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RI World Congress

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Plenary 1 - Education and Training

Good morning, everyone. Good morning, everyone I would be grateful if you could start to take your seats so that we can get under way and at least start on time. Welcome to you all from 65 different countries we have represented here today, 1,000 people, two hundred people speaking - it's going to be a massive event. We've got a lot of work to do to come together, share our ideas, and come away with thoughts and actions to actually implement the changes that promote the inclusion of disabled people. This is the opening plenary session on education and training, and we are going to move on to that shortly. I'm going to leave you in Dana's capable hands. Dana Roth will be facilitating that session with colleagues shortly. I have to leave to meet our VIP guests who are going to be coming into the main hall here at 12 o'clock, in about 90 minutes' time. In that time, we will be in the middle of a question-and-answer session, and it is likely that, at that time, we might have to interrupt the last question because of the scheduling of the process of the opening ceremony which kicks off at 12. If I'm rude and interrupt you, do forgive me at that stage - there are reasons behind it. Before I hand over to Dana, I thought we would get you awake with some music, and a drumroll, and a little bit of fun.

[APPLAUSE]

DR DANA ROTH: Good morning, everyone. It gives me great pleasure to be the - first I would like to introduce my co-chair, Mr. Haq from Kuwait. Education and training and learning are significant domain in all quality of life models and measures. The UNCRPD, the United Nations convention on rights of people with disabilities, Article 24, focuses on education, emphasising the right to people with disabilities to education. It views this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity which ensures an inclusive education system at all levels, and lifelong learning opportunities. It should be assured that persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of their disability, that if they access inclusive equal education, on an equal basis with others they live. This implies that governing parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general education, vocational training, adult education, and lifelong learning, and shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided. The plenary session will address whether if and how the above principles are

being implemented. The four speakers will present the three keys: policy, practice, and personal. Each speaker will have 15 minutes, and I will have the unpleasant role of making sure they don't go beyond 15 minutes, and ... our first speaker today will be David Ruebain. He's chief executive of the Equality Challenge Unit, a policy and research agency funded to advance equality and diversity in universities in UK and England. Mr. Ruebain's presentation is entitled "Tackling the underrepresentation of disabled staff and students in universities and colleges". The floor is yours, Mr. Ruebain.

[APPLAUSE]

DAVID RUEBAIN: Good morning, everyone. I don't think I've ever spoken to so many people at one time. It's a real honour and privilege to be here today, and I'm very much looking forward to hearing the other speakers, not only in this session this morning, but also the other sessions today, and also your own thoughts and views, and I think that we - there will be an opportunity for questions and comments, and I'm very much looking forward to that, particularly there are given representatives here from all over the world, and there is a real opportunity, I think, to understand the particularities and the perspectives of inclusion for disabled people around the world. I'm going to talk to you about under-representation of disabled staff in universities and colleges, and students. My organisation, if I may, I will say a little bit about us. The Equality Challenge Unit, we're the university sector's equality and diversity policy and research agency. We work mainly in the United Kingdom with universities, and also colleges, but, increasingly, in other countries as well. We undertake research, and we develop programmes to address under-representation and disadvantage. We do this through a range of tools, research information, and guidance, good practice. We hold events and seminars and conferences. We run two charters, which are long-term systemic change programmes. We have an advice line, newsletters. We provide training, consultancy, and so on. I should say that, by background, I'm a lawyer. I like to say that I'm a recovering lawyer! Certainly, most of my professional life and indeed my life as an activist, was as a litigator suing people, and mis-suing people, because it is great fun, but there we are. It is another way of trying to achieve similar outcomes. So, we undertook some research called "articulating the Russian" - some isn't on our website, but that one is. It was an attempt at getting some quantitative research to understand why university leaders think that diversity is important. In some respects, the answers they gave me are fairly obvious, one might think. Fair treatment is considered to be important. Universities, for those of you who don't work in universities, or who aren't familiar with universities, they're very interesting organisations. Some of them are like mini cities, and there is a strength in them in that they value ideas and progressive thinking, about it doesn't always translate into good practice. There is much work to be done in universities around equality and diversity, and this research tried to pinpoint why some universities were doing better than others, so fair treatment was considered important. The idea of attracting the best talent domestically and globally was considered important. Britain is a major destination for staff and

students from around the world - our universities are. None of us really knows what is going to happen in the light of the Brexit decision, but hopefully that will remain for at least some extent. It is important in attracting diverse people that universities remain open and accessible for all. Increasing staff satisfaction and engagement was seen as a key driver for diversity, and diversity of thinking: there is quite a lot of research, particularly that has come out of the US and the financial services sectors, interestingly, which shows that diverse organisations do better. Or, if you want to slip it over, non-diverse organisations or homogenous organisations do worse. I think that's especially true of universities and colleges whose business is really about ideas. For students, there has been and is in the United Kingdom, and I'm sure in many other countries, to widen access and increase participation. When I went to university when I was younger, which was about 427 years ago, I think only eight or ten per cent of young people went to university. Now it's pretty much approaching 40%, which is excellent. The problem, however, is, in order to widen access to ensure that universities are accessible and can be successful for all, we need to - universities need to change their practices, and that's partly about inclusion for disabled people as well. Particularly for those with diverse impairments, so, widening access means releasing potential. Again, attracting students from owl over the world is a big driver for diversity; increasing satisfaction of students in their university experience is key, and modernising the delivery of the curriculum is important. There are now many, many ways of teaching and learning. It's not just about lots of people sitting in front of a lecturer in one big room, although that remains one of the medium. So, doing that with diverse students and staff in mind, is key to success. We produce an annual statistical analysis of the demographics of the UK higher education sector. So, who studies and works at university by identity, not just by disability, but by age, gender, race - which is about ethnicity and heritage, and colour - by sexual orientation, religion and belief, and transgender status, and of course disability as well, although, increasingly, I think, because disability is such a heterogeneous identity, in order really to understand the nature of exclusion and disadvantage, we need to think about and study and understand the issues facing people with particular types of impairment, because somebody who was born blind, for example, as you will all know, will have had a completely different life experience than somebody who acquires an impairment, maybe at the age of 50, for example, if they have an accident, or they unfortunately get cancer. It's not enough just to think about disability as a homogeneous identity. To really understand the experience of under-representation or exclusion, we need to think in sophisticated details. The starting point of understanding exclusion is disclosure. Not all disabled people identify as disabled for lots of historical reasons to do with oppression. Encouraging disclosure of disability is always a starting point for knowing what to do next. Our data shows that disclosure among disabled staff that is increased, so, I think in 2014, disclosure has increased to 4.8 per cent for professional and support staff, and 3.7 per cent for academic staff, but that's way below what you would expect according to what we think are the numbers of disabled people in society. It's way

