

The CRPD's Evolving Impact on Other International Human Rights Instruments
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Monday, 8 June, 2026
13:15 - 14:30

Speaker: Good afternoon everybody. Thank you for showing up in large numbers. We are happy that you came to our Side Event. For the cost, this is one of the best! Very happy about the turnout.

We are sponsored by Switzerland. Cosponsor by New Zealand and Costa Rica. Thank you. Also by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities whose secretary is here for the first time. And sponsorship for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Switzerland, Disability Rights International who provided us with speakers and Validity Foundation whose boss is here today.

First a few words on the organizing. There is ISL interpretation and Closed Captioning. You can access that through the QR code. This event is broadcast live on UN Web TV and on demand. So you will have the chance to recoup if you missed anything.

First a few words on what we are doing today. Then we will hand the mic to a representative of the Swiss Government.

In the 20 years of its existence, the CRPD has left its mark on the previously established human rights system in Europe, Americas, Africa. Under the CRPD the jurisprudence developed not just under its confines but it has changed human rights in general. They are no longer what they once were over 20 years ago.

Today's side event will illustrate these developments with landmark cases won in different jurisdictions of international law. These should provide insight to how the CRPD today molds international human rights law.

These illustrations will make it clear, I hope that despite all its successes that we will see today, there will be a long way to go. International human rights law we will see is not where it should be, or where it used to be, or where it ought to be. The work is not over. The human rights committee hasn't shown that it fully understands what the CRPD means and how it's structured.

The committee against torture still holds positions not compatible with the CRPD. The European Court of human rights refuses to implement all elements of the CRPD that require structural changes. It has moved, but not all the way.

One thing will become clear today. The CRPD Convention is not just a formidable instrument to lobby the political bodies of government, something that most organizations of persons with disabilities do, but it's a powerful, legal tool. It's a distinctly legal treaty and opens enforcement like under the courts systems on the international levels and domestic levels. It adds lobbying. It supplements political advocacy. This supplement is what we will hear about in the next few minutes, or a little more than a few minutes. ☺

With the greatest pleasure I present to you a phenomenal panel. I'm proud that you are all agreeing to participate here.

First, Priscila Rodríguez Benavides from Disability Rights International and Steven Allen from the Validity Foundation. Caspar, Human Rights Officer, UN Petitions Unit, and Markus Schefer from the CRPD Committee and Professor of Constitutional and Administrative Law.

And Urs from the Swiss Project and Eric from Disability Rights International. I will introduce them in more detail when it's their time to speak. Handing it over to the Head of the Federal Bureau for the Equality of Persons with Disabilities of Switzerland. Happy you and your government agreed to support us for this side event. We look forward to your introduction. Thank you.

Urs Germann: Thank you! Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed representatives of Civil Society and guests. I am pleased to welcome you to this side event marking the 20th anniversary on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Thank you Switzerland for this important side event on the CRPD at 20 and it's evolving impact and human rights instruments. Extending my gratitude to the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica and the committee on the rights of persons with disabilities, Disability Rights International and Validity Foundation for their cosponsor.

This anniversary is more than a chance to celebrate progress. But it's meant to reflect on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a bigger instrument to human rights. The CRPD is gaining governance in international jurisprudence. For example, the Swiss Supreme Court refers to the CRPD in its presentations. On behalf of the rights of persons with disabilities.

For us, the CRPD is not a political declaration of intent, but a compass to guide our national policy. I am pleased to continue this discussion today and talk about issues from different perspectives. Switzerland is committed to preserving and strengthening the international human rights system including the United Nations' Treaty. This system is essential not just for sustainable, but to ensure that the CRPD continues to influence other human rights instruments.

This system can endure and make sure that the CRPD's standards are integrated and applied by other committees. This is meant to reinforce the CRPD's international human rights system to transform into meaningful improvements into the lives of persons with disabilities.

The CRPD will continue to develop the international human rights system and ensure that the CRPD remains embedded in it. We look forward to today's perspective and this discussion. I would like to thank all the speakers and each of you for your participation in this side event.

Host: Thank you, Urs Germann. And thank you for referring to the treaty body system, which is of great importance, and how we do things in Geneva.

We will do questions on using the CRPD in litigation. We have Priscila Rodriguez Benavides, the Associate Director for Advocacy, Disability Rights International with the DC office. She has lots of expertise in litigating the CRPD. She will talk to us today on litigating the CRPD in the inter-American civil rights system. We are very much looking forward to the brief view on what you experience in that system; how the CRPD works in the inter-American system.

Priscila Rodriguez Benavides: Thank you so much. Thank you for putting together this panel and the invitation to be part of it together with my esteemed colleagues. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has had a big impact on the regional powers, such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Both they and the court can use international standards to interpret the rights recognized in the American Convention. They have applied CPRD to those with disabilities.

The first that the American Courts used was a landmark case with Argentina, with a case where someone with extreme disabilities sought a compensation claim. The courts sought litigations and cited the model of disability.

With another one in Guatemala, they made a decision that on the basis of disability, this violates their rights to no discrimination, privacy, family life, among other things. They cited the CRPD in its decision. This case is a case of Frederico Mora -- a psychiatric facility in Guatemala.

They found some of the gravest abuses of those against those with disabilities, including sexual abuse and not preventing minors from being sexually assaulted. The case of Frederico Mora, as well as those in the case, the only institute in Guatemala seeks for American courts to go further than they did. We ask the courts to recognize the institutionalization of those in the courts are recognized, as per article 9 of the CRPD.

We seek rights in the American Convention. In 1969, they did not explicitly recognize those with disabilities. But the Inter-American Court made a practice of autonomous new rights to consider 1 or several rights of the American Convention together.

In its most recent advisory position, though the American convention does not explicitly express the right to care, read together -- like the rights of the child told to the parents -- must be understood as the right to care.

In the case of Frederico Mora, they now have the opportunity to talk about the right to be free from violence, privacy, freedom, etc. are recognized as integration as per article 9 of the CRPD.

This is an ambitious ask. But even the recognition of new rights in the American civil rights system and other bodies is important. With the international jurisprudence, so too the CRPD's work of bodies, the talk of international communications and reports.

Most recently, they covered the grave abuses of those in Mexico. This is the implementation that Mexico has ignored. This report shows that institutionalization itself is a form of violence, and makes steps that Mexico must take.

These recommendations will shape policy in Mexico and the region. Thank you.

[Applause]

Markus Schefer: Thank you very much, Priscila. We see CRPD has had an immense influence in the American system. Individual cases, but as you mentioned, also in inquiries that you basically started the committee's ideas, and supported the inquiry in Mexico on the ground. We are grateful for that.

We go further now with a very similar type of situation, but in a different continent. Europe also has a regional system of human rights protection, centering on the European Center for Human Rights. It's also working with the Courts of Human Rights. Africa also has their own regional system, the African Courts at its center.

For this, we have Steven Allen, Executive Director for the Validity Foundation. I'm always in awe of him when he speaks on law. I know his determination; he always shows when he talks about the rights of persons with disabilities, how to implement it. Steven, I'm very glad you're here. We're looking very much forward to your views on how to implement the CRPD in the European and African systems. Thank you.

Steven Allen: Thank you, Markus. It's a joy to be with you. Let me start: 20 years after adopting the CRPD, it's no longer a question whether the convention has influenced human rights laws and regional human rights mechanisms. Clearly, it has.

The more interesting question is how that influence has occurred. When it was adopted in 2006, the convention did so much more than just reaffirm that people with disabilities enjoy the same rights as everyone else. Indeed, it provided us with a strong legal instrument to challenge disablist assumptions that shaped European law, policy, there and elsewhere.

From then, my organization has used the CRPD as a legal tool to promote systemic change. In my view, and in our overall work, we have seen the CRPD is critical is both critical in Europe and Africa. In Europe, where we maintain large scale discrimination of those with disabilities, and in Africa where people were seen as objects of charity than those in need of key reform, now the CRPD influences how those can take part in regional reform processes. This is often through using it as a legal tool.

