

Speech: UK and Kenya on Disability Summit: Nothing about us, without us

Cabinet Secretary Yatani, Ladies and Gentleman

Good afternoon

I am delighted to see so many of you here this afternoon ahead of the first, yes the first, Global Disability Summit in London on 24th July.

The Summit which the UK, Kenya and the International Disability Alliance will co-host, will raise global attention and focus on a long neglected area. It will mobilise new global and national commitments on disability and showcase good practice and innovation from across the world.

The UK was thrilled when the Government of Kenya agreed to co-host the Summit. Kenya is rightly recognized as a leader on disability inclusion and there is much that the UK and other countries can learn from you. But, as is the case in my own country, true equality remains a work in progress.

Today I would like to acknowledge the dedication of [everybody here](#) to making the Summit a great success. It will be your passion, energy and drive that will help realise true equality for people with disabilities here in Kenya.

CS Yatani, as you head to London, I want to thank you and your team at the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection for our long-standing partnership. Together we have helped assist the most vulnerable and the most neglected people in Kenya.

Today, we are committed more than ever to ensuring that people with disabilities are not left behind, that they are supported to contribute their full potential to, and benefit from, Kenya's prosperity.

The UK is already working to promote disability inclusion here in Kenya, in partnership with many of you:

- From the support we're providing to Sightsavers through the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust to tackle blinding trachoma;
- To our partnership with Leonard Cheshire supporting disability inclusion in schools through the Girls Education Challenge;
- To our work with Sense International to support childhood screening of sensory disabilities; and
- During last year's election, our support through Humanity and Inclusion to help ensure persons with disabilities were able to cast their votes.

This is a good starting point, but we must continue to work together to push for change, challenge stigma and move things forward, both as individuals, but also as Governments.

For too long, people with disabilities have been excluded from conversations

on policies and actions that affect them. But that is changing. Your mini-disability summit here, which brought together disabled people, organisations, carers, the private sector and governments on 24th May was a fantastic example that there should be Nothing About Us, Without Us.

The commitments which came out of that event, combined with the Summit outcomes, will deliver real action, helping achieve progress on the rights of people with disabilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to conclude by thanking each and every one of you for your work, and by wishing those heading to London a successful trip. We look forward to working with you on return to further support people with disabilities in Kenya.

Before I invite my fellow speakers: i) Mr Anderson Gitonga, CEO of the United Disabled Persons of Kenya; ii) Ms Alice Wairimu, an inspiring young lady living with a disability; and iii) His Excellency, Cabinet Secretary Yatani to say a few words – I would like to play a short video message from the UK's Secretary of State for International Development, Penny Morduant.

As many of you will know, our Development Secretary is a long standing champion of people with disabilities, and the driving force behind the Global Disability Summit.

Thank you