RICHARD: Good morning or good afternoon everyone, and welcome to this Module 2 presentation, Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum Online Disability Equality Capacity Building course for 2021, and since we did, recorded the first Module I am pleased to say we had 428 of you who have signed up to do this course which is really good, from 41 Commonwealth countries. So that's a real mixture of people, larger in some countries, numbers, but we hope the message gets round of what we're doing here.

My name is Richard Rieser, I am the General Secretary of the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum and I will be introducing people. First of all our acting Chair Sarah Kamau who is from Kenya, then Prasanna Kuruppu who's on the Executive from Sri Lanka, Thandi Mufulo from who's the Vice‑Chair from South Africa and then Emile Gouws from South Africa who will each give a little bit on this. The Module we're looking at today is the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Sustainable Development Goals, and Their Impact on Disabled People's Human Rights. Very briefly what we will look at with that is the introduction from Sarah, about the language we use as well, then Prasanna will talk about human rights, really important, and the human rights framework. I will talk a little bit about how the UNCRPD came to be made and then Prasanna and myself will look at the UNCRPD and the impact on disabled people and how we use it. Then I will do I little bit about monitoring, then Thandiwe is going to give an example of how in South Africa they use the monitoring provisions, and then we'll end up on the Sustainable Development Goals. So now it's my great pleasure to introduce Sarah, to introduce this Module. Thank you.

SARAH: Thank you Richard. You can now move to the slide with the introduction. I want to introduce this Module 2, which builds on what we learnt in Module 1 about the socially created nature of disability which is different to our impairments. We need autonomy to organise self‑advocacy and come together to remove barriers in society that opposes and hold us back. Today we will learn about human rights, how this applies to us as disabled people, through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UNCRPD, and that all but four of our Commonwealth countries have ratified, what this means for us. Finally we will learn about the global commitment to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, how this links to our rights in the UNCRPD. The next ‑

RICHARD: Ok.

SARAH: I will also talk about the language that the Commonwealth Disabled People Forum use. For the sake of context for this course, we use the word 'disabled people'. Why we still choose to call ourselves disabled people in the Commonwealth Disabled People Forum? We call ourselves disabled people because of the development of the social model of disability. In the 19th and in the 20th century, a disabled person's medical condition was thought to be the root cause of their exclusion from society. An approach now referred to as the medical or individual model of disability. We use the social model of disability where the barriers of environment, attitude and organisation are what disable people with impairments, and lead to prejudice and discrimination, so to call ourselves 'persons with disabilities' is to accept that we are objects and powerless. We also view ourselves as united by a common oppression, so are proud to identify as disabled people rather than 'people with disabilities'. When we're talking about the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities we will use 'people or persons with disabilities'. Thank you.

RICHARD: Thank you Sarah. And now ‑ I am getting feedback. I would like to introduce Prasanna Kuruppu from Sri Lanka to talk about human rights so ok Prasanna off you go.

PRASANNA: Thank you Richard. I am Prasanna Kuruppu from Sri Lanka, CRPD Executive Officer representing the Asian region. In the previous session we have learned about disability, the charity and medical model, the paradigm shift to the social model and the human rights approach. Richard explain you earlier about the social model and the human rights model and the language we use at CDPF. In this section we discuss human rights, its characteristics and the human rights framework and how the evolution of human rights have influenced the UNCRPD. What are human rights? We know every human being is born free to the world. Human rights are basic rights and freedoms which belong to every person in the world from birth until death. They can never be taken away, only restricted in instances like breach of law or become threat to the interests of national security. These basic rights are based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. These values are defined and protected by laws and international treaties. Now we see the emergence of United Nations and the broader system of human rights. Human rights have a very long history. After the Second World War, considering the devastation and enormous damages caused to humanity and human lives, the world leaders have joined together and created the United Nations system to work together for the world peace and to guarantee the rights of every individual everywhere. Charter of the United Nations was signed 26th of June 1945 in San Francisco at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference of International Nations. Characteristics of human rights. Human rights are universal. Human rights apply to every person in the world regardless of their race, colour, sex, ethnic or social origin, region, language, nationality, age, sexual orientation, disability, or other status. They apply equally and without discrimination to each and every person. The only requirement for having human rights is to be a human. Human rights are inherent. The text of Article 1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, also known as UDHR, begins stating "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Therefore human rights are a natural part of who you are. Human rights are inalienable. Human rights cannot be given to people or taken away by the Government or anybody. Nobody can tell anybody that they do not have these rights. Even if your rights are violated, or you are prevented from claiming your human rights, you are still entitled to these rights. In short, human rights automatically belongs to each human being. Next slide please.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. World leaders decided to complement the UN Charter with a roadmap to guarantee the rights of every human everywhere. UDHR is a document that is considered taken up at the first session of the General Assembly 1946, it was adopted by the General Assembly on 10th December 1948. The rights identified in the UDHR comprises of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. All of them are interconnected and bound together. Next slide please.

