Agenda Item 6
Discussion on Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities
Incheon Strategy Goal 2: Promote participation in political processes and in decision-making

Overview of Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities

Challenges

Ways forward to promote political participation

Discussion Question
Incheon Strategy Goal 2: Promote participation in political processes and in decision-making

Target 2.A
Ensure that persons with disabilities are represented in government decision-making bodies

Target 2.B
Provide reasonable accommodation to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in the political process
Overview of Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities

- Out of a total of 4,960 national parliamentarian in 17 countries in Asia and the Pacific, only 18 parliamentarians had some type of disabilities.

- Women account for only 0.1 per cent of national parliamentarians across the concerned 17 countries and areas.

- Out of 190 countries, 128 countries have legal provisions in constitutions, legislations or laws that could restrict the rights of persons with disabilities to vote.

- No global data showing voter turnout gap between persons with and without disabilities.
**Challenges**

- **Accessibility:** 1) the lack of inclusive physical access, e.g. inaccessible polling stations  
  2) Political information in inaccessible format

- **Attitudinal barriers:** perception and attitude on disability, e.g. negative stigma, stereotypes and bias against persons with disabilities

- **Economic and social exclusion:** disparity in economic and social status leading to political exclusion of persons with disabilities

- **Discriminatory legislations, laws** related to electoral process and the lack of affirmative action to promote participation in decision-making bodies
Ways Forward to Promote Political Participation

- Adopt **accessibility guidelines and regulations** for inclusive political process and inclusive institutions and if there are, ensure the issue of non-compliance

- **Sensitisation and education** on the political rights of persons with disabilities

- **Empowerment** of persons with disabilities and organization of persons with disabilities

- Review of legislations, policies, action plan to **tackle discrimination and exclusion and promote the equal participation** of persons with disabilities
Discussion Question

How to address multiple barriers that persons with disabilities encounter in exercising the right of participation in political and public life?

How to incorporate non-discrimination and equality principles in laws, policies and practices relating to political participation of persons with disabilities?

What are potential ways in which ESCAP could support its member States in promoting the political participation of persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific?