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**STATEMENT BY ANNE HAWKER  
REPRESENTATIVE, REHABILITATION INTERNATIONAL**

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates:

Rehabilitation International supports the efforts of the WHO in the elimination of communicable diseases such as polio. While polio has been in many countries of the Western Pacific, many people are now living with the consequences of Post Polio Syndrome.

Because of the failure to adequately identify and support people with post polio syndrome, people have developed significant secondary disability often of a psychosocial nature.

My question relates to whether WHO would incorporate into its strategy the prevention of secondary prevention work, people with polio syndrome will not be fully included in society especially as the condition is often misunderstood.

The second area that Rehabilitation International would like to make comment on is on the strategy to manage the issues arising from mental health and neurological health issues.

We strongly support the need for a rights based approach to the effective identification and management of issues relating to people with mental and neurological conditions. It is hoped that the rights based approach suggested is consistent with the recently drafted UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People which is currently going through the drafting committee prior to presentation at the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the UN General Assembly.

We suggest that when referring to a rights-based approach that UN Convention on the rights of Disabled People once ratified is referenced in this context.

Lastly we would like to request that when countries are developing their health promotion and prevention programmes that they do not forget the particular needs of people with disabilities especially in terms of access to information, access to programmes and access to clinics and treatment. Without these considerations, we will continue to be further disadvantaged.

Thank you for your attention.