To learn about the human rights framework, it is important for us to understand a few terms. A convention, also known as a treaty, is a written agreement between states. It is typically drafted by a working group appointed by the UN General Assembly. Once a convention is drafted it goes to UN General Assembly for ratification. By signing the convention it's making a commitment to follow the principles in the convention and to begin the ratification process, but the convention is not legally binding on a country until it's ratified. Ratification is a process that takes place in each country. The legislative body of the government take the necessary steps to officially accept the convention as part of its national legal structure. Once a country signs and ratifies the conventions, it becomes a State Party to the convention meaning it has a legal obligation to uphold the rights mentioned in the convention. Each convention must be ratified by a particular number of countries before it enters into force and becomes part of universal law. Accession. Reservations. When the convention becomes a part of the national law the signing process will be over, thereafter the states must follow the accession process which is the combination of signing and ratification together. Since 1945, the UN has developed several human rights conventions that elaborate on the human rights contained in the UDHR. 9 of these instruments are considered core human rights conventions. Two of these conventions are called covenants and address broad human rights issues. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ICCPR, and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ICESCR. The two covenants and the UDHR combined to create a trio of documents known as the International Bill of Rights. Additionally, 7 UN human rights conventions address thematic issues of a particular population. In this slide, you can see these main human rights conventions. It's really important for us to understand the timings of these conventions, as all of these treaties have emerged as a result of the geopolitical situation prevailing during such periods and the lobbying of various pressure groups and interested parties. For example the, ICCPR and ICESCR both covenants opened for signature in 1966 and took near 10 years to enter into force and become binding international law. On the other hand, the CERD in 1966, CEDAW in 1979, CAT in 1984, CRC in 1989 and CRPD in 2006 took less than four years to become international law. The CRC, rights of the child entered into force within a record nine months. Next slide. Who is responsible for human rights? Usually the government of the state is responsible for ensuring people's human rights. States must ensure that political and legal systems are structured to uphold human rights, through laws, policies, programmes and that they operate effectively. A few countries have used international conventions and treaties as their main source of state legal obligation with respect to human rights. Many countries have developed or amended national constitutions, Bill of Rights and legal frameworks specifically to reflect universal human rights standards according to international law. Governments have a legal obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. Those states have the official legal responsibility for respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights. Human rights are not their exclusive responsibility. Human rights are far more than legal requirements. They represent a moral code of conduct that is designed to promote understanding, equality, tolerance, fairness and many other features essential to just and peaceful societies. Regardless of what behaviours may or may not be legally enforceable, a variety of actors including individuals, groups and institutions within society also play important roles in the promotion and implementation of human rights. Individuals must know and understand their human rights in order to be able to claim them, defend them and hold themselves and other people, their governments and societies accountable for the [inaudible] that affect them. Social and cultural behaviour has a profound effect on the ability of people to enjoy their human rights. The collective actions of groups for families to entire societies play a role in human rights. For instance if parents decide that only the male children will be allowed to go to school, they are effectively preventing their female children from claiming their right to education. Members of society interact with the private sector every day especially in countries with free market economies, private sector actors including people and entities of every kind, employers, providers of goods and services, entertainers and builders of houses, banks and even government buildings. People depend on the private sector for many things. Such organisations and other private sector players must make their own commitment to ensure that their practices do not violate people's human rights but support and promote them. I think I have briefly covered two section, but as activists and advocates you will need to read and understand the evolution of human rights and reading the course book and references. Thank you, Richard.

