

Mr David Maria Sassoli
President of the European Parliament

Brussels, 31st August 2021

SUBJECT: Partnership of the European Parliament in the #WeThe15 campaign

Honourable President,

Following the 2020 Summer Olympic Games, Tokyo currently hosts the 2020 Summer Paralympics that bring together more than 4500 athletes from 163 countries competing in 22 sports. The 539 events that will take place until 5th September will shine a light on astonishing amount of talent and hard work, excellence and determination, which too often remain invisible due to the persistent discrimination experienced by more than 1.2 billion persons with disabilities around the world. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected persons with disabilities and has further impeded the progress in the implementation of their rights and social inclusion.

The persistence of discrimination that stands in the way of inclusive society and the recent setbacks are the main drivers of the #WeThe15 movement that has been officially launched at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics. This global campaign represents 1.2 billion persons with disabilities (15% of the world's population), including 87 million persons with disabilities in the EU. The goal of the movement is to forge a global partnership for disability visibility, inclusion and accessibility for the next decade, resulting in a visible and active membership of persons with disabilities in an inclusive society.

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, firmly believe that the European Parliament, as a strong advocate of human rights of persons with disabilities and non-discrimination, should step up its efforts in guaranteeing rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the EU and at the global level. The goals and the objectives of the #WeThe15 campaign are fully aligned with the recent resolutions of the European Parliament and with the fundamental values of our Union.

We therefore call on you, Honourable President, to take all the necessary steps for the formal partnership of the European Parliament in the #WeThe15 global campaign. Such a partnership is a responsibility deriving from the democratic representation of millions of persons with disabilities living in the EU, as well as the necessary commitment to adopt policies and measures that support equal treatment of persons with disabilities in an inclusive society.

Sincerely,

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