support to and the empowerment of children with disabilities, also in the organization's operations, and recognized the importance of partnerships with organizations and networks of persons with disabilities, Governments, donors and private entities at all levels to catalyse actions that delivered tangible changes.

40. Several representatives of non-governmental organizations acknowledged the importance of partnerships among Governments, organizations of persons with disabilities and other stakeholders at the national and international levels. One representative acknowledged that organizations of persons with disabilities had made valuable contributions to the

implementation of the Incheon Strategy but pointed out that more needed to be done to include all groups of persons with disabilities who remained excluded, especially women and girls with disabilities. The representative called for strengthening preconditions such as accessibility, non-discrimination and equity to drive the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the Incheon Strategy and the new regional commitment during the decade ahead. Another representative encouraged the viewing and working on disability issues from an intersectional perspective to mainstream disability-inclusive approaches in policies, budgets and actions and in the monitoring and evaluation of regional and national development frameworks. One representative specifically called for the United Nations to strengthen coordination among stakeholders at both the national and regional levels.

Emerging issues and opportunities (agenda item 3 (c))

41. The participants in the Meeting benefited from a panel discussion on agenda item 3 (c). The panel discussion was moderated by the Chief of the Social Development Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank, Ms. Wendy Walker. The panellists were: Disability and Social Protection Specialist, UNICEF, Mr. Alexandre Cote; Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Social Protection and Disability Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Tonga, Ms. Luísa Manuofetoa; Commissioner, National Commission for Disabilities, Indonesia, Ms. Rachmita Maun Harahap; and Executive Director, National Council for the Blind, Malaysia, Mr. Wong Yoon Loong. The discussant was a member of the Faculty of Psychology at Atma Jaya Catholic University, Indonesia, Mr. Irwanto Atma.

42. The panellists and discussant spoke about emerging issues and opportunities for disability-inclusive development in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. New developments in social protection, such as adopting universal disability benefits to help cover disability-related costs, combining cash transfers with various support measures, promoting the compatibility of disability schemes with other social protection programmes, enhancing disability assessment and certification mechanisms, building disability information management systems and strengthening community-based support services for persons with disabilities, were noted to contribute to the protection and empowerment of persons with disabilities, especially in the context of natural and biological hazards. The pandemic had accelerated the digital transformation, highlighting the importance of the accessibility of information and communications technologies. Through multi-stakeholder partnerships, Governments should leverage the opportunities brought about by digitalization and technological innovation to advance disability rights and inclusion. The Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled and other relevant international accessibility guidelines served as useful tools for promoting the digital inclusion of persons with disabilities. Other pressing issues on disability-inclusive development included productive employment, inclusive higher education, legal protection, rights monitoring and data disaggregated by disability.

43. Representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP made statements: Malaysia; Maldives; and United States of America.

44. A representative of the World Food Programme made a statement.

45. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: CBM India Trust; and Indonesian Mental Health Association.

46. Representatives noted the significance of systematically involving persons with disabilities in all development efforts, including through a multi-stakeholder and community-based approach. One representative pointed out that the COVID-19 pandemic had provided an opportunity to review past policies and build back better. Measures such as increasing social protection benefits, developing online disability registration, job-seeking and learning platforms, and empowering persons with disabilities through entrepreneurship training were noted. One representative shared information on national programmes to address the diverse needs of persons with disabilities and measures to support the promotion of disability-inclusive development at the international level.

47. The representative of the World Food Programme spoke about food and nutrition security for persons with disabilities. Physical, informational, communications and other barriers often hindered persons with disabilities from meeting their food and nutrition needs, especially in emergencies and crises. Not only was it important to make stakeholders aware of disability issues and to develop an inclusive food delivery system, the participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations too was noted as being key.

48. A representative of a non-governmental organization emphasized that persons with chronic illnesses, rare diseases and psychosocial disabilities tended to be overlooked in the development agenda. Persons with psychosocial disabilities often experienced unequal recognition before the law and faced institutionalization. Digital inclusion was important, which was why digital technologies should be accessible to and affordable for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, persons with disabilities needed to receive training to improve their digital skills. With regard to disaster risk reduction, countries should mainstream disability perspectives at all stages of disaster risk management, including by issuing disability-inclusive guidelines and compiling the contact details of persons with disabilities as part of preparations for disasters, to ensure that persons with invisible disabilities in particular were not left behind in disaster responses.

