



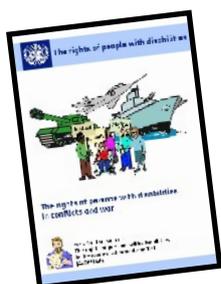
The rights of people with disabilities



The rights of persons with disabilities in conflicts and war



EasyRead version of:
**The rights of persons with disabilities
in the context of armed conflict.
(A/76/146)**
<https://undocs.org/en/A/76/146>



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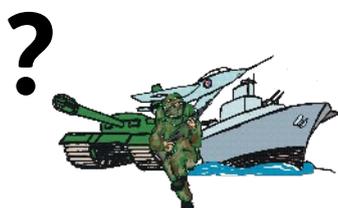
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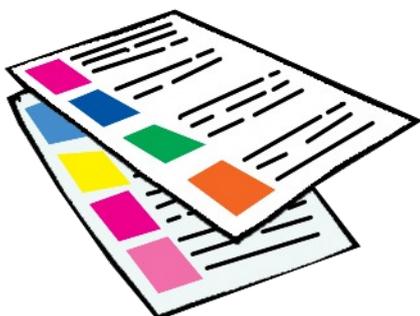
The **Special Rapporteur** on the rights of persons with disabilities, Gerard Quinn wrote this report. He helps countries understand how to make sure the rights of people with disabilities are respected.



The Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities is part of the **United Nations (UN)**.



The United Nations (UN) is a group made of 193 Countries. It works to keep peace between Countries, get Countries working together, and make sure people get their human rights



This is an Easy Read version of the Special Rapporteur's report of 2021 (A/76/146) on the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of armed conflict.



The Special Rapporteur asked many States and groups to tell what they thought about how to protect the rights of people with disabilities when there are very big problems like war and conflict.



39 Countries and groups told the Special Rapporteur what they thought in a survey. This included asking **organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)**.



Sometimes we say OPDs for short when talking about organizations of persons with disabilities.



A group of people who know a lot about protecting **human rights** and the rights of people with disabilities met together to talk about what needed to be in this report.



The Special Rapporteur thanks everyone who helped with the ideas and recommendations of this report about war and conflict and peace.



In some places in the world there are very big problems like **conflict** or war.

When there is conflict:



- there might be guns and shooting

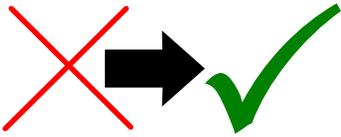


- there might be bombs



- people might be forced to leave their homes
- people might be hurt or killed.

This report is about the rights of people with disabilities when:



- there are very big problems like conflict or war
- trying to stop conflict or war
- trying to make fix and make things better after conflict or war
- working hard to keep **peace** and stop war starting.

15 people out of every 100 people have a disability. People with disabilities live in:



- all countries around the world
- countries where there are very big problems like conflict or war.



Human rights and people with disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:



- is an agreement that sets out what Countries must do to make sure people with disabilities have the same rights as everybody else
- is always important
- does not stop when there is conflict or war.

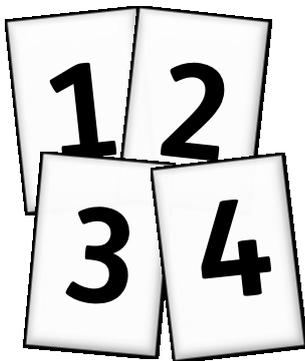


The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is sometimes called the **CRPD**.



People with disabilities must be respected for who they are at all times.

- this is in the CRPD
- this has not been included in many of the agreements and laws about war and conflict.



There are 4 ideas in the CRPD that are important to think about in this report.

1. What does it mean to protect people with disabilities?



People with disabilities:

- should be free and safe, the same as everyone else
- might need protection if they are in situations that are dangerous or unsafe
- need protection when there is war and conflicts, like everyone else.