In Europe, the jurisprudence of the European Courts of Human Rights has in fact evolved since the convention's adoption. That court is now looking into deprivation of legal capacity, deprivation of lack of liberty, access to justice, and is even beginning to do judicial cognition on other issues.

This is a highly conservative judicial system. Even to get initial citations with the courts has taken many, many years of determined litigation. We do now see the court is beginning to use the concepts and meets what it needs to do. Aligning its own standards with international human rights law.

The European Union has now adopted a victims' rights program, which seeks accommodations within the EU's program. This opens up the doors for persons with disabilities across Europe to enter the courts and have a fair chance of getting cultural accommodations.

In cases of Bulgaria, this has moved the conversation in Europe away from care and control to now beginning to recognize them as actors before the law.

Let me be clear in Europe: we have a hell of a long way to go! The European Convention still allows deprivation of liberty with unsound mind, associating them with drug addicts and alcoholics.

In Africa, institutions are now increasingly drawing on the CRPD to challenge segregation, guardianship, and to highlight from our work, colonial-era mental health law -- often borrowing from my own country's laws, the United Kingdom. At the president's pleasure, we challenge

legal standards which use terminology to refer to people as "lunatics, weak minded, imbeciles, morons", etc. that should be retired to history.

We also use other instruments, too. The leading example is the African Disability Protocol. It extends many core obligations, first articulated in the CRPD, while contextualising them in African societies.

One of the most important developments was those with disabilities are now appearing before courts. Before treaty bodies, before regional mechanisms! Those doors historically were closed shut.

We know from our work, transformation did not happen automatically. Bulgaria's case did reform jurisprudence across the whole European system. A point of this case? The man traveled to Strasbourg and the courts did not hear him. They came with a great judgment, but didn't even hear him! We have worked with people that force the conversation, that the institution is a great form of harm and suffering, and institutionalism must be investigated.

I also want to talk about colonial approaches to law, and indeed, I think we have the potential to really challenge violations of the rights to legal capacity for the whole continent. We look to Africa for this.

The influence of the CRPD should not be seen as uncontested. European countries still remain and hold important disagreements with their obligations under the CRPD. The European court of human rights when thinking about this obviated protocol reserved judgment. They knew this could create conflicting standards, like psychiatric detention in direct contention with the CRPD. Lucy's case is often stated when this protocol is called. He would hate that his name is called in these cases.

There are also testimonies of women with intellectual & psychosocial disabilities who have seen the court drag their feet in their cases for review. 20 years after it's adoption I see the greatest achievement of the CRPD is not that the courts are relying more on the text of the convention, but I think it is that we are now seeing persons with disabilities demand justice in courts and demand implementation to change real lives.

But the real question for the next 20 years is if our mechanisms at the regional level can stand up to the onslaught on human rights and if we have the power to support implementation going forward. We have laid the path. Now we must just keep walking it. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Markus Schefer: Thank you Steven for the powerful reminder that the CRPD can be a powerful instrument to move this document from 1950 to today's world. And to remove the remnants of colonialism that are still very much alive. Thank you for this.

Going now to Caspar Plomp. He is a human rights officer in Geneva at the office of the high commissioner for human rights. He's responsible for individual communications that reach our CRPD committee. I have had the pleasure of working with him for a sustained time dealing with the cases that come to our committee. I'm very pleased that Caspar will say a few words on how the CRPD convention influences other human rights treaties.

Caspar Plomp: Thank you Markus. It's good to be here today. It's hard to follow such good speakers! You should have changed the order! [Joke/joking.]

I will mostly focus on the other United Nations human rights treaty bodies of the other 9 committees that supervise the implementation of the human rights committee and the human rights of the Child for example.

First, the CRPD convention has the potential and has already influenced how all these treaty bodies deal with the rights of persons with disabilities. The way it addresses these is through the CRPD convention. This is significant because there's still more than 80 states who are not a party to this protocol.

