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**Press Release.**

**International Day of Persons with Disabilities.**

**Removing barriers to create an inclusive post MDGs and accessible society for all.**

**Sunday 2nd December 2012**

Uganda, 2nd December 2012 – AYWDN joins the 20th anniversary celebrations of the International day of persons with disabilities and takes the opportunity to appeal to States, the UN human rights system and other stakeholders to remove barriers to address the discrimination and exclusion faced by persons with disabilities especially youth with disabilities in international development efforts, and to ensure that all actions in this regard are consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Over one billion people, or approximately 15 per cent of the world’s population, live with some form of disability Persons with disabilities, “the world’s largest minority”. 80% of this global population is found in developing countries of which majority are in Africa, often face barriers to participation in all aspects of society. Barriers take a variety of forms, including those relating to the physical environment or to information and communications technology (ICT), or those resulting from legislation or policy, or from societal attitudes or discrimination. The result is that persons with disabilities do not have equal access to society or services, including education, employment, health care, transportation, political participation or justice.

Although in the recent years there has been significant progress in recognizing and proactively addressing the exclusion and discrimination faced by people with disabilities, as evidenced by the MDG Summit outcome document (September 2010), which highlights the need for inclusion of persons with disabilities and the outcome document Rio+20 (2012), which recognizes the participation of persons with disabilities in the development agenda, the reality is that today there is still very little presence of people with disabilities in development policies and programmes.

The new framework established for the period post-MDGs beyond 2015 will play a key role in addressing the discrimination and exclusion faced by persons with disabilities in international development efforts. “The High Level Meeting on Disability and Development to be held in 2013 should lead to an increased attention to the rights of persons with disabilities in the post-MDGs international development framework and we will need the support of all to achieve this. We call upon Governments and UN country focal points where National consultations on the post 2015 development agenda will take place to include persons with disabilities especially youth with disabilities in the consultations. And formation of the Country UN working groups on disability to support implementation of the Convention on rights of persons with disabilities and operationalisation of the African Union Disability architecture.

AYWDN would also like to highlight the necessity for physical, information and communication accessibility for all and use of data and statistics on disability, as a base for global comparison as well as the full and effective participation of representative organisations of people with disabilities in the implementation of the MDGs, CRPD and operationalisation of African Union Disability Architecture.

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