

18th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (COSP18)

Side Event | From awareness to action: ensuring climate and crisis response that works for all

As the world prepares for the Second World Summit for Social Development, ensuring that crisis response and climate action is inclusive of persons with disabilities is more urgent than ever. This COSP18 side event will explore innovative approaches to embedding accessibility, disability-inclusive policies, and community-driven solutions into climate and crisis response efforts. Experts, advocates, and policymakers will discuss strategies to raise public awareness and drive meaningful change—primarily through collaboration centred around the sharing of good practices—ensuring that persons with disabilities are recognized as key contributors to resilience, sustainability, and social development in the face of climate and crisis response challenges.

Duration: 60 minutes
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025
Time: 10:00 – 11:00
Location: Conference Room 12, United Nations Headquarters, 405 E 45th St, New York, NY 10017, United States of America

Main Sponsor: Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations

Co-Sponsors:

- Permanent Mission of the Commonwealth of Dominica to the United Nations
- Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations
- The Harvard Law School Project on Disability (HPOD)
- Zero Project

Chair/Moderator: **Thomas Butcher**, Senior Advisor, Zero Project, United States of America

Speakers:

1. **H.E. Dr. Philbert Aaron**, Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of Dominica to the United Nations, Dominica
2. **Nurilla Abdullayev**, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations, Uzbekistan
3. **Stefan Pretterhofer**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, Austria

4. **Professor Michael Ashley Stein**, Co-founder, Executive Director, Harvard Law School Project on Disability, United States of America
5. **Emina Cerimovic**, Associate Disability Rights Director, Human Rights Watch, United States of America

Itinerary & Format:

Minute 00	Moderator Welcome Thomas Butcher, Senior Advisor, Zero Project, United States of America
Minute 01	The Role of Nation Islands in Crisis Response H.E. Dr. Philbert Aaron, Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of Dominica to the United Nations Featuring a three-minute video segment of a person with lived experience in Dominica: link
Minute 07	Crisis Response in Central Asia Nurilla Abdullayev, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations
Minute 11	Moderator Introduction Thomas Butcher, Senior Advisor, Zero Project, United States of America
Minute 14	Presentation (eight minutes each – PowerPoint encouraged, but optional) 1. Professor Michael Ashley Stein, Co-founder, Executive Director, Harvard Law School Project on Disability, United States of America 2. Emina Cerimovic, Associate Disability Rights Director, Human Rights Watch, United States of America
Minute 36	Roundtable Discussions and/or Q&A with Audience
Minute 50	Call to Action – Zero Project Call for Nominations 2026

Thomas Butcher announces and entices the audience to bring forward good practices—and nominations—under the auspice of the Zero Project Call for Nominations 2026:

<https://zeroproject.org/research/zero-project-call-for-nominations-2026>

Minute 53

Closing Remarks

Stefan Pretterhofer, Deputy Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations

Minute 57

End of Session (three minutes prior to the next Session start, allowing us to get off stage and the next speakers to come on-stage in time)