An example from the mechanism procedure and then what this means in practice and how organizations with persons with disabilities can invoke disability rights before the other treaty bodies.

An example from the individual complaint procedure. This is a procedure that treaty bodies have and it allows people to complain about violations of the human rights treaties. First the one that holds the covenant on civil and human rights. This convention precedes the CRPD by several decades. But it's different in how it approaches the rights of persons with disabilities.

In a recent case against Sweden we reviewed a complaint from Mr Mernek with a psychosocial disability and was shot and killed by the Swedish police. It was found they violated his right to life. They didn't show that they conducted the operation with regard to his intellectual & psychosocial disabilities.

We wanted to place more limits on firearms so they could consider people with disabilities before carrying out such operations. I think it's safe to say that the committee concluded that the language was broadly good with the CRPD convention, but there are other examples we could cite.

But a few words on how organizations with persons with disabilities and others can invoke the treaty bodies and their rights. I think many today would be interested.

Invoking disability rights can encourage other treaty bodies to uphold a similar approach. A logical avenue is to file complaints with the CRPD committee but almost half of all United Nations member states are not a party. You might have admissibility criteria in these states for example. They cannot make interpretations of the CRPD, but they aim to be sure their jurisprudence is consistent with other treaty bodies.

You can invoke other non-discrimination provisions in other treaties like Article 26 of the IRCPR. The CRC predates the CRPD. So these were the first international provisions on children with disabilities. You can also invoke any relevant treaty provisions. It's possible to make reference to other relevant norms, many refer explicitly to persons with disabilities. As well as the jurisprudence of the CRPD.

90 final decisions have been rendered. You can rely on this jurisprudence if you want to bring a case to other treaty bodies. But the key point is that the CRPD can influence how all treaty bodies determine disability rights and there are different ways to invoke your rights under these different treaty bodies with a rights based approach. Handing it back to Markus. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Markus Schefer: Thank you so much, Caspar. The United Nations treaty body system is not the same that it was before the CRPD came into effect. It has changed slowly and some treaty bodies have changed more, and others less. But the human rights committee tends to be on the more conservative side.

You mentioned the CRPD can be invoked in litigation before other UN treaty bodies. But now we will hear how to list a case. We will hear about a case from Switzerland that was brought to the children's rights committee, the CRC. Switzerland has not ratified the optional protocol to the CRPD. We presume this has died though as it has lingered.

We will now hear from two representatives of Swiss OPDs intimately involved in this case. First, Konrad Stokar. He is Co-Executive Director, Association Cerebral Suisse, Member of the Executive Board of Inclusion Handicap Switzerland. He is an activist and communicator with COPDs. Thank you so much Konrad. We look forward to the first half of hearing about the case.

Speaker: Thank you, participants. I am Konrad Stokar. I live with mild cerebral palsy and I work for the Swiss Cerebral Association. This is the organization for those with cerebral palsy in Switzerland. Nuria Frei and I are discussing a case about inclusive education. I'm speaking from my own experience.

52 years ago, I met a young elementary school teacher. She said, yes! Konrad Stokar is coming to my school! We will make it work together.

I was already a year older than my classmates. I could not walk until I was four. I had to be pushed in a stroller but we made it work. I don't think I would be here today if that young teacher only saw my disability and not my potential. She believed in herself and in me.

I am honored to advocate for inclusive education in Switzerland today. We will tell you about that in this case.

A few years ago a family reached out to our organization. They asked for legal support in keeping their child in a mainstream school. That child had cerebral palsy. They have mainstreamed their knowledge of the CRPD with Inclusion Handicap. So I referred that family to them. Then Inclusion Handicap helped them in a joint project focused on strategic litigation.

The child was able to go through mainstream school, since the first court ruled in favor of inclusion. But the municipality appealed this to the next higher court. All subsequent courts, including the supreme court, ruled against inclusion. From the family's perspective, the school was implementing accommodations well.

Since Switzerland has not adopted the optional protocol, we could not bring this to the committee following the Supreme Court's decision. But since a child with disabilities is involved, we had the idea of bringing this before the CRC committee, since Switzerland has ratified the optional protocol with the CRC.