RICHARD: Ok. I am now going to ... yeah, I am going to now talk about how the UNCRPD came to be made, and I will, can you blank yourself please Prasanna, your video. Yeah, thank you. I am going to talk about how we came to make the UN Convention. Now I was lucky enough to be as someone there representing the UK disability movement, but we have to go back quite a long way sort of 20, 22, 24 years before we even started making the Convention to understand how it came to be made. When the UNCRPD was, before it was made, we had many years of the UN Declaration on Human Rights we had these other treaties that have been talked about and although there were occasional mentions about disability, there was no real addressing of the issue of disabled people. In fact when people asked about this, they said 'well prove that you are affected in a systematic way, with discrimination and unfair treatment before we will consider', said the diplomats at the UN and from around the world. Now they did start by declaring an International Year of the Disabled, unfortunate language, we don't like to be known as 'the disabled', followed by the decade, to raise awareness and out of that came the standard rules on equalisation, which was a non‑enforceable attempt which about 90 countries signed up to, to try and equalise things for disabled people in all areas of life.

Some areas, particularly the Nordic countries and some European countries, and Canada, and a few other places took this very seriously, but a lot of place did not and not much changed. So disabled people really began to think at the beginning of the 90s, we need to do more and began to gather information to establish widespread human rights abuses and organisations were set up to do that, and one that was based in London supported by Disabled People International gathered 2.5 million examples of human rights abuses around the world and catalogued those and put them forward.

At the same time, the disability movement in Latin America and Mexico and Ecuador was pushing their governments and there was an openness to take this forward. So at the General Assembly on the 2001 Mexico moved and Ecuador seconded, that there be a work on setting up a treaty and an ad hoc committee was set up that met eight times over the next five years, and what was important about that after the first couple of meeting it become clear that the diplomats themselves didn't really have the answers. So they invited more and more disabled people's organisations, NGOs, to take part, in fact up to 900 were registered towards the end. Rather than all speaking with different voices, different views, it was agreed that there would be set up an International Disability Caucus that would meet and it met every day while the ad hoc committee was in session, morning and evening, to work out what they were going to put forward on each Article, and as a result the treaty was made by consensus but it was a consensus that disabled people played a great deal in. There was formal and informal sessions. In the informal sessions the, sorry, only the countries could speak but in the formal sessions all those who were registered could speak. So it was possible with leaflets that the IDC put in, to actually sway things. By the end of the last session in 2006 there were 118 countries. Now Don McKay who was the New Zealand Chair after Mr Galios, who was the first Chair of this, said, look there are so many amendments coming forward, if you don't sort is out by consensus we will not be able to get there and eventually it was sorted out right at the last minute actually, and he'd said if you don't sort it out this week I am leaving this job and it's going to be in the long grass for 10 years, so very luckily we got that consensus.

Now, the call went out quite early for governments to have disabled people on their state delegations and a lot of countries brought them on to the state delegations, as well as them being there from their own NGOs and DPOs. James Mwanda, for instance, who was a Parliamentarian from Uganda and was the founder of the Commonwealth Disabled People Forum, was one such and there were a number of others. Out of that impetus came the next year to say we need to have an organisation across Commonwealth. That's how we came into being, you can check that out on our website. The convention then when it was made was adopted by the General Assembly in 2006. Adopted by 82 countries by the 30th of 2007 and in 2008 it become active around the world. Now we have 182 countries and 94 have signed the Optional Protocol, which we'll explain in a minute. Now the purpose of the... who are disabled people? Well it didn't give a specific definition. So it says in three places who we're talking about. The purpose of the present convention is to promote protect and ensure all equal, all rights in human enjoyment of all human fundamental freedoms for all people with disabilities and promote respect for their inherent dignity. Then a second paragraph in the purpose says at the bottom there, "Persons with disabilities include those who have long‑term", so it's a long‑term, "physical, mental intellectual or sensory impairment, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Impairment is a loss of function. Then it says in the preamble, a similar sort of definition, 'Recognising that disability is an evolving concept", so for instance neurodiversity has become much more important since the Convention was made, psychosocial is a term that's been used that is not mentioned in the Convention to cover people with mental issues and learning difficulties, but it's evolving. "That disability results from this interaction of persons with impairments and the attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation." This is very important because the paradigm shift we talked about in the last presentation, is in the core of this definition.

