Statement made by Ms. Maleni Chaitoo, representing the International Disability Alliance and the International Disability and Development Consortium, during the opening session of December 3 celebrations at the United Nations in New York, 2015

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

I speak to you today as a representative of the International Disability Alliance and the International Disability and Development Consortium.

The International Disability Alliance is a network of eight global and four regional organizations of persons with disabilities and their families, representing over one billion persons with disabilities from all constituencies in both the Global South and Global North.

The International Disability and Development Consortium is a global network of 26 disability and development NGOs and organisations of persons with disabilities working in more than one hundred countries around the world.

I would like to extend gratitude from all our members to UN Member States and the UN system for working together with us to ensure that Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly include persons with disabilities. The SDGs recognise the importance of our full participation and inclusion across all stages of development—from planning and design to implementation and monitoring. Today is an opportunity to celebrate our achievements and look ahead to what we must still achieve, working together with you, in the next 15 years and beyond.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the blueprint for how to realise truly inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. Together the CRPD and Agenda 2030 strengthen one another and set a path for an inclusive and participatory world for all.

As of today, one hundred and sixty Member States have signed and ratified the Convention and have committed to ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities. And yet, 80 per cent of persons with disabilities still live in poverty. This is not acceptable in 2015 and let’s make sure it is unthinkable in 2030. It is time to see commitments translated into action: the implementation of an inclusive 2030 Agenda that truly leaves no one behind.

The members of the International Disability Alliance and International Disability and Development Consortium are ready to contribute to and be included in the implementation of Agenda 2030 as equal partners in the process. At the same time we are calling for a disability data revolution in which we can become active participants to measure the achievements of Agenda 2030 for persons with disabilities.

For more than 10 years persons with disabilities have expressed “Nothing about us, without us”—and we’ve meant it. Let us now collaborate with you to build an inclusive society and ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are realized through the new framework in all aspects, from the local and national, to regional and global levels.

Thank you.