2. Respecting people with disabilities for who they are



People with disabilities:

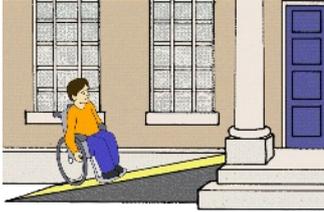
- are to be respected by the law like everyone else
- should have the same choices as everyone else about how they live and being part of their communities
- should be involved in making new laws and policies.



3. Countries agree that people with disabilities:

- are equal under the law
- must not be discriminated against
- are free to make their own choices
- have the same rights to be included in society as anybody else





- are to be respected for who they are
- should have equal access.

4. People with disabilities should be involved in all parts of society

All countries should:



- ask people with disabilities and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) what they think and use their ideas when making new laws and policies
- use what they say to help make the plans
- make sure people with disabilities have the right to take part in politics the same as everyone else.

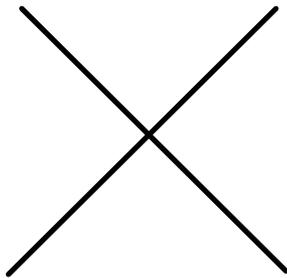




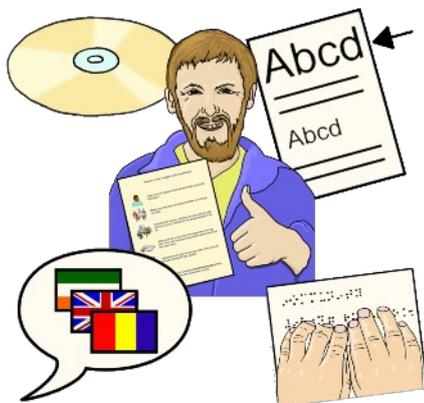
Human rights and war and conflict



There are agreements and laws about what Countries should do when there are very big problems like conflict or war. Sometimes the rights of people with disabilities have been included in agreements and laws.



But most of the time they have not.



When there are risky situations for everyone, for example if there is an explosion in a city. The CRPD says Countries must make sure that people with disabilities are protected:

- in a fair way
- in ways that are accessible.



The United Nations has other rules countries should follow when there are very big problems like war or conflict. One of these rules is the resolution 2475 of the United Nations Security Council of 2019.



The rules say that in war or conflict people with disabilities should be:

- protected
- helped
- asked for their ideas on how to make things better
- thought about and counted in reports.



The protection and help for people with disabilities:

- needs to happen in ways that are fair



- must be respectful of the rights of people with disabilities



- might be different for some people to make sure it is equal for everyone.



The United Nations has a plan called the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy.

The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy is sometimes called UNDIS.

UNDIS checks if the work of the United Nations:



- follows the CRPD



- thinks about people with disabilities in its work



- includes people with disabilities in planning how to fix problems.



There is already some good work done to include people with disabilities in the United Nations work to keep peace.

There is more to do.

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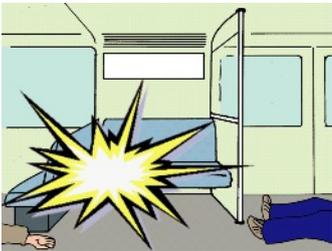


What can happen in war or conflict

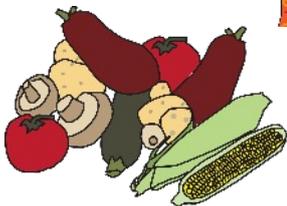


The way that Countries go to war has changed since World War 2.

- lots of people live close together in the city or other places
- places where lots of people live might be bombed or damaged by accident or on purpose.



When this happens, people have to leave their homes to try to find:



- safety
- food
- water
- medicines.





War and fighting are very bad for everyone.



For people with disabilities there can be a lot more problems.