better. It's very hard to count disabled people, but it's between 12 and 18 per cent in the UK. You can see already that there is an underrepresentation of disabled people in the universities in Britain. Amongst students, disclosure rates are much higher, and we think that is because disclosing as a disabled person often allows you then to access additional support services, and so there is more of an encouragement or incentive, if you like, to disclose. For some impairment groups, like wheelchair users, for example, there is almost 100% disclosure, of course, because it is very difficult to hide that impairment. For other impairment groups, particularly those with specific learning difficulties, like dyslexia and dyspraxia, or neurodiverse conditions like autism or Asperger's syndrome or mental health conditions, disclosure rates are low still, and we need to encourage more disclosure. So, to support disabled staff, there is a range of initiatives that we encourage universities to put in place. A lower proportion of disabled academics are on senior academic contracts compared to non-disabled academics, and that's a problem; in other words, there's an under-representation of disabled people in senior levels in universities, and more needs to be done about that. I'm going to move fairly quickly because of time, and we may be able to pick up some of these in the discussion. Amongst disabled students, disabled students are less likely to get a good degree, a first degree, and a good degree in the UK means a First or a 2:1. They're less likely to get the good degree than non-disabled students, although, if they've been in receipt of disabled students' allowance, which is a particular government benefit which unfortunately is being withdrawn at the moment, if they're in receipt of that, they're more likely to get a good degree, so we know that additional support and help makes a difference to success, and that's a critical issue for the success of disabled students at universities. We're actually doing some work at ECU to try to support universities in providing more support for disabled students, particularly in light of the withdrawal of this government benefit that I mentioned. Also relating to disabled students, they are more likely to be unemployed six months after graduating than non-disabled students. That probably doesn't surprise us, given the level of exclusion that remains in society, but that's not true for all impairment groups, so, again, it's not enough just to think about disability as a homogeneous identity; we have to understand the experiences of people with particular impairment groups. So, what can we do next, just to finish off? More work, more encouragement around changing the physical environment, processes, and also overcoming negative stereotypes, and unconscious attitudes, and some of the work that we are doing at ECU is around subject disciplined changes, because what it means to be accessible in a laboratory is different to what it means to be accessible if you're studying a modern language. There's a range of initiatives that universities can do to support staff and students, principally to involve them. I won't go through the list of things there, but those are all examples of work that needs to happen. I would say, just in closing, that I think universities have made big strides in the last 20 or 30 years or since I was at university 473 years ago. But there is much more to be done - much more to be done - and I think I will finish by just flagging up one other issue which is that of what we call

"intersectionality". We are more men and women, and all old, and gay, and straight and queer, and from the North of England, and from a different country, and all of those makes a difference to our experience, and also the way that we are treated, so the work that we are doing at ECU now is to think increasingly around the intersection of these identities and how that plays out in the public sphere. Thank you very much for listening to me. I'm looking forward to hearing the discussions for the rest of the day and the seminar. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

HASHEM TAQI: Thank you very much. David. The second speaker is Dana Roth. It is entitled education for employment or learning for life.

[APPLAUSE]

TRESSA BURKE: Good morning everybody. I am absolutely delighted to be here with you all. I would just like to give a special shout out to members of Glasgow Disability Alliance who are here today in quite high number through our Organisation, so it's been logistically challenging but we are here and 'hello' to everybody.

So, we are focusing on furthering the empowerment of Human Rights and inclusion of disabled people and you will see from the slide behind me, the title of my presentation is 'education for employment' or 'learning for life'. First of all, those are not mutually exclusive and it's a provocative title, and we want all three: we want education, employment and we want life-long learning.

However, what we do find is that many people assume that education is just about employment or employability, and that really the assumption that only employment is worthy because it's got an economic value but we don't live in an economy: we live in a society.

I want to talk about the kind of society that we want to live in, and that we want for disabled people and for us all.

Education and life-long learning have an intrinsic value and we think there is a gate way to opportunities and I will demonstrate that a little later.

Firstly, I will introduce GDA. I will introduce Glasgow Disability Alliance, the Organisation I am from, and I will outline some of the current values and challenges, building on some of what David has already told us about. I will tell you about some of the solutions we ourselves as disabled people have come up with, and that includes Human Rights, which obviously already exists in the treaties and legislation and independent living: and then I will show a short film.

Glasgow Disability Alliance: as with some other organisation here today is an Organisation that is run and controlled by disabled people, for disabled people. We firmly believe that the voices of disabled people should just be that, 'nothing about us without us', and for anybody that visits our stall we have lovely badges made up for the Congress and one that says 'nothing about us without us', and we have for any

disabled people here that says, "Disabled and proud", so come and get a badge.

Never has it been so important to have that slogan 'nothing about us without us' is of the historical reasons care has been provided many claim to speak on behalf of disabled people, sometimes with good intentions, often with good intentions, but, with the current economic circumstances, disabled people have become voiceless and powerless and sometimes are in danger of not being heard at all.

At GDA we are totally committed to ensure that disabled people have the right support to speak up for ourselves and more importantly to demonstrate when we get the support, life can be amazing.

With over 3500 members, Glasgow Disability Alliance is the largest membership-led organisation in the country.

Our vision, which you will see on the slide, is for disabled people to be able to participate with their families and communities, in their work places, anywhere that they want to be, visible across all of society and that may be volunteering, may be education, may be employment or community involvement. But, again drawing on David's earlier point, it's about them having support to do that, to be able to make these choices.

We know from our engagement with members that most disabled people want to work and they want to access education and learning and want to be socially connected and want to contribute but they face significant barriers.

Picking up the inspirational film at the start, what I would say with our relationship with disabled people is that disabled people are not often super human or labelled so or as strangers and that is a real concern to an organisation, because it leaves disabled people will know where to go unless they have the right support. So not saying we are not proud of disabled people that achieve amazing things, but it should be enough to achieve ordinary things, what we all want, to have an ordinary life.

Some of the barriers specifically that disabled people are experiencing are covered in this slide and what I would say is that so much to slide, access to life, is determined by education, learning and the rich opportunities that these things bring and social connections in employment and all sorts of other things.

We know from talking to extensive membership, and by research that a focus on employment or education for the sake of employment only, these are not enough. Employment admittedly has huge benefits beyond earning a wage but it's not accessed by over 50% of disabled people in Glasgow and it's no longer a guaranteed route out of poverty these days.

I have some research done by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation about disability and poverty in Scotland and they say that disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to be disadvantaged in life and these problems and challenges we really need to focus on.

So there are over 600000 disabled people in Glasgow and according to our census over 25% in some parts of Glasgow are disabled people and people with long term conditions.

As I said more than 50% face higher costs such as equipment and transport and adaptations, so a disabled person will earn the same as a non-disabled person that is quite unusual they have a lower standard of living and austerity as made this much worse with a lot of cuts on disabled people and isolation is a major concern as a result of all of this.

I have some statistics up here about specific education concerns: so we know that young disabled people are three more times likely than their peers not to be in 'not in employment, education or training' and we know that disabled are twice as likely as non-disabled people not to have any qualifications, and we have heard about the Disabled Students' Allowance and how important it is for the success and outcomes for disabled students but yet over 90% of disabled students don't access because they are not at for example higher education colleges and we know there is an under-representation of younger disabled people. If we look at the education and professions for young disabled people specifically, we start with the knowledge that young disabled people can be forcibly segregated in education. Our dialogue with young members at the Glasgow Disability Alliance highlights an individual lack of individual choice and a voice about post school transition and in many cases teachers and support staff choose what they think is the safe test option and often that option is what has the most support attached and many do special courses that look at skills for life, when they would want to have in place more in place in the main stream, so people are not able to fulfil their potential at this stage.

What I would say is that barriers to education and learning are only one part of the problem. GDA members and the wider movements of disabled people across the whole world describe that many solutions are needed and that this altogether makes up something we call independent living.

It's not about doing things by yourself or for yourself, which is kind of for the title independent living might seem to mean but it's about doing the things you want to do with the support you need to do it. It's about being able to make choices like any other citizen with support, and live the life you want to live. If you think of it, it's like a jigsaw on the screen behind you; made up of individual pieces. We can see if one of these is missing, then the picture is incomplete and it means a disabled person's life is also incomplete and they don't get to fulfil their potential.

You can see the interplay of all the things behind you, so I am a disabled person with MS. At certain times in my life I may need health services and that maybe important to me or accessible transport or support with access to work but with others it may be social work participation; they are important, but not equally important to all the people at the time. But when you start to move things, things break down.

If we look at a social model, at the way disability is organised, we see that we can start to tackle some of these problems by a removing the barriers and putting these supports in place.

So GDA's response to this was to set our own organisation up and we saw a lack of peer support, and learning to develop confidence and a lack of disabled people's voices in Glasgow and we were concerned

not only disabled people not having pathways to education and employment but about the quality of life that people can have with or without work and whether voices are heard. It's about increasing their confidence and building connections and helping disabled people, with a meaning and purpose and we want disabled people to have a route out of isolation, out of hopelessness and more equal participation and visibility in Scotland and in Glasgow.

