Opening statement

The National Human Rights Committee of Qatar

Mr. President

On behalf of the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar, I have the pleasure to participate in the work of The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), hoping our deliberations shall promote, protect and ensure that persons with disabilities fully enjoy all human rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life, and promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Mr. president

The National Human Rights Committee of Qatar appreciates the continuing efforts made by the State on prompting the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, through adopting laws and procedures concerned with persons with disabilities, that are based on effective and guaranteed application and implementation mechanisms of their rights. In spite of all these efforts, there are some challenges facing the full realization of the principles, concepts and other detailed provisions stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Mr. president

Reviews carried out by the National Human Rights Committee had led to a number of conclusions and recommendations which can be summarized according to the following:
First: National policies and legislation system for persons with disabilities in the State of Qatar:

- This system adopts the medical perspective in defining "disability", and "persons with disabilities", it lacks environmental factors and behavioral barriers, which led the executive bodies to rely on medical reports as being the "entry gate" through which persons with disabilities shall exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms.

- Adopting medical, service-based approach by Qatari legislature and policy makers, led to a general trend reflected in strategies, plans, programs and legislative provisions, relating to needs of persons with disabilities, in isolation from establishing a human rights legal culture that consolidates the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- Therefore, the National Human Rights Committee recommends that Qatari legislature and policy makers should adopt a holistic definition of the status of disability and integrate it in national legislation, policies and strategies.

- The NHRC considers the need to abolish all legislation based in a way or another on discrimination on the basis of disability, and calls on issuing regulations and legislation concerning the rights of persons with disabilities that adopt the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in addition to promoting the principle of "reasonable accommodation" in adopting strategies and plans of various executive bodies.

Second: Lack of effectiveness of legal provisions concerning the rights of persons with disabilities:

Law No. 2 of 2014 on protecting the rights of people with disabilities, has faced since its issuance a set of constraints in applying its provisions, due to absence of regulations and procedural instructions necessary to enforce it in practice, and limiting the implementation of most of its articles to the Supreme Council for Family Affairs.

Therefore, the NHRC recommends amending provisions of Law No. (2) for the year (2004) in addition to reforming provisions relating to persons with disabilities and their concerns in all laws and legislation to reflect the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
The NHRC also emphasizes the need to issue the executive regulations and instructions to ensure the application of the provisions of Law No. 2 of 2004.

**Third: Integrating rights of persons with disabilities and their concerns in public affairs:**

Revisions of strategies, plans and programs of various executive bodies had led to the conclusion that rights of persons with disabilities and their concerns do not constitute a priority to these bodies, where only few of these bodies refer to persons with disabilities within the preventive medical service-based measures, that do not achieve integration and active participation.

- Therefore, the NHRC considers the need to integrate rights of persons with disabilities as being priorities in strategies, plans and programs of various executive bodies.

- The NHRC emphasizes the importance of consolidating the culture of human rights at all levels in decision-making bodies, executive authorities, service providers and institutions concerned with persons with disabilities.

**Fourth: Poor participation of persons with disabilities and representative institutions in developing plans, strategies and decision-making procedures:**

Poor participation of persons with disabilities and their representative institutions in developing plans, strategies and decision-making procedures is considered one of the major obstacles to promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in the State of Qatar, this weakness point is due to commonness of the medical charity-related model in providing various services to persons with disabilities, starting from direct aid and ending with the mandate of the supervisory authorities providing these services.

Therefore, the NHRC considers the need to strengthening capacities of institutions concerned with people with disabilities, in addition to enabling persons with disabilities themselves and their representative institutions to familiarize themselves with claiming their rights and enhancing their participation in decision-making and policy-making related procedures.
Mr. president

Finally, on behalf of the National Human Rights Committee, I would like to extend thanks and gratitude for giving us the opportunity to deliver our vision and recommendations, which aims to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in the State of Qatar, and I would like to express our support for all efforts, at the national and international levels, which aim to achieve equality and provide equal opportunities to this vital segment in the society.

Thank You