



## High Level Panel on “Accessible Cities for All: Smart and Inclusive Urban Planning”.

Observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.  
Monday, December 3, 2018. CR 4. United Nations Headquarters

### **Opening Remarks on behalf of Mario Armella, President of IFFD**

Our Federation, together with the Regional Council of the Veneto Region and the valuable initiative and collaboration of the Division for Inclusive Social Development, started a project called “Inclusive Cities for Sustainable Families”.

The project is directed to local and regional governments that wish to actively contribute to “making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” (as SDG11 states). It aims to follow-up on the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda signed in Quito, Ecuador by gathering good practices from local, regional and national authorities on family responsive legislation, into making cities more resilient, inclusive and sustainable for all.

Well, in this regard, the local and regional governments that wish to show their commitment with the project sign the Venice Declaration

and present a yearly report about the results of their work on points regarding Housing, New Technologies, Education, Healthcare, Safety, Clean Air, Transportation, Affordability, Families in vulnerable situation, Leisure and Tourism.

The project has a family perspective because we are well aware that all the members of the family are related to various social realities. So, a family perspective will definitely contribute to a holistic approach of any policy intervention and to benefit each and every one of the members of the family as of older persons, parents, children, youth, indigenous people and persons with disabilities.

Today, in this observance we turn our attention to persons with disabilities and their families among the different points of action of the Venice Declaration.

The first point to consider about the Venice Declaration is how cities design should keep in mind all family members, especially older persons and persons with disabilities, while facilitating access to **housing**, involving inclusive urbanization, promoting smart cohousing solutions -with common use of services-, and ensuring flexible and accessible buildings.

Another point of action is the necessity of connecting people through **new technologies** to ensure social inclusion. For example, the importance to bridge the digital gap through training of professional carers.

Also, the provision of inclusive and quality **education** for all and the promotion of lifelong learning (SDG 4) should lead to the

improvement of accessible and affordable participation of persons with disabilities in educational activities.

Additionally, the organization of campaigns to promote **healthy** habits and lifestyles, especially those targeting the promotion of mental well-being, while meeting the challenges of persons with disabilities and their families.

Plus, design of a plan to make public **transportation** more rational and accessible while facilitating access to tourism, cultural activities and leisure for all.

And finally, establishing specific programs to recognize the value of unpaid work and care, and addressing the needs of **families in vulnerable situations**.

We are committed to follow-up on all of the good practices and reviews that this initiative will bring. We are sure that this universal call for action will promote inclusive cities for sustainable families and will help to leave no one behind, especially persons with disabilities.

I don't want to close before appreciating once again the sponsorship of the Permanent Mission of Ecuador and Malaysia to organize an event during the Observance of the World Cities Day, last month. During that Observance, with the collaboration of the Division for Inclusive Social Development, the first local and regional governments signed the Venice Declaration.

Thank you.