Over the last 10 years we grew our member base and we have over 3500 Disability Discrimination Act about members and it's based on those that have inequality and disadvantage should be involved in solution to tackle these things to recognise and tackle these things to build on strengths.

We build and deliver opportunities ranging from introductory courses to build confidence and self-belief right through to intensive coaching and programmes and connections are made to services so people get the support beyond Glasgow Disability Alliance that they need.

Our members are based around the Human Rights approach. We have the parallel principles so it's about participation in all sorts of ways and it's about accountability to our members and members holding the public sector; it's about non-discrimination; about empowering people through training and support and capacity building, and it's about telling people their legal rights. That is what the L stands for.

These things on are on the screen.

We engage people add find them and we deliver the programmes and build voices and provide access to services and information and sign posting and we work together with other partners to bring about change and make things better for disabled people.

I think it's worth saying that Glasgow Disability Alliance takes a very human approach and how we do things is as important, sometimes more important, than what we actually do. It is fundamental to a deliver model is access.

Equality is free and accessible. We provide transport, personal assistance, communication support and all the things that disabled people need to take part.

Susan wrote this, who is a GDA member for me to read out, and I will do it, because she is here today: "I was perfectly normal until I broke my back in an accident and I spent years mentally ... look at what happened to me - that resulted me in going down a very dark road. I was suicidal and one summer day in 2015 and I was Googling information and by a chance found Glasgow Disability Alliance and it took some weeks before I made the initial contact. My first course was in first aid.

Transport was provided but I was skeptical but without transport I could not attend the courses but I was enabled to have the confidence in myself".

This is important because without the supports, disabled people fall at the first hurdle.

Outcomes of our work are rich, diverse and abundant and disabled people have shown they can be involved and give something back.

With the examples on the screen in front of you, much of that is covered in a short film which I will show at the end so I will not read it out.

The outcomes all tackle isolation and improve health and well-being, and increased choice and control and health and well-being and resilience with life challenges which I think is really important.

I started with the title, "Education for employment, learning for life", and the truth is that education and learning is for life and recognising the barriers facing disabled people and that we have much to contribute much than work alone is the start to understanding a modern approach to education and disabled people's valuable contributions and this approach we firmly believe must be built with dignity, equality and have peer support and accessible opportunities and user voices and to take part in all of life's opportunities, and we can develop a much more rich and vibrant society: a kind of society we want to live in.

I will stop now and show you the next bit [APPLAUSE]

CHAIR: Thank you Tressa.

Our next speaker is Haqeeq Bostan who grew up in Pakistan: a communication Director. The floor is yours, Haqeeq. [APPLAUSE]

HAQEEQ BOSTAN: Good morning everybody. Thank you very much for inviting me along today to say a few words. I was sat quite peacefully in my office about four weeks ago and then my very good friend and also ex-boss and the organiser of this Conference, Dr Stephen Duckworth called and woke me up and said "Do you fancy coming along to speak at the Conference in Edinburgh in November?" I said, "I would not mind doing that", "What would you like me to talk about?" "Education". "I am no expert in education".

Stephen's reply was, "Well, you are, because 1) you have been through the education system, and 2) you are a disabled person who has experienced both inclusive education and segregated education".

When I arrived here yesterday, I first of all thought about what an amazing city Edinburgh is and then started to see so many disabled people from all over the world here.

This morning at breakfast I bumped into an incredibly successful man from China with the same impairment as me. We exchanged stories about our life and about living with our impairment, but I think already I was starting to understand the power of social confidence and the importance of bringing disabled people together, forging friendships and also about starting to build up experience and exchange contacts and most importantly start to take forward our agenda of how we build a more inclusive society and have opportunities to build our potential.

Straying away from my subject area, again I go back to my original point: I am now expert in education.

However, what I am here to talk about are my own personal experiences.

Again, excuse me for not being able to recite any statutes or refer to any particular UN sort of matters, but I am only going to talk about this from my own personal perspective, and I hope that it illustrates some of the key points we'll discuss today and some of the other speakers who are experts in this area may

enlighten you on.

I was born in Pakistan a long time ago; I will not say how long. I was born in a rural part of Pakistan and I had polio, when I was 2. Like many of you who may come from more developing parts of the world, you will understand the fact that often education and lack of education opportunities limit us, but those that have a disability are even more limited, and that is VERY clear in some of the experiences that I had.

So, the nearest school in my village was about 25km away and those children that were lucky enough to attend school would get up at dawn, and feed the animals and start a long walk to school.

Unfortunately, I was unable to do that. So like many other disabled people in that area, my life revolved around just sitting around and doing absolutely nothing. That in itself was not only restrictive but it kind of sets the pattern as to what life may look like going forward.

At that point, however, a fundamental thing happened in my life; my parents decided to make a significant move away from rural Pakistan and come to the UK like many other migrant workers. A relatively familiar tale but it made a huge difference to my life. I came to the UK. I was able to participate in education.

However, to a certain degree, that education was very different to what I had envisaged. I went to what was called segregated school. Segregated schooling in the UK consists of some education and a certain degree of therapy. That 'therapy' is not consistent much with education but literally medical therapies.

My routine consisted of going to the school in the morning, and given breakfast. Second breakfast, so thankfully I am not too fat. I managed to have two breakfasts a day. Then we had some singing and then after that we watched some videos and then the therapy sessions would start which would be a massage, and some aqua therapy and then taken home. At no point was there anything that we would view as education.

So I got to the age of 11 and at that stage I had been going to school for 3 years, but I didn't know the alphabet; obviously I could not read, and I could not write. That got me kind of a little worried. So at that point, the next most important intervention happened in my life: there was a teacher called Mrs. York and she came up to me one day and asked me a number of very important questions and they related, most importantly, well... not a single question related to my impairment, but what my ambitions were and what I want to do, and may be the things that stimulated me, and she said, after that meeting, he would write a note to the head teacher and say "This young man should not be in a segregated school but be in a main stream school". The initial reaction for the education authority was: "There is no way we can accommodate him". Mrs. York's reaction was: "I think he will be okay; he will find a route around it. He is flexible".

I went into mainstream schooling and at that point the first realisation was how far behind I was to all my peers. I think many disabled people, and many of you in this room will relate to this, is that often in our early years we are significantly behind in education with our peers.

But I was VERY lucky: I was able to catch up. At that point I started to realise the importance of being around other people from diverse background, being around people who may have, on the face of it, an impairment, or not: people as David mentioned during his speech their makeup is of many different backgrounds, many different factors; whether it's age, gender, sexuality, and all those things are in the mix, and you start to learn and understand and start to change and broaden your horizons and broaden your ambition.

It also allowed me a VERY interesting opportunity which was to - I was in Leeds at the time, a city in the north - and the same Mrs. York allowed me a visit to London one day. During that visit, I managed to go round London to see some of the major sites. The most important site I saw was the Houses of Parliament. I am not sure how many if you have seen the Houses of Parliament but it's a very imposing building but for me as a 15-year old boy it's a very inspirational building. I got one thing in my head at the time: I want to come and live in London. That was my sole ambition at the time and again my route to London; my route to being near Parliament was education and most critically it was inclusive education. Despite the fact that I was a fair degree behind my peers, I was able to pass what were then called GCSEs and I did those and I did my A levels and I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to study at Uni and to get my undergraduate degree, and then my post-graduate degree. Like David, I also studied law and went on to practice law.

After that, I became a consultant, and I did some work around Parliament and then, again, by sheer chance I was able to meet the Chief Executive of the then London 2012 organising committee and in four years I was able to work as part of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. An incredible experience and opportunity to meet people from all over the world, from different diverse backgrounds I mentioned, but also to get a real feel for the incredible wealth of talent that there is out there, amongst disabled people.

