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# Disability Political Resolution

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**Output of consultative Disability  
Conference by CCD in Kabul**

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**Community Center for Disabled - CCD**

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## **Introduction**

CCD conducted a 2-day national conference with participation of 100 (50 female and 50 male) persons including high government officials, CSOs, DPOs, PwDs and Media representatives in Kabul. The main participants of the 2-day national conference were 36 (18 female & 18 male) members of DPOs, CSOs and government representatives (provincial level) of 6 provinces (6 each (3 female & 3 male)). The rest of the participants of national conference were from Kabul 64 (40 high level government officials & 24 members of Kabul based CSOs and DPOs). 50% of the participants were female. The high level officials of the central government were include representatives from Presidential office, Ministries, Commissioner's office, security department; Kabul based CSOs, DPOs, Media and PwDs activists.

### **Conference Day-1, Discussion Topics for Groups to deduce Recommendations / Suggestions for Disability Resolution**

Group work was the core activity on the first day of the conference, where the participants were divided into groups and were asked to discuss in the light of their experience in the project activities. Before the group work, project presentation was played for the participants with brief explanation from the facilitator (Abdul Malik Wafa and Shahab) in order to refresh the project components and objectives.

Facilitator undertook the group work through participatory approach and in the best way possible to get the effective results i.e. Listing of Issues / Recommendations / Suggestions regarding the Democratic and human rights of PwDs in Afghanistan.

The Issues / Recommendations / Suggestions were compiled in the form of a document for the proposed **Disability Political Resolution** on the second day, to be shared and discussed with the panel of related government officials.

List of related topics for the discussion in this regard are as following:

1. Eligibility / Registration for voting
2. Polling Stations accessibility and facilities
3. Transportation and related issues
4. General Community / Family Attitudes
5. Inclusion in Decision making at Public and social level
6. Political Parties & inclusion of PwDs
7. Election Candidateship of PwDs
8. Strategic: Laws / Policies / Plans
9. Media / Debates / Publications etc.
10. Awareness raising regarding electoral processes / Civic Education / Political rights
11. Any other, as the facilitators may deemed relevant

The group work activity on day one of the consultative conference resulted into a comprehensive document in the form of Disability Political Resolution, the main points of which are discussed below:

### **Disability Political Resolution**

1. Persons with disabilities (PwDs) are least visible on the political stage and are consistently neglected and treated as second-class citizens in almost all provinces of Afghanistan. The consultations among groups of disability stakeholders, DPOs, media and PwDs themselves expresses concern about the fact that persons with disabilities face multiple challenges when trying to exercise their political rights, related to accessibility, inadequate support for the diversity of disabilities, an unjustified link between legal capacity and the right to vote and the frequent reluctance of political parties.
2. Political rights, such as the right to vote, stand for election and be elected, are fundamental human rights. Ensuring respect for the exercise of these rights by persons with disabilities does not mean creating a set of new rights or special rights for a specific category. Guaranteeing the respect of the political rights of persons with disabilities is a democratic issue relevant to the whole population, raising questions about the inclusiveness and efficiency of democratic systems.
3. In this respect, the consultations have already underlined the need to ensure full participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life, such as in the **National Law** on access to rights for people with disabilities and their full and active participation in society, **National Law for Disability Article-1 and Article 15**; on equality and inclusion for people with disabilities in social, economic, political, cultural, educational and recreational aspects, without being discriminated against.
4. The Consulting stakeholders and PwDs are convinced that the participation of persons with disabilities in political life can contribute to breaking down stereotypes, changing mindsets and combating overall discrimination. Concrete measures can be taken to facilitate access to voting and participation in elections, but they require political and financial commitments.
5. Political parties can play an essential role in tackling the lack of rights awareness and encouraging active participation of persons with disabilities. They can contribute to raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and participation of all, without discrimination, in political life.

6. The Consultation welcomes the adoption of the **National Strategic Plan for Disability and Prevention and Physical Rehabilitation 2017-2020 by MoPH**, which presents an ambitious set of measures promoting the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and calls for its swift implementation.
7. In the light of these considerations, the PwDs calls on **GOIRA** and **related Stakeholders**, and **etc.** to:
  - a. Ratify without delay, for the **Ministries / Departments** which have not yet done so, the **particulars of National Law on Disability based on** United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which specifies international human rights standards for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, and ensure its full implementation;
  - b. with regard to combating discrimination against and stigmatization of persons with disabilities:
    - i. launch awareness-raising campaigns on the political rights of persons with disabilities, together with organizations representing persons with disabilities and disabled persons' organizations, in order to combat and break down stereotypes with regard to their capacity to participate in elections and run as candidates;
    - ii. encourage visibility and participation of persons with disabilities in electoral debates in the media, and the broadcasting of political programs and debates in accessible formats;
    - iii. provide civic education in accessible formats;
  - c. with regard to accessibility of polling stations, information and procedures, including electoral campaigns:
    - i. ensure physical accessibility of public buildings, including polling stations, national, regional and local parliaments and government buildings, and guarantee that at least one polling station in every election district provides full accessibility;
    - ii. ensure the provision of information about electoral processes, voting procedures and political programs in accessible formats, including in easy-to-read and easy-to-understand versions, with sign interpretation when required, subtitles for videos and Braille versions;
    - iii. provide ballot papers in accessible formats and tactile voting devices for blind people in at least one polling station in every election district;
    - iv. consider linking State funding of political parties to their compliance with accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities;
  - d. with regard to assistance with voting and to remote and alternative voting:

- i. provide, when requested, assistance with voting via supported decision making, and respect for the voter's free will;
    - ii. hold training on non-discrimination and assistance to persons with disabilities for polling station officers and officers in charge of voter registration, in co-operation with organizations representing persons with disabilities and disabled persons' organizations;
    - iii. prepare and disseminate guidelines on assistance to voters with all kinds of disabilities, in co-operation with organizations representing persons with disabilities and disabled persons' organizations;
    - iv. set up mobile voting units and propose, when possible, electronic voting for cases where persons with disabilities are not in a position to go to a polling station;
  - e. with regard to active participation in elections:
    - i. systematize collection of data on the political participation of persons with disabilities at national and local levels to ensure that relevant support measures are taken;
    - ii. consider the establishment of quotas for the participation of persons with disabilities in parliamentary and other elections, with a view to increasing participation and representation;
    - iii. provide candidates with disabilities with additional financial support to cover the extra costs they might incur for carrying out electoral campaigns.
8. The Consultation calls on GoIRA to not only guarantee accessibility of premises but also ensure the broadcasting of parliamentary debates and the provision of information on their websites in accessible formats and, as standard, to cover costs for assistance to parliamentarians with disabilities. It also calls on national parliaments to set up systematic consultations with organizations representing persons with disabilities and disabled persons' organizations for the preparation of any new draft law concerning the rights of persons with disabilities, respecting the principle "Nothing about us without us".
9. The Consultation encourages political parties to demonstrate their commitment to making political life more inclusive and representative by producing and disseminating accessible political manifestos and ensuring accessibility of their meeting premises and events. Political parties should promote participation and offer persons with disabilities electable positions on electoral lists.

10. The Consultation recognizes the essential role of organizations representing persons with disabilities and disabled persons' organizations to promote the political participation of persons with disabilities and calls for financial support for awareness-raising projects in this field. Moreover, it encourages further co-operation between GoIRA, political parties and these organizations.
11. The Consultation conducted by CCD decides to publish easy-to-understand versions of its adopted resolutions and recommendations on the rights of persons with disabilities on its website/social media. The CCD shall also consider the feasibility of providing these texts in sign language interpretation on its website.