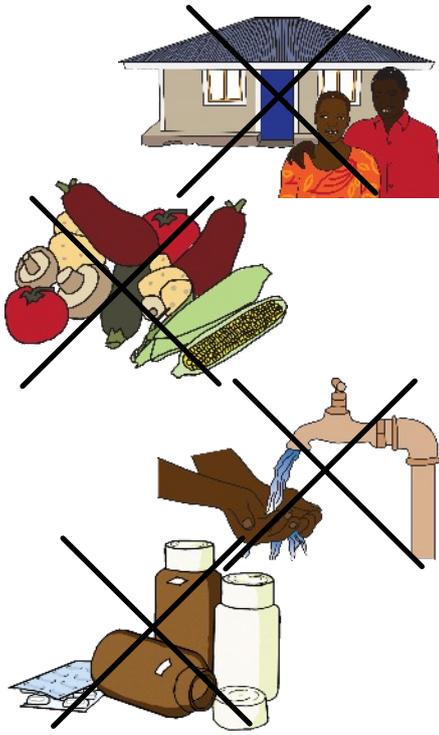
People are hurt when there is war and conflict:



- then more people have disabilities
- people with disabilities may lose some abilities
- more people need support.

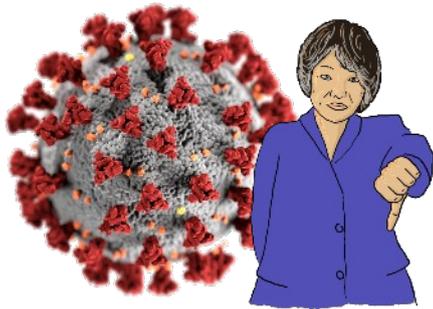


Many countries in the world have war and conflict.



Many people do not have:

- safe places to live
- enough food
- enough water
- the medicine they need.



COVID-19 has made these big problems much worse.



Some people with disabilities are treated more unfairly.

Countries agree that women and girls with disabilities are treated unfairly in lots of different ways:



- violence at home
- violence from caregivers
- **sexual violence**
- **forced marriage**
- **exploitation.**

When there is war and conflict problems can be much worse:



- for women and girls
- for people who are from rural or farm areas
- for people who are from small **ethnic groups**



- for people who live in institutions or social care homes



- for **refugees**.



The United Nations has other rules countries should follow when there are very big problems like war or conflict. One of these rules is the resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council of 2000. It is called **Women, Peace and Security**.



The rules say that women and women with disabilities should be:

- protected from violence



- helped when they are trying to build peace



- given different kinds of help if they need it



- protected in new laws
- asked for their ideas on what women need to make things better.

Finland uses the rules when they train people who help in emergencies and conflict. It tells how to help:



- women and girls
- people with disabilities
- other groups who might need more or different help.



This way of training people could be a good way to help people learn better ways to support people with disabilities during conflict.



How are the human rights people with disabilities thought about in war or conflict?

People with disabilities and the work to keep peace

We should:

- ask people with disabilities what they think about keeping people safe and stopping conflicts
- make use of what they say to help make plans.



We could use the Women, Peace and Security plan as an example to show how to include people with disabilities.

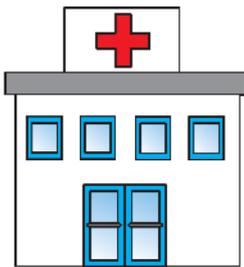


People with disabilities when there is war or conflict

There is an agreement called the **Geneva Convention**.

When there are very big problems like war or conflict the Geneva Convention says:

- everyday people should be protected from violence
- there should be no discrimination about protecting people
- hospitals should be protected in wars and conflict. This includes institutions where people with disabilities might live.



The Geneva Convention says people with disabilities should be protected.

But it uses old ways to say this.



For example, it says people who are very sick or hurt should be helped first. And this includes people with disabilities who are not sick. This is important and we will keep thinking about this.