The General Principles then go on to respect what came out of this in line with other treaties, so the inherent dignity, individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons, which for many millions of people had not had any choice. Choices had been made for them, they had been locked away in institution's or locked away in their parents' house or their relatives' house, and there was no independence for disabled people. That is all meant to change because of these principles. There was not meant to be discrimination, yet we'd shown there was discrimination all round the world.

Full and effective participation and particularly Article 4.3 and 33 say that DPOs, disabled people organisations, need to be involved at all levels in society.

Respect for the difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity. So there's nobody who is not included here and having these rights.

Equal opportunities for all. Accessibility. This really is the first treaty, that was a slight mention in one or up to of the others, but there was no elevation to what we have got now, a human rights principle of accessibility. Then equality between men and women, and the evolving capacity of children and these last two are dealt with in Article 6 and 7 but also woven through as accessibility is throughout the treaty, what we call a twin‑track approach. I will now pass over to Prasanna again who will take us through Article 4 and 5. Thank you.

PRASANNA: Ok I will start the video.

RICHARD: Can you put your camera on please Prasanna?

PRASANNA: I can't start the video.

RICHARD: All right, do you want to talk then, talk your way through it.

PRASANNA: Right ok. Thank you, Richard. Richard mentioned earlier about the purpose of the Convention. Similarly before we go into Article 4, I want to mention the definitions in Article 2. The communication means the ways to help disabled people to talk and understand information for example, computers, and Braille. Similarly the language, the dissemination on the basis of disability, the reasonable accommodation [inaudible]. These terms are very important for us to understand, the Article 4 and all the articles in the Convention. The Article 4 is the general obligation. In the human rights section, we learn that states have a legal obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. In the UNCRPD Article 4 under general obligations, it states the obligation of respective governments in implementing this Convention. Article 4.1, all countries should make sure that disabled people actually do get treated equally without discrimination. Under this Article 1, there are couple of other sections for example, to do this the states should under a), making laws, rules and regulation to give disabled people their rights, and take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures. Under Article 4 (a) ‑ under article 4 (b) it says making sure to amend or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and principles that discriminate disabled people. And Article 4.1(c), making sure that disability perspective and their rights are included in all Government policies and programmes. Article 4.1(d), refrain from doing thing that act against this Convention and make sure state and its authorities work in compliance with this Convention. Article 4.1(e), make sure no‑one discriminate on the basis of disability. Next slide please.

Article 4.1(f), making sure to promote research and develop universally designed goods, services, equipment and facilities to be used by disabled persons in a cost‑effective manner and development of national standards and guidelines. Article 4.1(g), using new technology to help disabled people, including information communication technology, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies. 4.1(h), giving accessible information to disabled people about communications, technologies, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies. Article 4.1(i), the training people, professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities and their rights mentioned in the Convention, so these are the component parts of the Article 4.1. So Article 4.2. Next slide please.

It says all countries promise to do so as much as they can afford, to make sure disabled people have equal access to things like housing, education and healthcare. This is by way of resource mobilising in order for progress and realisation of these Conventions. So unlike other treaties the UNCRPD has a really interesting word called 'progress of realisation'. The countries can start doing programmes for disabled people with whatever resources they have, and make sure that the progress will realise in time to come. So we can use this Article 4.2 as one of the tools for governments to plan out activities, at least to help programmes to be reached by 2030. 4.3, all countries should involve disabled people in making new laws and policies and get their active participation in decision making process. Many countries, especially in the western countries and developed countries they use this, but unfortunately it's very difficult, most of the countries in the developing and third world measures to get into this process. So in countries like Sri Lanka we're trying our level best to get involved in the decision-making process. Next slide please.

Article 5 is about equality and non‑discrimination. To read this Article 5, I think we have to go back and look at Article 2, the definition of discrimination on the basis of disability. It says, be treated unfairly or not getting the changes you need because of you are disabled. So the discrimination on the basis of disability is defined in Article 2. Countries agreed that everyone is equal under the law, and that discrimination against disabled people will not be allowed. No‑one will be discriminated against. This is what we Article 5, with Article 5 that countries have agreed. So in the Article 5 we have to read Article 5 with Article 3(e), everyone should have equal opportunities. Equal opportunities is closely linked to non‑discrimination. It refers to a situation where society and environment are made available to all including persons with disabilities. Equality of opportunity does not always mean that the exact same opportunities are made available or, as treating everyone the same might be [inaudible] inequalities. Rather it's recognised differences between people and ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to enjoy rights.

