



# AUSTRALIA



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## **14<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

15 June 2021

### **Statement by H.E. The Hon. Mitch Fifield, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

Australia is pleased to make this national statement to the 14th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Australia acknowledges the ongoing global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and recognises that people with disabilities are disproportionately affected by the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19.

Australia is working to administer national COVID-19 vaccinations as quickly as possible, while prioritising vulnerable Australians, including people with disabilities and those working in the disability sector.

Australia's National Disability Strategy sets out a framework for continuing to improve the lives of people with disabilities. A new ten-year Strategy is expected to be launched at the end of 2021.

Australians with disabilities continue to be supported by Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme. The Australian Government is exploring ways to improve NDIS participant's flexibility, choice and control over their disability supports.

In 2019, the Australian Government established a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disabilities. The Final Report, due in September 2023, will recommend how to improve laws, policies, structures and practices to ensure a more inclusive and just society.

Australia continues to support an inclusive education system in which all students can achieve quality learning outcomes. During the COVID-19 pandemic students with disabilities have continued to have access to education in a sustainable and effective manner. Australian schools are required to ensure students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations that enable them to access education on an equal basis with others.

Australia remains a strong and consistent advocate for disability inclusion and rights globally. Australia's development strategy, Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response, reaffirms our commitment to those most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 including women and girls, people with disabilities and those living in poverty.

Australia is working with disability partners to enable people with disabilities to participate in and benefit from COVID 19 response and recovery efforts on an equal basis with others.

Australia continues to advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities in all humanitarian action and is proud to have championed the Charter for Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Action at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016.

While the Charter is a significant achievement, we now need to ensure practical implementation at the local level. Australia supports the Reference Group on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action (DRG). This group provides a forum for coordination between organisations of persons with disabilities, NGOs, UN entities and others committed to promoting the rights of persons with disabilities affected by humanitarian emergencies.

Australia is pleased to announce the launch of Ms Rosemary Kayess re-election campaign to seek a second term on the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2023 – 2026. Ms Kayess has proven to be a highly valued member of the Committee and is currently serving as Chair of the Committee.

Thank you.

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