



► Disability inclusion must remain a priority for companies, during and after the COVID pandemic

Geneva, 30 November 2020

Persons with disabilities represent a wide diversity of vibrant, innovative talents, crucial for the development of forward-thinking companies. However, they are also one of the groups most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even before the current crisis, persons with disabilities faced barriers to the labour market, and they are facing even more barriers during the crisis, to gain or retain employment. This is particularly the case for workers who face discrimination because of their disabilities, along with other intersecting grounds, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. We wholeheartedly agree with the United Nations Secretary General when he says that the response to the pandemic must be disability inclusive. We wholeheartedly agree with the ILO Director General when he says that a disability-inclusive response is a better response for all. We are cognizant that the time for action is now, that disability inclusion cannot be delayed during the COVID crisis, for delaying action would only be a recipe for building back the same inequalities as before, which could deepen the marginalisation already faced by many persons with disabilities.

With this firmly in mind, members of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network, comprising global companies, national business and disability networks as well as disability organizations, hereby:

Key points

- ▶ **Recognize** that disability is a fact of life, an expression of diversity, and that disability inclusion is a strength of good business, and must be valued during and after the current crisis;
- ▶ **Reaffirm** their commitment to promoting the employment of persons with disabilities, following the principles of the Global Business and Disability Charter, and ensuring that measures taken to address the pandemic are applied in a non-discriminatory way;
- ▶ **Reaffirm** the need for collaboration between all stakeholders (public authorities, social partners, and civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities) to jointly promote the employment of persons with disabilities through a combination of non-discrimination and affirmative action measures;
- ▶ **Highlight** the need for the national socioeconomic responses to the pandemic to include persons with disabilities as a priority group and to undertake both targeted measures and ensure their inclusion in mainstream measures;
- ▶ **Support** meaningful consultation and dialogue with the community of persons with disabilities, with particular attention to more marginalized groups, so that their insights and experience guide all of us in the reconstruction of a more just society;
- ▶ **Commit** to communicate this Declaration within their organizations, to their stakeholders, to their partners, and to the greater society in which we all live and work.