First, we are most worried that people with disabilities haven't really been thought about much when there is war and conflict:



- there are no plans for the types of help people with disabilities might need



- there are no accessible warnings when there is danger coming



- getting to safety may be harder for people with disabilities



- safe places might not be accessible

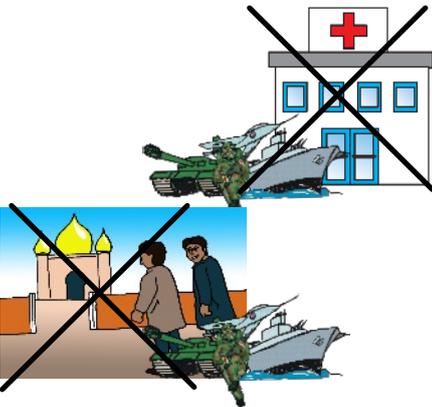


- safe places might not be able to look after people with disabilities properly



- having no medicines can be a big problem for some people with disabilities.

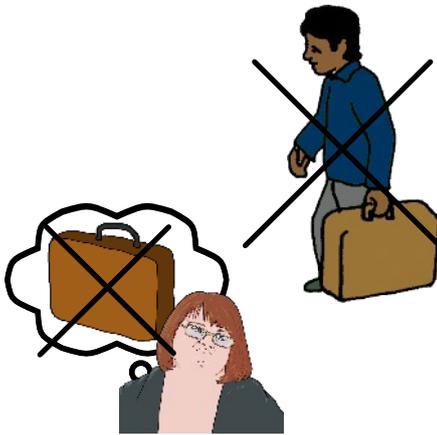
When there is conflict or war the agreements say bombs and fighting should:



- stay away from services that help people survive
- stay away from places where everyday people live and gather
- give warnings so people can try and get to safety.

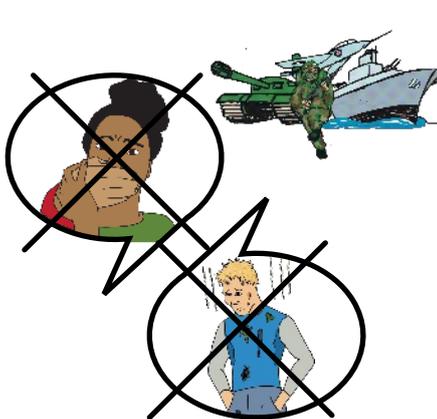


This is very important for people with disabilities. But it does not always help.



People with disabilities:

- might not be able to move away from risky places
- might not know they need to move away
- might need accessible information about the danger
- people who support them have left because of the conflict.



When people with disabilities are abused during war and conflict

Harm caused to people with disabilities during war and conflict has not been talked about. We need to change this.



The CRPD says Countries should make sure people with disabilities are properly protected when there are risky situations for everyone, like war or conflict.



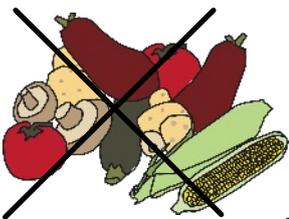
Countries need to:

- talk and make plans to properly protect people with disabilities
- check if people with disabilities have been harmed
- make sure if people with disabilities are **abused** that the abusers are taken to court.



People with disabilities and work to care for people

Humanitarian work is work caring for people when there are risky situations. For example:



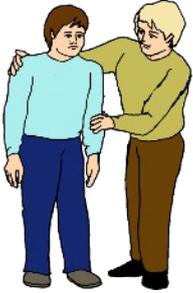
- when there is war and conflict
- when people don't have enough to eat or drink
- protecting refugees.





Sometimes people with disabilities have been included in planning humanitarian work:

- having a say about plans for many risky situations
- with specific ways to protect and support people with disabilities when there are emergencies.

