



43rd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 24 February – 20 March 2020

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities

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Oral statement delivered by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

Madame President,

APG23 takes note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities focused on how ableism is reflected in legislation, policies, customs and practices related to prevention, cure and assisted dying.¹

From its beginning APG23 related to persons with disabilities as active and participatory subjects in their own life and worked actively to promote full recognition of the dignity of the persons with disabilities and their essential role in building a new humanity and a better society. Indeed, in our long experience of living with persons with disabilities in our families and family-homes and working with them in our cooperatives and daily centres, we can testify that persons with disabilities bring talent, diversity and richness to their communities as the Special Rapporteur affirms in the conclusions of her report.

Recognizing the dignity of each person, APG23 believes in the unique contribution to the common good of every person with disabilities through their original life stories. As Pope Francis said, and I quote: “Indeed, making good laws and breaking down physical barriers is important, but it is not enough, if the mentality does not change, if we do not overcome a widespread culture that continues to produce inequalities, preventing people with disabilities from actively participating in ordinary life.”²

We strongly recall “the irrevocable dignity of the human person, as loved by God – the dignity of each person, in every phase and condition of existence”³, the value proper to each human life, and we reject the dominant culture of waste in which whoever does not respond to the ideology of efficiency and profit is dischargeable and not important.

Inclusion, fraternity, solidarity should be among the driving principles of a society in which the dignity of every human being (from conception to natural death, with or without disabilities) is preserved and valued. Yet, in many situations a “culture of waste” is dominant and continues to produce inequalities, therefore persons with disabilities are denied full participation, belonging and opportunities.

We would like to ask the Special Rapporteur: which steps can be taken to combat and change the attitude of a culture of waste, individualism and social fragmentation, and promote a new culture of solidarity and inclusion?

Thank you!

¹ A/HRC/43/41

² Message of the Holy Father Francis for International Day of Person with Disabilities 2019

<http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2019/12/03/191203a.html>

³ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2018/june/documents/papa-francesco_20180625_accademia-provita.pdf