I guess my most important message for all of you attending this Conference today is that we live in a world where opportunities are REALLY significant: they are there, they are there also tangible and there for us to touch. We know what we want to achieve, but often sometimes, as disabled people, there are barriers in the way. My view would be that, as a society, if we can go forward, develop more of an inclusive approach to the way in which we deliver education and opportunities, then individuals can fulfil their potential and there is no need for us to live in an excluded world but embracing inclusivity, by embracing the idea that people can learn from each other, and having people in an integrated system, we can work towards achieving our goals and potential.

I have been given the signal to conclude my remarks. I hope that I have given you some food for thought for the rest of the Conference. I look forward to meeting all of you during the coming days. I hope you enjoy the Conference and I hope we can all work towards building a more inclusive society for disabled

people. Thank you. [APPLAUSE]

HASHEM TAQI: Our next speaker, Scott Thompson is from the Faculty of Education, University of Canada.

Mr. Thompson - starts from inclusive education to inclusive employment. [APPLAUSE]

DR SCOTT THOMPSON: Good morning. I'm very pleased to be part of the RI World Congress, indeed. I'm from a small city in Canada, Regina, and what I would like to do is just sketch out some of the thoughts in terms of curriculum theory and inclusive education, moving from some of those thoughts that we had around how to arrange curriculum for students with disabilities into implications for employment, and sort of trace that history a bit, and then to look at some of the implications in between those two.

I'm going to begin now with inclusive education and look at that journey. As I we talked about, we in the 1980s talked about "mainstream education", and we arranged that through what was called the principle of partial participation, and this was both a curriculum theory and an instructional practice, so it was a curriculum theory in the sense that it spoke to the rights of students with disabilities to be in classrooms, but it was also had an instructional component. It had a component of how are we going to make this happen? The principle of partial participation talked about various techniques conducting task analyses, looking at pieces in constructional sequences that students with disabilities could do, and things that they were likely to be able to do with support, and some things that they may not be able to do, and is we planned around those pieces. For example, if a self-help skill might be the administration of insulin, let's say a student with a disability couldn't do that one thing of pushing the plunger to self-administer but could do many steps before and many steps after, so, on a 20-step process, if you will, maybe able to do step nine or ten. The idea was that we would teach steps 1 to 8 and 11 to 20. That was the name that a student would be more independent by being able to do 18 steps, even though the steps in the middle they might not be able to do and they would plan around those. So that was the first sort of foray, one. First, I should say, in terms of inclusive education.

Now, unfortunately, with that, the principle of partial participation, the way that it was taken up in schools largely was that some teachers would equate any participation in class, would equate any participation in class as the level that that student was capable of, so that is what partial participation became. So, mere presence in schools became the principle of partial participation, so it was an unfortunate choice of name. So we moved on from the principle of partial participation to inclusive education. Yes, so this looking at partial participation and the various ways it was taken up. We began to think of inclusive education, and, with inclusive education, we seriously engaged with both the academic goals that we need to provide for students with disabilities in classrooms and the social goals, so we wanted both to be there. So, beyond mere presence. Beyond presence in schools, there is a responsibility for academic teaching as well as the social component. What we found with this new iteration - inclusive education - through Giangreco and others' work were some challenges with this as well. So, moving from mainstreaming into inclusive

education, some of the challenges are listed behind me. Sometimes, a student with a disability would be no more than three feet away from his or her paraprofessional teacher appendix aide for the entire day. You can see how this usurp opportunities for socialisation and have other kinds of challenges. As well, you had people that were the least qualified in terms of making adaptations and accommodations to curriculum, et cetera, being responsible for them. So we began to see in the field what some people have referred to as the new exclusion, or the new segregation - that is, in a classroom with many different students of different diversities, the student with the disability would be perhaps at the back with their teacher's aide. We began to see, okay, this is the second iteration of inclusion, and it has some challenges as well. So we have now moved on to what we are call authentic inclusion. Diane Ferguson identified some of the challenges that we had with inclusive education. One of the challenges that I just talked about was the presence in the classroom and being equated with inclusive education. By doing that year-long project, Dr Diane Ferguson, the parent of a son with a disability, began to see there are really two tracks in education - there are probably many tracks, but at least two - so there is general education over here and special education over here. More and more, she saw that these tracks had to be combined, so, administratively, in terms of how we deliver education had to come together. So this new authentic inclusion is really calling for a deeper and more systemic change, and that was first brought to our attention by Dr Diane Ferguson, as I said, back in 1995. And it is part of a unified system, and the other piece to authentic inclusive education is a recognition that not every iteration of inclusion is, in fact, authentically inclusive. So, we are trying to make a distinction, I would say, writ large in education about that as well.

So those are the sort of two pieces of authentic inclusion as we've moved from mainstreaming to inclusive education, and now to authentic inclusive education.

If we look at where we are at with this latest incarnation of inclusive education, we can see that there are challenges - there remain challenges. Dr Ferguson went back, if you all look here. You can see that there are still some challenges with authentic inclusive education. So the call was for systemic change, a reorganisation of schooling, and meaningful curriculum, as I said, combining both academic and social goals, and we are still progressing in that area, I would say. We're still progressing in that area. As you can see, Diane went back in 2008, and revisited her work in 1995.

That's sort of a big, big picture, if you will, of how we have thought about inclusive education, and how the different iterations of that have worked.

If we turn our attention now to employment, inclusive employment, and I'm focusing here particularly on the inclusive piece, I want to do a similar kind of trajectory of looking at how employment for some folks with disabilities has moved and has progressed, so, if we begin with sheltered workshops to supported employment, to customised employment. It is not an exact analogous journey as to that of authentic

inclusion, but there are some shifts that we should be aware of. So sheltered workshops began in the 1970s and they're usually segregated settings. We moved quickly from those to supporting employment. There's a lot of research around supported employment, in terms of supported employment versus customised employment, with the next iteration, there certainly is more in that area. So it's usually in integrated settings, and, we can see that there is quite a bit of research in this area. So, supported employment includes competitive work and integrated settings with ongoing support services. As with the issues of inclusion in schools, the nature of inclusion often in studies is not looked at carefully, so that is an area we need to concern ourselves with in supported employment. Customised employment is very similar to supported employment, but we are looking at the nature of the employer, employees' relationship, sort of framed customised employment, and there was a lovely study done in 2016 by Melina, who was a teacher, and introduced a lot of students to employers, and they began to think about what potential customised jobs might happen. So that is the writ large iteration of employment - inclusive employment, and students with disabilities.

So, let's look now at this last little part here at how these paths might cross, or what we might learn from one another. So I want to go over these four points. The first point is students now are experiencing, some, for sure, authentically inclusive settings in terms of their education. This is going to impact their expectations of what post-school life might look like. I wanted to show you some data from a study that I just did caused, "Voices of Inclusion" where we looked at students with and without disabilities in an authentically inclusive high school. One of the things we asked them is about life after high school. What I like about these quotes is there is a diverse range of interest that these students have, and hope for the future - different kinds of things. I think that's one of the markers of an inclusive school. So, students are in these authentically inclusive schools, we can see they have certain expectations about what happens after school. We need to think about that in terms of transition planning. One of the big studies, done in 2014, by Paul Wehman, and it operates as a meta-analysis, and he looked at particularly supported employment, and he looked at the benefit to students with disabilities for support employment, and he found that, for 21 per cent of folks that were in specialised settings, that there was quite a great effect. But he also found 20 per cent of the respondents that had autism and other developmental disabilities that were in general education, also had quite an effect. So, even though students with disabilities may have been in segregated settings, it doesn't mean remembering Paul Wehman's study, and it is all referenced on the PowerPoint, and you can access it. It doesn't mean that is what they were necessarily prepared for. It means they can have quite successful careers in inclusive settings. I just wanted to show you an example of that. This is also from that study I did where we had a student with autism, and he would likely participate in a segregated setting, but he was quite a successful worker, and he worked in an inclusive office setting.