It saddens me that between the time I had the possibility of being excluded, and today, 52 years has not made much progress. What can we do to change that? How can we go from a luxury occurrence to the norm? We have to know that having a disability is normal, highly likely to occur in someone's life following an accident or with age-related ailments.

Once we grasp this concept, we can grasp inclusion. This is how we can put into practice what that elementary school teacher exemplified 52 years ago. Thank you.

[Applause]

Host: Thank you very much, Konrad. Now we immediately go on with the same case that Nuria Frei will tell us from the legal side. She is a lawyer for Handicap Switzerland, and leads many projects and works long hours! The floor is yours.

Nuria Frei: Thank you. The emergence of human rights treaties in the 20th century evolved the systems. But the definition of equality meant that these rights had little effect for those with disabilities. The CRPD ratified 20 years ago was a big step for countries to give more rights to those with disabilities, as well as general accommodations.

The CRC goes far beyond the original concept of human rights protections. On education, which Konrad talked about, we argue the CRC must be interpreted like the CRPD committee. This approach is a joint statement from the CRC and CRPD committees that reaffirms that the rights enshrined in both are related to those children with disabilities.

The right to inclusive education of children with disabilities is incompatible with separate education systems. We must have one education system adapted to both disabled and abled children.

Courts in Switzerland have been reluctant to have major reforms. All courts except the first rejected the inclusion of the child in mainstream education.

We submitted in 2005 our communication to the CRC, asking for new measures to help the child into schools during the proceedings. They stopped the transfer to the new school. Switzerland suddenly requested to lift the suspension immediately, which is currently pending.

Even with the interim measures still in effect, and Switzerland's statements to comply with it, the municipalities have wanted to segregate the child starting in the next school semester this August.

We want these Treaty measures to go to the federal level. Switzerland has only looked at measures under the federal government's jurisdiction. But what about the other municipalities in Switzerland? This opens new questions, and sparked considerable debate -- particularly the binding measures of the UN measures.

To prevent the segregation of the child, we initiated a new proceeding about two weeks ago. The outcome is still uncertain. Despite the challenges described, I encourage you to advocate for the application of all human rights in light of the CRPD, which is the best resource of those seeking civil rights for those with disabilities. Thank you for your attention.

[Applause]

Markus Schefer: Thank you Nuria. We see when the binding effects of entry measures by UN Treaty Bodies become a subject of major political discourse in a country, and as I may, a reason for friction between government departments, I think we see how powerful litigation may be. _

We now go on, also with respect to the rights of children with disabilities, to Eric Rosenthal. He is the founder and executive director of Disability Rights International. A powerful member of our inquiries, and a leading civil rights advocate. Trained many advocates in many countries. I'll stop here, so Eric, the mic is yours.

Eric Rosenthal: It's great to be here. I want to take the moment here to thank Markus in particular. The investigation and reporting that the UN did on Mexico would not be what it is without your personal involvement.

We watched Markus as he wandered through the psychiatric facilities and institutions of Mexico. What happened to Markus happens to most anyone with a heart that goes inside one of those institutions. It changes who you are. I can only believe that by the end of that inquiry, the force and the passion that you gave to that inquiry report could only have come from personally being there.

I want to thank you and shake your hand for all you've done.

I will be speaking about children with disabilities and the overlay between the CRPD and the Convention of the Rights of the Child. I'll also talk about what my colleague Priscila talked about with the Inter-American Convention. This is really three-dimensional chess with the institutions.

This is personal to me -- being in these facilities, seeing what's happening. I think of a child at the Frederico Mora psychiatric facility. An adolescent boy locked up in an isolation cell, we asked what he was doing in there. He said "he is there for his own protection and safety." Because "if we were to release him, he would be violated within minutes."

Consider this: the institution is itself there for his "protection and safety" and the institution is so dangerous he has to be locked in isolation to protect him for his own safety? We argue before the Inter-American Courts in autumn, him along with thousands of others locked up since we brought up this case -- one of the largest ever -- and we'll discuss his rights and remedies.

