



Thursday 1st December, 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

“Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want”

The United Nations International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) will be celebrated on Saturday 3rd December. The United Nations (UN) started commemorating this day on December 3rd, 1992, and since then it has been celebrated worldwide annually.

This year’s theme is “*Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want*”. These goals refer to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were adopted by the UN in 2015 as part of the New Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. They seek to build upon the foundations created by Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) and to complete what these did not accomplish.

The SDGs, unlike the MDGs, identifies Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) as a vulnerable group. In fact, in the UN Resolution, 5 of the 17 SDGs make reference to PWDs. The SDGs reinforces the principle of inclusion as espoused in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The CRPD was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006 and this year’s IDPD coincides with the 10 year anniversary of its adoption. The CRPD remains one of the most quickly and widely ratified international treaties put forth by the UN.

The UN has indicated that this year’s objectives include assessing the current status of the UNCRPD and SDGs and laying the foundation for a future of greater inclusion for persons with disabilities.

Trinidad and Tobago and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Trinidad and Tobago signed onto the CRPD in 2007, ratified the Convention in 2015 and is expected to submit its Initial Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2017.

Having ratified the CRPD, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Affairs has begun reviewing the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities and is engaging stakeholders in consultation. This is in order to bring the existing Policy, approved in 2005, in line with the CRPD. The Convention speaks to a number of rights which include, but are not limited to the right to accessibility; health; work and employment; participation in recreation and leisure; and participation in political and public life, which speaks to the right to vote.

National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) has noted with concern a number of reports that buildings selected as polling stations were not accessible. This is especially troubling when one considers that the buildings used as polling stations were public buildings, mainly schools and community centres. NCPD however remains committed to doing its part to promoting inclusiveness and achieving the 17 SDGs. On November 14th NCPD launched a social media campaign, culminating on IDPD, which highlights NCPD’s contribution to the realisation of each of these 17 goals.

NCPD remains optimistic that Government, Public Sector, Private Sector, NGOs and citizens of Trinidad and Tobago will work together to achieve **an inclusive society for all**.

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For more information you may contact Ms. Lisa Bholai, Research and Communications Officer at 652-4880, via email at ncpd.rco@gmail.com or visit our website www.ncpdt.org

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ABOUT NCPD

NCPD is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which promotes equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities through training, information, research and consultative services. For more information on the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, please visit our website, www.ncpdt.org, or contact us by telephone at 652-4880 or via email at ncpd1@hotmail.com.