I just want to end, too, with customised employment. So, customised employment again is that negotiation between the employer and the employee, and that may be a very useful kind of model, particularly in rural settings. That might make the transition to post-school life of easier. So, here's an example from some of that data. Thanks very much indeed. [APPLAUSE].

CHAIR: Thanks very much, all of you. It was very, very interesting. And this is up and down sort of getting a little depressed and getting hopeful, and also seeing certain people's achievements, so we have a lot of work to do. Before we open it to the audience, I wanted to know whether any of you have any questions to each other of a you've heard each other?

NEW SPEAKER: I just have one question for David: what do you think is the importance of having a strong legislative framework to ensure inclusive education?

DAVID RUEBAIN: Well, I think it is very important, Haqib. I think legislation has a floor not a ceiling. It is a starting point. It is a minimum that it provides - a platform on which you can then build beyond that. But, without anti-discrimination law, it is very hard to shift perspectives and attitude. It's a great question and I think it is really important.

CHAIR: We have theoretically about 20 minutes, and as Dr Duckworth said, we may be interrupted in the middle, so, in case someone is taking a breath of air, they may have to stop even then once the ceremony will begin. If there are any questions, we have a volunteers that are - you can raise your hand or any other way that you can be noticed. If anyone has a question, please - if it is a direct question to someone, referred directly to them, and if it is a general question, please state it is general and respond to it. It's hard for me to see. Speaking of accessibility! Okay.

NEW SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm from Hong Kong. I'm very happy to hear that people with disabilities, no matter what their disabilities are, should have equal opportunities to receive continuous education, even the university education, this is a very inclusive approach. I think that it is what we are aiming at. We should aim at this. My question is what are the challenges and barriers faced, for example, the government in terms of policy-making, financial implication, the teacher training, the social environment, and lastly, what about the accreditation system? That's very important. It should not be the same as the mainstream one, maybe?

My second question is: if there is no barrier to disabilities, what about students with intellectual disabilities? Could they go to the university or colleges as well as an example? I'm not talking about normal intellectual ability; I'm talking about people with intellectual dict. An example about this? Thank you.

DAVID RUEBAIN: I will talk about two pieces of that. If I talk about teacher training for a minute: it is a big topic, and how do we, in effect, some ways change the attitudes that teachers have so they can effectively support all students? So, some of the things we are doing in education right now is we are looking at

differentiated instruction, so we are looking at always and already trying to create a rich plethora of instructional strategies and evaluative assessment tools that respond to a range of needs. Ann Jordan looking at how to change attitudes around students for disabilities with teachers has done a lot of work in this area. She's looked at ways and means of effecting that, actually, from Canada. With respect to your second question, there is an inclusive post-secondary education. It's a movement, particularly for folks with intellectual and developmental disabilities, where they would go through four-year college, largely audit classes, and have what is referred to as an authentic university or college experience. So there's a consortium, if you will, of universities and colleges called "think college". In America.

It's quite a useful thing, you might consider looking up. In Canada, at the University of Calgary, they want to do inclusive education in can do a did a for students with disabilities.

CHAIR: Thank you. Any other questions? At the back there is someone.

NEW SPEAKER: I'm from Inclusion Scotland. I have a really simple question. As you know, there are so many disabled people in the world, and I'm thinking about myself in particular, and thinking what can I do to make a difference to a number of people in society? It is a big opening question! Thank you.

NEW SPEAKER: I'm going to answer that question very, very succinctly, and I'm going to borrow a phrase from a great organisation in London that's involved in the arts and the participation of disabled people in the arts, and their phrase and organisation is called "Attitude Is Everything", and I think that, to a certain degree depends on all of our actions, and some of the things that we can do. If we all have the right attitude to participation, disabled people, but I guess, you know, recognising people's diversity regardless of what their background is, that's a big, big thing that we can do. Yes, we need an independent legislation, yes, we need support, whether it be from individuals or government, but I think the driving force has to be attitude.

CHAIR: There was someone at the front before? Does anyone have a question?

NEW SPEAKER: I'm from the National Disability Authority in Ireland. Thank you very much to all the speakers for the interesting presentations. In Ireland, we have a comprehensive employment strategy for ten years which started last year. But a key part of that strategy is related to education, and getting work on the agenda early on in education. Just to build on aspirations which helps change the attitudes and culture in schools, but also in families in terms of the future, but a key challenge is not just in relation to education and employment, but it is also the role of other social services and social protection, because sometimes the early access to social welfare benefits in itself can be a disincentive, and also maybe pressure to go on to take a social care support directly after school instead of progressing on to higher education. Is that something anyone on the panel has come across, and any ideas in dealing with that?

NEW SPEAKER: Absolutely. We came across that a lot. First of all, younger disabled people may tap into welfare benefits; maybe it creates disincentives to the families, preventing them to move on both from the

home and into education, because of financial restraints, because of the pressures families are under in having to give up their jobs to care for people, so that's something that would come across. What I would say, in relation to the thing about the interplay - again, you picked up on that issue close to my own heart - I think that's really what needs to happen, because, building on what was said, attitude is absolutely so important and can move us on very far. But we also must have access to the vital support that we need, and social work has to have a role in that, or whoever provides social care, and the services all working together. Unfortunately, that's the hardest bit.

CHAIR: Yes?

NEW SPEAKER: My name is Satika, and I'm from Indonesia. We are really grateful that we are talking about employment for people with disabilities, and what people from my country are thinking about education - still in education. Right now, we are still thinking about education for those with low functioning. It keeps me thinking how can we help them, the ones with the low functioning, to be able to work later on and what kind of support that we can give from every aspect?

NEW SPEAKER: By low functioning, you mean people who find it difficult to communicate?

NEW SPEAKER: It is the communication.

NEW SPEAKER: I think there are many examples of excellent practice, and it's in the nature of this inclusive practice that when we start out, we assume very little about people who are different. But the more that we progress, the more we see that much more is possible, and it's very easy to be naive about this, and I'm not trying to be naive. I think there are significant difficulties, but the more we think about diverse ways of living, of studying, of working, the more that people's individual strengths can be used even if they have other difficulties. So, I think the short answer to your question is there are examples of good practice where people with limited function can do well in the work environment, as well as studying. It doesn't mean to say they can achieve everything that everybody else can, but there's a lot more, I think, that can be done.

NEW SPEAKER: Can I just add, that we have to guard against labelling people from a very early age, and I'm sorry if I'm going to be a little bit controversial here, but, often, there are very well-meaning health professionals, social care individuals, involved in social care, who are, by the nature of their work, very interested in protecting that individual, but, by protecting them by labelling them at a very early age, it does stifle ambition. And I think, to a certain degree, we have to be driven by that individual's ambition of more tailored approach, and I think going back again, it's all about attitude, and it is all about making sure that we can accommodate that person regardless of their ...

CHAIR: This gentleman at the front.

NEW SPEAKER: Thank you. I'm from China Disabled Persons' federation. The first I appreciate the UK's efforts in including still with the disabilities into mainstream universities or colleges. Also, in my

understanding is that segregating education sometimes makes students with disabilities hard to get included into the main society, mainstream society where they grow up. Also, the inclusive - it is in conformity aspirations of the rights with the person with disabilities. My question is you mentioned that legislature framework is very important for the implementation of inclusive education, so my question is that could you please to offer us a real case in which a university violates the spirit of the rights of a person with disabilities, that is to say the person refuses to accept the student with a disability, especially a student with an intellectual disability to study in the mainstream university? Could the student who was refused to study in the mainstream university have access to justice? So what is the best practice for the UK in addressing this kind of problem? Thank you.

NEW SPEAKER: It's a great question. I think there are a number of points there. The first is that universities aren't in the UK, at least, so I don't believe under the UN Convention, they're not obliged to amend the minimum standards that they require in order to accept or not to accept a student. So I'm not aware of universities in the UK who are breaking the law because they haven't reduced or changed their admissions requirements. However, there are numbers of examples where they haven't amended their course practices to make the more accessible for disabled students, and, as a result of which, a student has been disadvantaged, sometimes maybe had to leave university, because the requirements of the course have not been adjusted to enable the disabled student to succeed. That's the sort of area where there is still much more work to be done. I'm hoping to be in Beijing in two weeks' time at a disability human rights conference, so maybe we can talk some more then?