Tracking progress towards the achievement of disability-inclusive development (agenda item 3 (d))

49. The participants in the Meeting benefited from a panel discussion on agenda item 3 (d). The panel discussion was moderated by the Director of Human Development, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Department, ASEAN Secretariat, Ms. Rodora Turalde Babaran. The panellists were: Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, Center for Inclusive Policy, Mr. Daniel Mont; Director General, Department of International Affairs, China Disabled Persons' Federation, Mr. You Liang; Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Disability Forum, Mr. Setareki Seru Macanawai; and Head of the Resident Coordinator Office in Indonesia, Strategic Planner and Senior Coordination Officer, Ms. Afke Bootsman.

50. The panellists stressed the need to collect disability-disaggregated data to understand disability gaps across different thematic areas. In addition, information on enablers and barriers to participation in society, as well as on the support needs of persons with disabilities, was essential for policymaking and programming to close disability gaps. Harmonizing statistical and administrative data through the adoption of a core set of questions on functioning would maximize the use of data from various sources. Pioneering work had been done on developing big data platforms to record the diverse needs of persons with disabilities and support the delivery of targeted services.

Involving grass-roots organizations and fostering intergovernmental collaboration should play a critical role in building such data platforms. Moreover, the engagement of organizations of persons with disabilities in data collection, analysis and Sustainable Development Goal reporting through national and regional mechanisms was underscored. Some measures had been taken by United Nations entities in Indonesia to better track progress towards disability-inclusive development, such as developing an inclusive monitoring and evaluation framework, conducting a situation analysis of the state of disability data and assessing the internal progress towards disability inclusion through the use of a scorecard.

51. Representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP made statements: Cambodia; Japan; Malaysia; Pakistan; and Türkiye.

52. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: Disabled Peoples International Asia-Pacific region; and Rehabilitation International, Asia-Pacific region.

53. Government representatives shared information on efforts made to improve the monitoring and evaluation of disability-inclusive policies and plans at the national and local levels, with the participation of persons with disabilities. A representative also shared information on efforts made to track progress in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities through reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Representatives emphasized the need to have data disaggregated by disability to create evidence-based policies and programmes, highlighted the importance of the use of the Washington Group short set of questions on functioning in censuses and other national surveys, and noted the benefits of linking databases to facilitate access to services.

54. Representatives of non-governmental organizations reiterated the need for disability-disaggregated data and thanked ESCAP for supporting its member States in building their capacity to collect and analyse data on disability inclusion. It was important to involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in monitoring and evaluation processes, including in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. A representative recommended that ESCAP continue to promote the enhanced collection and use of reliable disability data during the coming decade.

C. Adoption of the report on the Meeting and the outcome document (agenda item 4)

55. On 21 October 2022, the report on the Meeting and the outcome document, entitled “Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023–2032”, were adopted.

56. The Executive Secretary delivered closing remarks by video message.

57. The Chair opened the floor for additional comments. Representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP made comments: Fiji; Maldives; Pakistan; and United States of America.

58. A representative of the Asia-Pacific Women with Disabilities Network and several ESCAP Champions and Promoters of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, also made comments.

59. Government representatives expressed appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting the Meeting and to the ESCAP secretariat for organizing it. They noted with appreciation the rich sharing of perspectives and good practices on disability-inclusive development among participants. The representatives recommitted themselves to strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation to address emerging challenges and pressing issues concerning persons with disabilities. Representatives requested the secretariat to prepare, in consultation with all stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities, an action plan to support the effective implementation of the Jakarta Declaration.

60. Representatives of non-governmental organizations expressed appreciation for the effective engagement of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, in the Meeting and commended the ESCAP secretariat for its efforts to enhance accessibility in the organization of the Meeting. The representatives expressed appreciation for the smooth adoption of the Jakarta Declaration and called for continued efforts to be made to accelerate disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific.

61. The Chair delivered closing remarks and closed the Meeting.