It turns out, the way the court interprets the right of children with disabilities, drawing from the CRPD or CRC, will determine whether this child simply has a right to live in a smaller, cleaner,

nicer institution or whether that child has what all children should have a right to as recognized under General Comment 5 under the CRPD: to grow up and live alongside a family.

What are the rights of the child? The court has to deal with an issue unresolved to this day between the two conventions. Before I plunge into the conflicting standards, I want to point out one other area of difference between the CRC and CRPD, which is a more hopeful area, full of synergies and where the two disabilities and children's communities can learn from each other.

CRC, Article 12, has a cutting-edge and important recognition of the right of children to be heard in all matters affecting them. It's written in the individual, "the child", capable of expressing his/her views to express his/her opinion as to what the individual rights are.

The idea of simply communicating with the child itself and allowing that is still cutting-edge, important, and so widely overlooked that we can learn what these groups have been doing, to make sure that the child's needs are met. I still have problems and wishes for updates on the language and legal capacity and inherent right to make choices. A good study of Article 12 would be valuable.

But what is missing from the CRC is what's so powerful of the CRPD -- especially in Article 4.3 -- the right to people with disabilities through their organized representatives to participate, to be engaged, to help make decisions, to help policy and legal development, to help with human rights monitoring.

There is active engagement of those with people with disabilities on all aspects that involve them. It's not just being heard, but a collective right to participate. That's where we need to go. To this day, they overlook the role of organizations. Those children grow up to be adults. If we don't allow adults to participate with creating remedies, we overlook their rights.

With regard to the CRC, they have that language. "For their protection, children separated from their parents have a right to special protection, which may include placement in an institutions appropriate for a child."

Now we call for the closure of large institutions, but the preservation of smaller institutions. This can be things like foster homes and such, promoted by UNICEF. Alternative care still says that smaller institutions have to be maintained.

When the CRPD was adopted, there was a harmonization process. We got together to harmonize standards. The process exceeded in almost every area, but they glossed over these differences since both groups dug in their heels and didn't want to meet on these. This is clearly in conflict with General Comment 5. It loses billions of dollars of year to institutions abroad. Throughout

the world, institutions for children exported and supported by international donors; whether those children live in a family or a nicer, cleaner institution, is a matter billions of dollars and millions of lives. Unless those issues are resolved, the CRPD is essentially treated as a second class treaty.

If the standards are overlooked then the CRPD is a second class treaty and that issue is not resolved. We will litigate this in front of the inter-American court. Wouldn't it be great if that gave life to the CRPD in a way that the CRPD committee hadn't done themselves! Now I know there are members here of that organization and thank you. Because I know they have given their blood, sweat and tears to this and the political process. But there are political limitations to where one treaty can't override the other. But it's unfinished business and it may play out in the courts, if not on the committees themselves. Thank you

[APPLAUSE]

Host: Thank you Eric. The CRPD convention certainly has been conferred second class citizenship upon it in many jurisdictions. Me and my friends from Switzerland know that.

Now to the end of our presentation. I would like to invite you to comment or ask questions in particular to the panelists. Say your name and briefly the institution from which you come from. Yes?

Speaker: [inaudible] . . . psychiatry. I would like to ask what the panelists think about the prospects for dealing with the difficult areas, for example, how will we move the human rights committee, committee against torture and the European human rights courts. How can we get them to get rid of the institutionalization and forced detainment?

I don't know if someone is positioned to talk more in detail about another aspect of the Mexican Inquiry Report, but Mexico didn't accept the recommendations on conforming their laws at the state level to the requirements of the CRPD in terms of abolishing committal treatment. Or solitary confinement. How do we address that? It relates to the issue of federal versus state.

Host: Thank you. Steven?

Steven Allen: An important opportunity is right now for the treaty bodies. They can begin working through this issue of torture, ill treatment and violence. The CRPD committee has published a guideline on this topic. I think the guideline should engage with the standards from other treaty bodies and make clear where those treaty bodies should update their standards. By which I refer to the subcommittee against torture. And these standards being held for the

provision of torture in Europe. And I hate to say it, those are far below the subcommittee, those standards.

