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Is Civil Society Participation Shrinking after the Adoption of the 2030 Agenda?

New York, 12 July 2016, 1.15 pm - 2.30 pm, CR 5

H.E. Mr. Stephan Tafrov, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the UN

Ms. Moderator,

Bulgaria is proud to co-host this important and timely event on the participation of civil society in the work of the UN after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

When drafting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development we, the Member States of the UN, set a very good example of an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process of negotiations in which the UN and its Member States benefited from the vision, knowledge and expertise of multiple actors. The elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals was an open, representative and inclusive process that brought together all the different stakeholders, including the civil society and Disabled Persons Organizations. This led to the adoption of a truly transformative Agenda that is unique in its scope, nature and ambition. The Agenda envisages a central

role for the civil society and the different stakeholders in its follow-up and review process as well.

Bulgaria was an active participant in the SDGs negotiations and was strongly advocating for the openness, transparency and inclusivity of the process.

The promise of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind can never be fulfilled if we do not ensure the participation of all the stakeholders, and especially civil society organizations, in its implementation, follow-up and review.

The 2030 Agenda transformed the traditional understanding of partnerships by highlighting the significant role of all stakeholders in its implementation and review, including persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. Bulgaria fully shares the inclusive vision of the 2030 Agenda and is confident that civil society and Disabled Persons Organizations can contribute immensely to the success of the Agenda. Inclusive implementation is key to achieving the main objective of the Agenda - ensuring that development reaches everyone thus being truly sustainable.

Bulgaria highly values the important contribution of civil society and Disabled Persons Organisations in particular and reiterates its position in support of enhanced civil society and DPOs participation in all deliberations at the UN related to disabilities which is also in line with Article 4.3 of the CRPD and the high-level commitments of the international community to date.

Persons with disabilities were recognized as stakeholders in the 2012 Rio+20 Outcome Document “The Future We Want” and since then are officially entitled to participate in all sustainable development-related processes.

The High-level Political Forum as the body specifically tasked to review progress achieved in the implementation of the SDGs explicitly invites persons with disabilities to participate, provide official written inputs and make oral contributions during the HLPF's official sessions.

I am confident that today's event could play an important role in mobilizing support for an enhanced participation of civil society in all processes at the UN and especially in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you, Ms. Moderator!