Article 3 General Principles, 3(b) is non‑discrimination. These are fundamental principles of human rights treaties on the basis of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It essentially prohibits discrimination anyone against on the basis of disability, given that discrimination prevents people enjoying their rights on an equal basis with others. However, today non‑discrimination is understood as a much broader principle within the process, not only prohibiting the discrimination act but also taking steps to protect against potential future discrimination, hidden discrimination and promoting equality. So countries, in the Article 5, it says, Article 5.1 persons are equal before the law and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination the equal protection and equal benefit of the law. 2 says, prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities, equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.

Third one says, reasonable accommodation, appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided. Article, 5.4 says specific measures which are essential necessary to accelerate or achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities shall not be considered discrimination under the terms of the present Convention. So coming from the Asian region, we face many discriminations, and we face many inequalities. So therefore the convention when in agreement with Convention it's very important for us to look at this Article 5, all these Articles are very important for the wellbeing of disabled people. Over to you Richard.

RICHARD: Thank you Prasanna. I am now going to look at the general principles of accessibility ‑ can you switch off your sound please, yep thank you. So accessibility as I said when we were running through the General Principles, is a principle, it's important as a means to empower, for empowerment and inclusion both as a General Principle but also a standalone Article, so there was a whole article which goes into detail in Article 9, which is certainly worth looking at. Identifies the different areas of the environment, but also the communication, the internet, and then the infrastructure, all sorts of parts of that need to be addressed. But then it's also, we have this twin‑track approach, so access must be ensured to justice, in access to the Court system for disabled people, to be able to go to the courts, to be able to get legal aid so they can take a case and so on. To be represented sympathetically barristers and solicitor, advocates. In Article 19 to live independently. We can't live independently if the housing we want to live in is not accessible to us, so that has to come in there. In services we want to use, there's a big emphasis on information and communication. So things like the Marrakesh Treaty on Copyright would come in there and so on. On Article 24 on education, which has now being defined as inclusive education, under General Comment No 4, which is made by the CRPD committee. Access to the school system in terms of Braille, sign language, alternative augmented education systems. Communication systems being available and a curriculum that is accessible and the teaching to be accessible. As well as the school building stock physically and sensorily being accessible. Similarly, access to the health system in all aspects and habilitation, rehabilitation; very important for us to get the aids and appliances we need, prostheses and other things so we can function in the environment. It's very important for there being no barriers for people to get to that, and most importantly in Article 27, access to education ‑ to work, as well as then adequate standard of living so you see it goes right the way through.

We find this in the structure apart from the first 5, which are really the principles which we have gone through, overarching women and children. 8 is awareness raising, this really important it's important for DPO organisations to be actually developing this training, the sort of training we're doing here, not just for disabled people, but for all people in society so that they are aware of the paradigm shift and what they need to do in order to link with the law. The Government needs to provide advertising, needs to challenge broadcasters to be much more accessible. The right to life is a fairly fundamental one. Humanitarian situations. Equal recognition before the law which we will be looking at more in Module 3, it's really important, particularly for people with mental health issues, psychosocial, access to justice for everybody, liberty, security, freedom from torture, freedom from exploitation and violence, protection and integrity of the person. Those 12 to 17 really are legal rights that are there for everybody. Then movement, and of course many countries have reservations on that because of the current fear of migration in many places but nevertheless we should be treated equally there. Living in the community, I have talked about, personal mobility and so on so this structure, and then Article 30, culture and participation. 31 requires governments to disaggregate statistics and collect them, and there's a lot of work on that we will be looking at that later on in another module. International co‑operation. Getting funding from bilateral and unilateral funders to help with these aids and unifying all the different organisation, NGO's, charities who are working with countries so they work in a co‑ordinated way with the government. Too often, governments say well, these international NGOs will do it, no they have a responsibly themselves, and that's why we need national and international monitoring, and the mechanisms of that are there, as well as the Convention. Now, the last thing I want to talk about at this point is the Optional Protocol, which is really important for individual rights. 94 countries have signed this as well, which means if you have exhausted the legal procedures in your country, you can take your individual complaint, or enquiries into the processes and procedures that the state is using, under the Optional Protocol to the UNCRPD Committee which is elected mainly disabled people, elected over a two‑year and then another two‑year cycle, by the State Parties that have signed this, and they will investigate the complaint and publish it. So that's the structure we have.