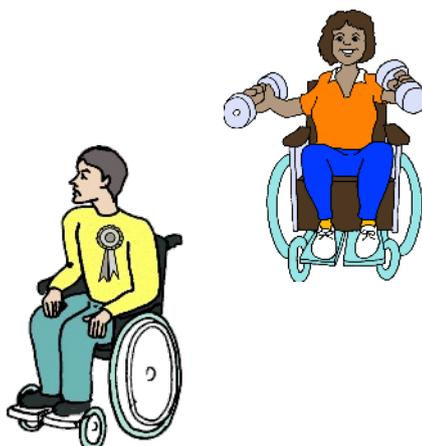


But this is not enough.



Supporting people who have a disability from fighting in the war or conflict

Sometimes people who have fought in wars and conflict can be injured and then have a disability.



This group of people with disabilities:

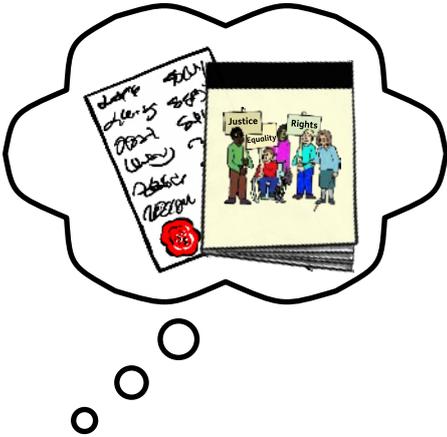
- have lots of strengths
- may need help to find a new place in society



- should have support to do new work
- may wish to be a part of keeping peace and making things better after conflict.



Important ideas to think about



1. We need to keep thinking about the CRPD at the same time as we use other agreements and programs for human rights.

2. We need to think about protecting people with disabilities in a new way.



People with disabilities:



- must be respected for who they are
- should be free and safe, the same as everyone else



- might need protection if they are in situations that are dangerous or unsafe



- need protection when there is war and conflicts, like everyone else.



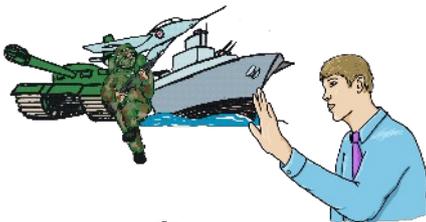
We should ask people with disabilities:

- what they think about their society
- think about what they say and use their ideas to help make the plans.

3. We should ask people with disabilities about what is right for people with disabilities when:



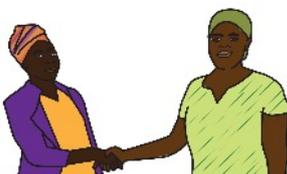
- there are very big problems like war and conflict



- trying to stop conflict or war happening



- trying to fix and make things better after war and conflict



- working to keep peace and stop conflict starting.



In doing this, we should use the CRPD to guide us.



We should:

- think about what they say
- use their ideas to help make plans
- use the CRPD to help our thinking



What should happen next?

Work to stop war or conflict happening



People with disabilities can be hurt and have much to lose if there is war or conflict.



People with disabilities and organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs) in different countries should work together to try help fix very big problems.

Any new work by the United Nations should:



- use words that are respectful of the rights of people with disabilities
- ask people with disabilities what they think about problems like war or conflict
- think about what they say and use their ideas to help making plans.

When war and conflict is happening

Countries need to:



- always think that about 15 in every 100 people living in every country has a disability



- have protections for people with disability when there is war and conflict.

Countries should:



- ask people with disabilities what they think about protections in war and conflict



- think about what they say and use their ideas to make new plans



- use the ideas to train people who fight in wars and conflicts.

Protecting human rights



International court:

- is a world court that makes decisions about disagreements between countries



- should check more carefully if people with disabilities are abused during wars or conflict.

Work to care for people

Some humanitarian work includes people with disabilities:

- in the ways it helps people
- in planning humanitarian work
- having a say.



This should keep going.

Supporting people who have a disability from fighting in the war or conflict



People who have disabilities from fighting:

- should be included in planning peace work
- should have help to get a new job and to be a part of their community. This is happening in some places and should happen more.