CHAIR: Officially, the session has ended. We will continue until they return here, because, there's some delay. So we will take a question from the left.

NEW SPEAKER: If I can add to that point. I think there's one crucial thing which is that, too often in education, an individual's chances are dependent on a little bit of luck. They are dependent on a well-meaning or very focused individual. I think the legal framework that David set out, what it does do is it allows universal access; it allows an underpinning, to ensure that that person has certain rights that they can fall back on. I think we've got comprehensive legislation in the UK but I think David will agree with me on this: there are very few examples where individuals have enforced it, and one of the problems is that the onus is on that individual to bring the action, and, often, that's too expensive or too burdensome for a disabled person, so it's a bigger, a much bigger topic than just this forum, but I think the legislation is important, but we need to look at how people are empowered to enforce that legislation.

CHAIR: I'm sorry, but we will not continue, because now the ceremony will be opening. Let's have a fantastic conference! [APPLAUSE]

Thank you all. I am sure you have been kept well entertained and we certainly very much enjoyed a look around the exhibition.

It's my honour and privilege to introduce our VIP party, her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, the Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon, Euan MacDonald, and Yan, the President of Rehabilitation International, who will hand over during the course of this event, this week. And, we have done a video from Professor Stephen Hawking and we have the Shaw Trust Executive who will say a few words.

As I said before, with people here from 65 different countries, we hope that you have enjoyed the first session.

I would like now to introduce HRH, Princess Royal to formally open our Congress. Thank you (Applause)

HRH Princess Royal: Thank you very much President, and Ladies and Gentlemen. Can I say thank you very much for in inviting me to be here; it's a really significant event, not just in here Edinburgh but for the whole of the UK and for globally, for those involved with disabilities of all sorts.

I don't think any of you here will be aware of the fact that the last time, the only other time this Event has been held in the United Kingdom, the Rehabilitation World Congress was opened by my father, the Duke of Edinburgh, in 1956. Time moves on and from the post second world war, whereupon the rehabilitation that everybody was focused on, and the beginning of the Paralympic Games in 1948, things have changed just a little bit.

I hope that the Paralympic movement has had some impact of those changes. As a member of the International Olympic Committee, I have been hugely encouraged by the way the attendance and the interest in the Paralympic Games has grown; I think particularly from Beijing and London and most recently in Rio.

They have also changed in terms of the type of Games because those early Games were wheelchair and spinal injuries-orientated and they have broadened the Paralympic Games now quite dramatically.

From my own experience in the time in between, I suppose gives me some understanding of what to do here: it started in the early days when I was with Save the Children, rehabilitating children that suffered from polio, looking at rehabilitation and workshops with their own calipers which were created locally and through the Spinal Injuries Association and through the College of Occupational Therapists and the Deafblind Association and other organisations like the Motor Neuron Disease Association: it covers a wide range here of what is covered in that term, 'disability', and the changes that those organisations have seen over the years in the awareness and understanding of the general public and also the huge impact that appropriate uses of technology have made to some groups and more than others.

But the value to all those is to get a diagnosis early.

The value of role models, as motivators to inspire each individual to achieve something at that stage, may have decided they were no longer able to do so. The inspiration applies not just to them but to their carers but those that could employ and work with them, because it's important for them too to have role models and mentors to make that transition successful and fulfil everybody's potential.

We know, as you all know, that every person is affected differently, even if they have the same diagnosis, which makes rehabilitation the key, and to have general solutions is a real challenge.

Perhaps though there is an important indicator of a country's attitude in this rapidly changing world but it's how quickly they are enabled with a range of disabilities to participate in not just daily activities but their ability to live independent lives, and activities within society, and business.

I mentioned sport already: it's an important criterion but it's not the only criteria that should be considered.

Employment also provides a major pathway to independence, not just physically but mentally to give that level of satisfaction that can make a difference in people's lives. This independence has been growing for many disabled people, certainly since my father spoke at this Congress 60 years ago, I don't think people could have begun to imagine the range of opportunities in employment that would be available.

So every 4 years, about 1000 people from more than 60 countries come together to identify and keep pace with the change and then to try and reduce the barriers that still exist that do restrict opportunities and result in individuals being marginalised and lacking that independence, but it is the ability to actually have the choice and to be able to make those choices.

We look at wheelchair access as a kind of simple definition of how people judge accessibility, but it's not just about that: it's others being recognised, like deaf people, recognising the issue, and having the time, taking the time to realise that you can communicate better, and give that little bit of time.

As I said, technology can overcome many of these barriers but we need to help other people and learn how to use that technology and to create better human interfaces.

Everybody else needs more patience and time and the vision to understand the differences and have a real understanding of what those diagnoses and conditions really mean to individuals. We still battle with a fear of the unknown and the fear of responsibility that often comes from employers in relation to how they employ people.

Over the next 3 days you are going to hear from many internationally-renowned speakers including many disabled professionals on their views on the way forward. You will listen and you will exchange, at least I hope you will listen and exchange (Laughter) views, and may be look at practical solutions which will help make a real difference for all disabled people, wherever they are in the world.

I hope you will leave Edinburgh having had the opportunity to enjoy some of what the city offers outside the Congress, but that you will also be able to take back much inspiration to help you in the roles that you fulfil in your own countries back home, and within your own organisations, and that you will feel enriched and invigorated to make a more meaningful and lasting changes to promote the inclusion of disabled people.

Above all, all the organisations and statutory authorities must try and remain flexible enough so to be

judged not by a named disability, or their assumptions that comes with those disabilities, but by their abilities and their ability to fulfil their own potential in their own way.

So thank you all for the efforts you make, have made, over the past many hundred years. This is your twenty third International World Congress and I am delighted to declare it open. (Applause).

CHAIR: Your Royal Highness, thank you very much indeed for your inspiring speech to start the Conference. Being as we are in Edinburgh, it seems only appropriate to invite our next speaker, the Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon, the First Minister of Scotland. I would like to invite Nicola Sturgeon to join me on the stage. I am sure she will be keen to advise her on what her Government is seeking to achieve to promote the inclusion of disabled people as we move forward over the next four or five years. (Applause).

RT HON NICOLA STURGEON: Your Royal Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen, it's a real pleasure to be here with you today. I am delighted, absolutely, to extend a very warm welcome to Edinburgh, to over 1000 delegates from 60 different countries across the world. Your presence here is a testament to the importance of this Congress but demonstrates that we share a very strong commitment to a very inclusive world. I am very grateful to Rehabilitation International and the Shaw Trust for the excellent work they have done in organising this event; there is a lasting legacy secured in the city not least by ensuring the accessibility of this Conference venue.

I am delighted that Scotland was selected as the host country for this Congress. As we already heard, the last time the World Congress was held in the UK was in 1956: it was officially opened by his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, so it's particularly fitting that Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, has opened this Congress.

In the almost 60 years since the first UK-based Congress, and what we think about people with disabilities, and disability itself, has changed a great deal. While there is a great deal of work still to do, I think we would all agree that it's changed very much for the better.

On an international level, the issue of disability rights has become a major focus through the agenda, through the UN Declaration and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the continued success of the Special and Paralympics has inspired generations of disabled people and redefined expectations around their abilities and ambitions.

Grass-root movements on independent living and self-advocacy have changed attitudes and empowered disabled people to take more control of their own lives. Of course these advances have come about because of the outstanding work done by hundreds, thousands, of disabled people and by a very wide range of organisations. In short, by those of you here today, and people like you across the world.

There is much to celebrate as we gather here in Edinburgh. But, as we all know, there is still much work still to do.

