

Annex 1 - Reflections from the Advisory Group of Persons with Disabilities and Disabled People's Organisations

The Advisory Group welcomes the Commonwealth Disability Action Plan and calls on Law Ministers to support it and to commend it to Heads of Government for endorsement and for Heads of Government to redouble their efforts to fully implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. To this end it would be very useful to now expedite *“the establishment of a High-Level Advisory Group of Persons with Disabilities together with representatives of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities from across the Commonwealth, to effectively support member states, in advancing the rights of people with disabilities”* (para 6, 2024 CHOGM communique). In addition, ways must be found to bring Commonwealth Ministers with responsibility for implementation of the UNCRPD together with representative Disabled People's Organisations to collaborate and learn from each other.

We feel strongly that there should have been more face to face meetings between the Advisory Group and the EWG, especially in the period from January to March 2026, when Professor Lawson-a disabled person and expert in disability jurisprudence-was no longer employed as consultant. We had meetings with the new joint chair from New Zealand, but think that more of the issues which were settled in consensus described in the report, which in practice were the lowest common denominator and not in line with text and spirit of the UNCRPD. We are also of the view that more credit should be given to the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum as the originators of the idea of DIAP and the producers of the first draft. This said, the Advisory Group welcomes the progress made and look forward to the greater involvement of disabled people's Organisations in all levels of Commonwealth deliberations, for as it says in the finalised DIAP 'Nothing Without Us' meaning we need to be involved in the whole range of Commonwealth discussions on every topic.