Now, the monitoring and compliance. It's very important that governments, when they ratify the treaty, that they set up a procedure within their country with a focal point in government that anybody who wants to know what they are doing to implement the Convention can contact a co‑ordination mechanism with the government and other partners, human rights organisation, the DPOs and NGOs and then there must be an independent mechanism as well which is usually human rights organisations operating under the Paris Principles which means that they are maybe paid for by Government but they are free to operate and not having a gun held to their head by the Government. DPOs need to ensure these mechanisms are set up and that they are fully involved, and this UNCRPD Committee which as I said is elected every two years, half of it by the Committee, which meets in New York every year, the UN Convention of State Parties, that's the 182 countries that have ratified, and they elect it and then it's worth looking at the website of the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights, CRPD Committee. If you put that in a search engine you will find all the documents and all the reports on every country. They review every country who, under Article 35 after two years of signing, has got to put an initial report and then every four years. They draw up the questions that need to be asked and we, as DPOs, can influence the questions that are asked, by submitting Shadow Reports and Shadow Questions and we can even go, and a number of our DPOs have gone to Geneva when the Committee is there, to ask questions directly. So the mechanism is seen here really. The focal point in the Government, a national co‑ordinating interministerial, which DPOs and civil society must involve in, enforcing the minimum standards that are the obligations that are in the Convention. Obligation to report to the Committee and then international co‑operation, all of that. I would now like to ask Thandi Mufulo from South Africa, our Vice‑Chair, to tell us about this perspective in South Africa. Thandiwe.

THANDIWE: Thank you Richard. Can you hear me people?

RICHARD: Yes, we can hear you, it looks like we have lost your picture but talk us through, can you see the slides? Ok, good off you go.

THANDIWE: May I put my video off because when I cannot hear when people are speaking or should I just continue as it is, can you hear me?

RICHARD: Put your video off and keep talking, as long as you have got your microphone on, we can go. Ok?

THANDIWE: Thank you so much.

RICHARD: Off you go.

THANDIWE: From the South African perspective, you know in our constitution, South African Constitution Chapter 2 and Section 9 of the Bill of Rights, guarantees the rights to equality. Specifically that is relevant for disability. And section 9.1 guarantees the right to equality before the law and equal protection and benefit of the law. We have got legislation and policy that have comprehensive, we don't have a comprehensive disability legislation, but we have got policies that deals and all the legislation that are there in various aspects, that deals with disability issues in a general, for each and every policy that is there we have got general input around disability issues. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it explains in their General Comment No 3 that the States Parties must also ensure that third parties do not violate the rights of women with disabilities. And in addition to this international human rights obligation, South Africa is a State Party to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and its protocol on the right of women in Africa, especially it's called the Maputo Protocol. Then when it comes to the Shadow Report that was done on the 31st of July 2018, the submission focuses on the rights violation that is disproportionately or uniquely affecting women with disabilities in South Africa. It also focuses on promotion on gender equality for women, girls with disabilities. And Article 8 of that is recognised of the CRPD on awareness raising. It's talking about, it's awareness raising round that is Article 8, also Article 5, 7, 9 and 31, they are also applicable to that. When it comes to gender‑based violence, it constitutes one of the most pernicious manifestations of intersectional discrimination. Women in South Africa face a very high‑risk of gender‑based violence, especially women with disabilities, but women with mental disabilities are even at a greater risk of such violence, particularly sexual violence. South African women with disabilities, particularly black women, women in rural areas, women with intellectual or psychosocial disability, are regularly discriminated against and they are always denied access to justice or essential supports and services.

Furthermore, women with disabilities face a very unique form of discrimination in healthcare. I will make an example, when it comes to sexual and reproductive health information and services, finding these services are unavailable, unaffordable, inaccessible, and they are also discriminatory towards women with disabilities. Next slide please.

