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**UN Human Rights Council**  
**47<sup>th</sup> Session, July 2021, Item 3**

**Panel 1: Violence against women and girls with disabilities**

Delivered by Ambassador Meirav Eilon Shahar  
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in Geneva

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Thank you, Madam President .

Women with disabilities face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, first due to their gender, and secondly due to their disability. They are also more likely to suffer violence, including sexual and gender based violence, than women without disabilities. They are also often unable to access health systems due to a risk of humiliation which is compounded by difficulties in forming relationships, the questioning of their sexuality by others, and by their mistreatment by professionals and authorities.

Madam President,

Women with disabilities also experience harmful social attitudes and stereotypes that perceive them as weak and deny them of their independence and their access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Additionally, they are placed in a more vulnerable situation as a result of their dependence on others involved in their care. This vulnerability is further intensified by the inadequacy of the legal system to understand their disability, which often leads to lack of legal proceedings against offenders .

Madam President ,

In Israel, we have a programme called “Woman to Woman” which works to connect women with disabilities to other women in their community in order to share experiences and discuss the challenges they face. We also have a program of “Justice Enablers” which is created to accompany persons with disabilities who are victims of violence through criminal proceedings and the justice system .

Madam President,

Israel believes that in order to eliminate violence against women with disabilities actions must be taken to:

1. Develop accessible services for victims of sexual assault, and train caregivers (including caregivers with disabilities) to provide accessible service.
2. Make shelters accessible to victims of violence including victims with disabilities .
3. Continue to develop legal training and accessibility within the police and judiciary, as well as amendments to legislation, in order to enable women with disabilities to exercise their rights within the criminal justice system.

I thank you.