It's important to get this right and to be clear on the definitions, being up to date recognizing the disabilities and subsequent forms of torture. All treaty bodies should give this note.

A few weeks ago in Vienna we had dialogue on mechanisms on monitoring and with the representatives of the subcommittee and committees on the CRPD and the conventions in Europe. We need to update these standards on forced detention and torture under article 7 of the CRPD. From Validity Foundation we expect these committees to work together on that dialogue and that all the committees come together and discuss the needs to systemize their standards.

Why? So European countries can choose their standards to apply and help all. There might be reforms going in place that enforce torture for those with psychosocial disabilities. My view is that we have a crucial opportunity with disability based violence guidelines to be developed further to give more protection.

Host: Thank you Steven Allen, and in particular for reminding our committee to do our homework, very serious homework on that front.

Priscila Rodríguez Benavides: With Mexico, I will say what they have done is pass legislation. And there's been important forms like the right to informed consent and the right to communication service. This is connected to reforms in Civil Society.

Mexico is saying well, we haven't done anything else, but at least we passed legislation. I think they recognize this. But they have concrete comments and it's important for Mexico to pick these up from the CRPD. But the real challenge is that even though the legislation is there, it's not being implemented. This was passed in 2013 and then again in 2022. With passing the legislation, Mexico can do it. But it's really about implementation.

Host: Thank you Priscila Rodríguez Benavides. We have seen that states have difficulty implementing the CRPD on the lower federal levels. Like the case my swiss colleagues showed, the swiss government didn't have the guts to do it, and then with Mexico and others in the room here know what I'm talking about.

I would like to ask other participants for questions? Please wait until the light is red to speak.

Speaker: Thank you, I am the President of the World Blind Union, Mr. Santosh Kumar Rungta. The things our panelists discussed today, I understand there's a challenge we have. The CRPD has had spatial loss with policies for promoting participation of persons with disabilities. But

there's a disconnect with the mainstream laws, and their regulations on employment. There's no convergence between the mainstream and spatial laws. So there is an implementation gap that we see everyday in every country.

In thinking about the strategy for the future, we need to ensure education for integration for persons with disabilities into mainstream systems and laws. Thank you very much.

Host: Thank you. That is one of the main issues we face on a legal side. To change laws in was to render them inclusive. This is why implementing the CRPD is such an enormous task even though its goals are very modest. Just protecting the same rights for persons with disabilities as to everybody else.

I was reminded why the representatives could not spend more time than we are allotted!
[Laughing.]

We only have the room until half past. So we must call this event to an end. We have been presented with fundamental landmarks of developments. The CRPD exists on the instruments of other human rights laws. These are the highlights of what the CRPD has achieved not just in legislation but in case law and jurisprudence. The law is moving, slowly but persistently. Due to the dogged pursuance of lawyers and activists. Thinking about the rights of persons with disabilities and their personnel and lawyers, this will move the law and society to further change as envisioned by the CRPD.

The genie has been let out of the bottle. After 20 years I don't think we could move backwards, but it would be difficult to move forward. The rights of persons with disabilities are here to stay and change international human rights law and to move our societies towards further inclusion of all people and persons with disabilities. I thank our panelists for hosting this side event, and for everyone sharing their experiences and expertise, thank you New Zealand and Costa Rica. Thank you Disability Rights International and Validity Foundation. Thank you to those in Geneva for sharing their enormous institutional knowledge and for the Swiss OPDs for daring to venture out into the world. [Laughing.]

And thank you dear participants for being interested in this topic and legal issue, and for your steadfastness in your pursuit for making the CRPD a reality wherever that may be. Thank you. This side event is closed.

[APPLAUSE]

[End.]

***This transcript provides a meaning-for-meaning summary to facilitate communication access.
TypeWell speech-to-text service may not be a verbatim record of the proceedings. Thank you.*