Then when it comes to the UNCRPD monitoring, reporting and compliance, the promotion of gender equality for women and girls with disability it's also recognised in Article 8 of the CRPD on awareness raising, I said it before. This submission concludes with recommendations to the CRPD Committee to take into account during its review, when they conclude their observation to South Africa. The CRPD committee explain in a General Comment to say, I am still repeating this one of the State Parties must ensure that third parties do not violates the rights of women. Those are the monitor of women with disabilities. This submission focus on the rights violation that disproportionately or uniquely affect women in South Africa. There are list of relations to the initial of this report of South Africa. In addition to this international human rights obligation, South Africa is a State Party to the human rights and the charter and the rights of women in Africa. Actions that is needed. The Convention's lack of implementation is a factor and urgent action is needed. The Convention lacks that, the implementation side of it. Human rights‑based approach to disability needs to be taken by the governments of the Commonwealth and needs to help shape a better understanding about disabled people. Because we realise that this Commonwealth Government, they sign all these protocols but when it comes to doing, making sure that they are implementing it neither here nor there. The Commonwealth Disabled People Forum also, they aim to push to erase and eliminate such stereotypes of Commonwealth countries to bring the desired changes. Those are the actions that is needed. Thank you so much.

RICHARD: Thank you Thandiwe. So next I want Emile Gouws who is a member of the Commonwealth disabled people's forum executive and represent the neurodiverse community people, autistic people. Emile. Going to talk about Sustainable Development Goals and the impact on his community. Go.

EMILE: Thank you Richard. Thank you for this major opportunity that you provided me to speak. The Agenda 2030 has provided the platform through which the global disability movement could influence sustainable development. We adopted the pledge 'leave no‑one behind', and made our presence felt at the higher-level political forum over recent years. We remain committed to ensure that Sustainable Development Goals are reached. The previous Millennium Development Goals from 1990 to 2015 did not mention disabled people nor disability, nor were these goals achieved. So after a wide global consultation exercise with a wide range of stakeholders, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals were adopted with the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Most importantly, of the 169 targets, seven explicitly mentions persons with disabilities. By utilising the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is used as a guided framework in implementing the SDGs, to ensure inclusion. Next slide please.

As you can see on your screen, this is just a graph to show you how far we came to ensure that inclusion occurs and also to ensure that the UN, the 2030 Agenda as well as 17 Sustainable Development Goals are reached with the purpose to leave no‑one behind, and to ensure that the UNCRPD, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are utilised. Next slide please.

So what are the links between disability, human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals? This can be interpreted through the lens of the UNCRPD. I do not want to mention all of them, because it's in your course pack, but I want to elaborate on 5 which has an impact on the autistic community and also referring to myself as autistic individual. The goals are, Article 5, that promotes equality of opportunity and non‑discrimination of persons with disabilities. The next article, Article 9, to ensure that there's accessibility and that governments take action to ensure that persons with disabilities have got the right to independent living and to participate in all aspects of life. The next article, Article 11, with reference to those in vulnerable situations, this includes the right to be protected in a situation at risk, natural disasters and humanitarian situations like we are currently experiencing now with the COVID‑19 pandemic. Next slide please. Oh sorry, the CRPD Article 31, SDGs must be monitored through disability disaggregated data, and the next article, the next article, Article 32 that follows up on Article 31, which ensures that development of countries relate to other international countries in co‑operation and partnership to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in all aspects of society.

Now referring to autistic community, we remain part of the marginalised group. We experience challenges on cognitive, emotional and social level. It's very important that individuals on the autism spectrum need a secure and structured environment, because if not we can socially regress and this leads to frustration and heightened anxiety levels. The following SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals that I took, has got the influence of the autistic community and personally has got influence on my personal life. I just want to read the following SDGs. For instance the first one, SDG10, we want to ensure, we want to ensure that individuals on the autism spectrum are full participants in society and we want to reduce inequality. Number 2, the SDG number 3, accessible and good healthcare. The SDG4 is very important because this ensures that individuals on the autism spectrum has got the right to participate in education system, free from discrimination and victimisation. SDG No 9 is to ensure that individuals on the autism spectrum have got the right to ensure they are accessible in public transport, because the majority of the autistic individuals are dependent on public transport to go to work. SDG No 9, No 8, ensures that individuals on the autistic spectrum have got the right to participate in decent work and also a workplace that's safe and ensure that there is equal economic growth, and last but not least SDG No 11 ensures this accessible services as well as the cities are inclusive to ensure that individuals on the autism spectrum are full participants in a society. Thank you.