The economic upheaval of the past decade has exacerbated inequalities right across the globe, and we

have seen too clearly what this rise in inequality can create: alienation, exclusive and social instability. Disabled people very often have been those that have suffered the most from that. So, in my view we need to redouble the efforts and tackle inequality head on and ensure everybody has the chance to realise his/her full potential.

The UN sustainable development goals represent a very clear call to action on this front as they specifically focus on reducing inequalities. I am very proud that Scotland was one of the first countries to sign up to these global goals because that indicates a strong commitment to a more equal and a more inclusive world.

The key themes that you will focus on over the next 3 days of this Congress: employment, education and skills, independent living, and international development and partnerships identify clearly where we all need to focus our effort.

In Scotland we are taking action in these key areas where we work to deliver the requirements of the UN Convention.

We have already pledged to use the Scottish Parliament's new powers to create a dedicated employability service for people with disabilities. We have already safeguarded the rights of our most disabled people by establishing Scottish independent living, and, as part of the Scottish government's international framework, we are looking to tackle inequalities around the world.

Indeed, one of our further education colleges, Kelvin Glasgow College, has partnered with India to develop employability schemes for people with disabilities in that country. That is an example, just one example, but an important one, of Scotland sharing our experiences and expertise to improve the lives of disabled people across the world.

We also recognise that we have much to learn from other countries. So, we are determined too, to learn from the best practice and best ideas of other countries. That is why, as an example, we are exploring the model of care that has been so successful in the Netherlands, and the principles of self-help, independence, and integration of support are exactly those we embrace in Scotland.

So, in the coming months we will begin to test the model across the country and, through initiatives like this, we continually seek to get the support that people with disabilities receive and that that support is tailored to their individual circumstances. That is hugely important because disabled people are not a homogenous group but they are individuals and, as such, have individual circumstances, needs and aspirations. These can change over time. That is the fundamental truth. There is one we have recognised in Scotland and why we decided to integrate health and social care, which is one of the most significant reforms since the establishment of the National Health Service in the late forties, and we have made our NHS and the Government services jointly responsible for the coordinated support that people need. So people consistently get the needs at any point in their lives.

We have redefined social care by a looking at Self-Directed Support, and we know that people with disabilities have been seen as service users with little contribution to make in deciding the direction of their own lives. This kind of attitude cannot only have a demoralising effect on individuals but it can very often, which means they don't receive the right support because they have not had their full say in determining the support that best meets their needs.

Self-Directed Support empowers people with disabilities. It empowers carers and families with disabilities so they have control and choice when it comes to their own lives and control and choice, that the rest of us take for granted. It helps ensure that people get support that is specific to their circumstances, whether that involves personal assistants or ways to work or new technologies to access support.

Work in Scotland is ongoing. We have come a long way but have a long way still to go. As all of you know, trying to change attitudes and bring about positive lasting change is not easy. To succeed our efforts, we need to have creativity and determination, and I think it's exactly those qualities that disabled people's organisations bring to the cause. Real life experience helps us identify the policy and service changes that need to be made and tenacity focuses and energises those that work with you.

The partnership between disabled people's organisations and Government has been a key feature of the progress that we have made here in Scotland. It has underpinned the development our plan to deliver the requirements of the UN Convention and it's a feature of all the improvement that is we seek to make.

Just last month we published a new accessible travel framework. That framework is designed to improve the accessibility of our transport system, and it's the product of two years of collaborative work between people with disabilities, disability organisations, transport operators and Government. It sets out the need to make the views of disabled people a central focus of policy making; not an after-thought of policy making. That is something we recognise that we must embed across policy making at all levels. There is no way we'll reduce disability-based inequalities without fully involving those who are most affected. When it comes to their own lives, people with disabilities are the real experts. It's important that the Government and all policy-makers see and treat them as such.

However, this form of collaboration between Governments and people with disabilities can't be the limit of our ambitions. There is another obvious and direct way to strengthen the voice of disabled people in a political process to make sure that people with disabilities have every opportunity to run for, and be successful in running for elected office.

People with disabilities are significantly under-represented in elected and democratic politics: at national and local level. Political parties of course have a big role to play in addressing this and much more needs to be done.

My own Party recently held a disabled Members' Conference which I attended a first for a political party in Scotland. It was a Conference organised by and for disabled people and brought together people for a day

of workshops and key-note speakers and vibrant discussion. The agenda was “How do we ensure that people with disabilities are represented properly in the political process?” I think that is important. Some of the messages we hear are about accessibility in a very practical sense. Sometimes it's about the cost of people with disabilities or of standing for elected office, and that is why I am very proud to say in Scotland we recently created our local Government elections for next year and they have been administered by Inclusion Scotland, one of our country's disabled people's organisations, and indeed they are well represented here today: a great advocate for inclusion and participation, and hopefully it will ensure that disabled candidates can access the funding they need so they can compete on a level-playing field. We hope it will create a lasting legacy to familiarise disabled people with electoral processes and by demonstrating there should be no barriers to elected office.

Ultimately I think that is what this Congress is all about: trying to create a fairer, more equal society, where people with disabilities can fulfil their full potential.

So, as I said already, I am very proud of the progress we have made in Scotland but I am acutely aware that there is much more we still have to do and much more we still have to learn which is why this event is so important.

In the next 3 days you will share your range of different experiences and different opinions and different ideas and, in doing so, you will increase your collective understanding of the challenges that disabled people face across the globe and you will help to guide the future actions that we all need to take in order to deliver a more equal and a more inclusive world.

So, that is why I am so delighted to welcome you all to Scotland, and I wish you all the very best for a constructive and a very successful Congress. Thank you very much indeed. [APPLAUSE]

NEW SPEAKER: Rehabilitation International.

CHAIR: Thank you, First Minister. That was a fantastic chronology of how things have changed over time, and what is going on now. Delighted to hear about your joint work with the Indian government. We have the Honourable Minister for Social Justice today, a cabinet minister, in the room with us. That shows us the credentials of the people in the room. I will say again, Inclusion Scotland, and the credentials of the people in the room, and I would like to apologise for the appalling accommodation you ended up in last night, and we are setting to and sorting it out right now. Thank you.

The next speaker is someone who has a funny out-of-office when you send him an email. It says, "Not quite sure about black holes or Big Bang any more. Thinking about strings." So, because he couldn't be here himself - he's in America at the moment - we're going to see a short video from Professor Stephen Hawking. Thank you very much. So, in the words of Professor Stephen Hawking, keep talking I think is what the key message was coming through to me from that clip. So long as we keep talking in this room, working together, sharing ideas, and the theme of this conference, you will see as we go through to the

closing ceremony - I know it's a long way off yet - where we will have Dame, efficient Lynn Glennie, a deaf percussionist, and Patron of the Shaw Trust, she will talk about the power of communication. I first met Euan yesterday, so I suppose I can be rude to you now, can't I, yes? My Stephen Hawking lookalike! Euan McDonald from Euan's Guide. [APPLAUSE]. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm grateful to have the opportunity to welcome you to the UK, Scotland, and, more specifically, my home town of Edinburgh. We were delighted when we heard Edinburgh would host it conference. It raised some interesting questions for us. How will our city cope with the visit of hundreds of people with a large variety of access requirements? Will there be sufficient accessible accommodation? Will the transport system work? These are all important questions which we have attempted to answer by seeking disabled people's views and feedback. I hope you will be able to help us answer by feeding back some experiences of your visit in the coming days. It begs the question what makes a city inclusive and what makes it accessible? The answer of course is people and their attitudes. It could be an architect who puts access at the heart of their design, a restaurant owner who makes you feel welcome, or the staff member at a visitor attraction who ensures it works for everyone. There are examples of the above around the city.

We have received five-star reviews of old buildings that have been made accessible like Edinburgh Castle and the National Galleries. And venues where staff have gone above and beyond to make people feel equally or more effective way to encourage negatives and the lessons that result can't be ignored. Recognising and celebrate venues that are doing things well can be an equally or more effective way to encourage change and improvement.