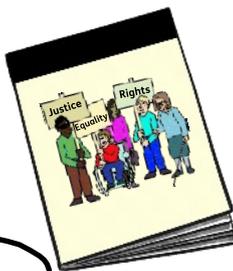


Work to keep peace



The United Nations work to keep peace must use the United Nations Disability Strategy. They must:

- check if the work follows the CRPD
- think about people with disabilities
- include people with disabilities and organizations of people with disability in planning how to fix problems.



New plans and agreements should:



- use words that are respectful of people with disabilities
- ask people with disabilities what they think about problems
- think about what they say and use their ideas when making new plans and agreements
- collect and use good information about people with disabilities to make plans.



Building peace

It is important and helpful to include people with disabilities and organizations of people with disabilities (OPDs) in building peace after war and conflict:



- being included is a human right
- people with disabilities can help everyone understand better about including all people





- people with disabilities can help everyone work together



- people with disabilities need to be included more.



What we need to keep learning

We need to learn to include people with disabilities better.

We need to support people with disabilities and organizations of people with disabilities (OPD) with trainings and learning opportunities, for example about:



- keeping peace and building peace
- war and conflict
- international laws and human rights.





Learning organizations like **Universities** should work with organizations of people with disabilities to make sure:

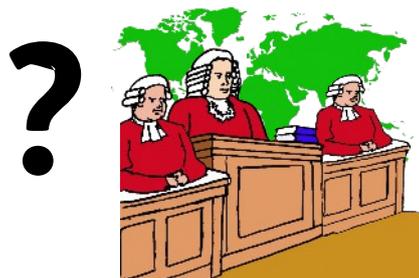
- people with disabilities are thought about and protected
- people with disabilities included in planning.

What we need to know more about

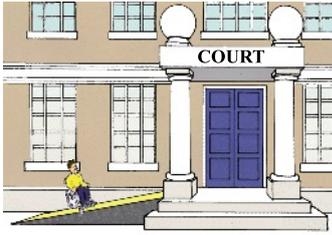
We need to know more about:



- what organizations of people with disabilities need to join in best?
- find out the best things to do to include and protect people with disabilities in war and conflict. Tell this to the people who train people who fight for their countries in wars and conflicts



- what is happening in international courts for people with disabilities?



- what are the best ways for the international courts to be accessible?
- what are the examples of people with disabilities doing peace building?
- use this information to show how people with disabilities can be included.



What the words mean

Abuse - when someone is hurt or scared on purpose.

Conflict - when groups of people or Countries don't agree about important things.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) - an agreement that sets out what Countries must do to make sure people with disabilities have the same rights as everybody else.

COVID-19 - a virus that can make people sick. It spreads easily from one person to another person. It is a virus that has affected many people around the world.

Ethnic groups - a group of people who have the same race.

Exploitation - when someone takes advantage of you.

Forced marriage - when someone is made to marry someone they don't want to. It can often happen to girls.

Human Rights - are the rights everyone should get.

Humanitarian work - work caring for people when there are risky situations.

International court - a world court that makes decisions about disagreements between Countries.

Organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) - are organizations that have an understanding of disability. Many of the people who work at the OPDs have a disability or have a family member with a disability. OPDs help people with disability have their say.

Peace is when Countries do not have any big conflicts for a time.

Refugees - people who have been made to leave their country because it was not safe to stay.

Sexual violence - when someone forces you to do something sexual without your agreement. Rape is sexual violence.

Special Rapporteur - a job with the UN in charge of a certain area of work about human rights.

United Nations - an organization that aims to keep peace between countries, get countries working together, and make sure people get their human rights.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities - a treaty or agreement that wants to protect the human rights of people with disabilities around the world. Countries that sign up to it are expected to do what the Convention says for people with disabilities in their country.

Universities - places where people learn. Most people who go to university have finished school.



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