The task for us to encourage those positive attitudes to become more widespread.

If I can urge one call to action, it is to adopt and endanger with disabled access day where you live. The ethos of the day is for people to do things they haven't done before. And for places and organisations to open their doors and showcase their accessibility.

This is something we can all promote, and is a small step towards our shared goal of proper access and inclusion 365 days a year. It's wonderful to have you here.

I very much hope that the result of that conference is that attitudes, wherever you live, are influenced for the better.

I hope you have an enjoyable visit. [APPLAUSE].

CHAIR: Thank you so much, Euan. We've heard the history, the political perspective, and now the individual's point of view on issues as they relate to improving inclusion for disabled people.

Our next and penultimate speaker is the president of Rehabilitation International. He is going to say a few words of welcome, and, as I mentioned earlier, an hour or so ago, he will be handing over his precedency to Madam Heidi from China.

NEW SPEAKER: Your Royal Highness, ladies and gentlemen, to believe in rehabilitation is to believe in

humanity. These are the words of Dr Howard Rusk, the RI president from 1954 to 1957, and is also known as the founder of modern rehabilitation. I will return to this later in my speech. I will as RI president mention some brief achievements and milestones in RI's history which is, as you all know, almost 100 years.

This organisation was established in 1922 in Ohio by Edgar Allen, and the name of the organisation at that time was the International Society for Crippled Children. RI changed its name three times before, in 1972, we decided to take the name "Rehabilitation International". One of the first things that RI did which was recognised very highly is that we were putting forward the Bill of Rights for the crippled children already in 1931, which is when I look back, incredible that already so early, were claiming rights for children and children with disabilities. We also were a very strong front-runner when it came to established sport at Olympics for persons with disability, so, we made a decision about working very hard for that already in 1951 in our Congress in Stockholm.

We created the symbol of access which is one of the most famous symbols in the world already in 1969 in Dublin, which is close to Edinburgh. And, in Ireland, we also did another great achievement in the same year, 1969, where we created the concept called "Community-based rehabilitation".

In the 1980s, we created a charter of the 1980s which influenced very much the international disability day, and the decade of person with disability. I'm also glad to see that RI has been a front-runner when it comes to women with disabilities. We started to work hard on that already early in the 1990s.

We created also the Charter of the Third Millennium in 1999 which was leading up to the process of getting the UN CRPD, and we had a leading role in disabled society, working to get this Convention ready for voting in the United Nations in December 2006. After that, we have been working with the implementation of the UN Convention for many years now, and weaved pushed the WHO to make a new resolution on disability, which took place in 2013. We have engaged very much in WHO's so-called "gait project" which is about assistive technology for people with disabilities around the world, and we've been working the last years on the disability-inclusive disaster-risk reduction, and we've been one of the front-runners making this come true in the meeting in 2015. During the last years, of course, we have had a big focus on the sustainability of other goals and working to get those development goals inclusive for persons with disability.

This very brief introduction to RI's history shows also the important role civil societies are able to play when we are talking about moving the world.

RI's history, which was written when we were 80 years old, the name of the book was From Charity To Disability Rights. That shows that the development had gone very far during the first 80 years when they started out as a charity organisation. Civil rights and inclusive societies must walk hand in hand to achieve sustainable outcomes for persons with disability. Because rights - we really need to implement the rights.

When I took precedence in 2012, I made my slogan for my period of four years "togetherness", and that is because I think if we are able to work together, we can achieve a lot more than if we are working single-wise, because, to be together creates of stronger power.

The most important togetherness project which the world is facing now is the sustainable development goals because the UN is about togetherness, and the sustainable development goals are important for many reasons: it's important, of course, for disability, it's important for women, it's important for rehabilitation, it's important for all people living in the world.

RI's mission is to create and more inclusive world, and the importance of inclusiveness cannot be stressed and emphasised too much. Without inclusiveness in politics, in policies, and in action plans, it is not possible to create good societies where people can enjoy their full rights. All RI initiatives and actions I mentioned in my introduction has increased inclusion of persons with disability in the society, and has developed a more inclusive work, which means RI has made a difference. RI will continue to make a difference under its new leadership, and the incoming president. The world Congress in Edinburgh will be a new start for RI and global inclusiveness. Rehabilitation is a very important tool for inclusiveness. In the opening of my speech, I made a quote where to say that to believe in rehabilitation is to believe in humanity. I will today reformulate this a little bit to believe in inclusion is to believe in humanity. I wish you all a good Congress in creating a new inclusive world.

Thank you. [APPLAUSE]

CHAIR: Thank you for your hard work. It will be a great act to follow, and we hope that the new President will enjoy the next four years.

Finally, the way that the Rehabilitation International conference works where it's held every four years is sort of a competitive process, a bit like bidding for the Paralympics and the Olympic Games, or the World Cup football, so we sort of brought it home after its nearly 60-year break to the UK, and this was done under the excellent leadership of Roy O'Shaughnessy who will say a few words, the chief executive of Shaw Trust. [APPLAUSE].

NEW SPEAKER: Your Royal Highness, First Minister, Lords, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Rehabilitation International World Congress 2016. I'm the chief executive of Shaw Trust, your host organisation to this event. We are a UK-based charity supporting disabled and disadvantaged people to lead independent and inclusive lives. By 2020, we aim to transform the lives of at least 50,000 people per year. I would like to take this opportunity at the start of this Congress to offer a few short expressions of thanks. May I first thank Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal as the Royal patron of this event, and for making the time to attend to speak today. I was delighted when you agreed to be the Royal Patron of this Congress, not just because of the commitment to social reform in progress you demonstrate so keenly, but also because your father was the patron the last time the UK hosted the RI Congress over 50 years ago.

Thank you. Thank you for your continuing commitment to our work and fighting for the rights of disabled people across the globe. I would also like to thank the Right Honourable Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland. Thank you for speaking about inclusion in Scotland, in particular through the principles of fair work, dignity, and respect. We look forward to taking these conversations forward as you implement the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and ensure Scotland is a leader and an ever more inclusive and accessible world for disabled people. Euan, I'm delighted you could join and address us today. Thank you. Your story and amazing work you do at Euan's guide is an example to us all. The power and information you provide is helping to transform the lives of disabled people across the globe, giving them confidence and choice in how they lead their lives. We are looking forward to using the lessons you've outlined at this event to develop further practical solutions which allow disabled people to live their lives to their fullest potential and enjoyment. I would also like to thank everyone here today, and those who will be attending the Congress over the coming days. We have representatives from actually now 65 countries, so do please take this opportunity to network, discuss and debate with fellow delegates to share your knowledge and experience. Whether your journey has been from the other side of the world or the other side of the road, I'm delighted to welcome you all to Edinburgh, and hope you have a very enjoyable and stimulating Congress.

Last, but by no means least, I would finally like to congratulate the outgoing President of RI for his very successful four-year precedency. Jan, you've achieved so much over this period of time, both externally in raising the profile of RI with senior decision-makers and politicians, but also internally, to ensure RI is fit for purpose for the future. On behalf of everyone here, thank you. I know the time and dedication you've placed in the role, and, thanks to you, RI has never been on a surer footing in advancing the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities across the world. All that remains for me to say is to wish you all a wonderful Congress, and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the coming three days. Thank you.

Thank you Roy, that very neatly brings us to the close of the opening ceremony.

I would like to invite the Royal party and VIP guests to make their way through the doors, and I will be able to advise others where they might be going for lunch in a moment or two, so thank you very much indeed for joining us (Applause).

I am not being the sort of person that wants to keep you from your lunch too much longer and I know that some of you may have drunk too much coffee this morning and are already heading in the right direction but, if you go out of the main doors here and turn right, and continue down to the Hall, you will find your lunch there.

So, thank you for your patience this morning. We will be back here at five to two for a prompt two o'clock start on the World of Work.