



**43rd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 24 February –20 March 2020**

**Annual interactive debate on the rights of persons with disabilities**

*Theme: Article 8 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on awareness-raising*

Oral statement delivered by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

*Check against delivery*

Madame President,

APG23 welcomes the Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on "Awareness-raising under article 8 of the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities".<sup>1</sup>

APG23 since its origins relates to the persons with disabilities as active and participatory subjects in their own life: they are not the object of assistance but a resource for the society. "Each one has got a value for the others, despite the fragility - said Don Oreste Benzi our founder - as a builder of life, carrier of a unique and irreplaceable mission, an active citizen and protagonist of history".

In Italy, since 2006, APG23, in compliance with art. 8.2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has promoted a public awareness campaign on the rights of persons with disabilities in conjunction with the International Day of Persons with disabilities, called IO VALGO "**I AM WORTH**".

It takes place in the squares of about ten Italian cities, through marches, conferences, theatre plays, workshops, art exhibitions, concerts, wheelchair basketball tournaments, flash mobs, distribution of informative material and collection of stories. Through these events, all the media are invited to represent persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the objectives of the Convention, in particular by giving visibility to stories and experiences of social or work integration collected directly from the protagonists.

"**IO VALGO**" becomes an effective opportunity at the local level for a non-discriminatory narrative to overcome stereotypes, prejudices and avoid instrumentalizing stories related to persons with disabilities. Both a positive vision and a greater inclusive social cohesion of persons with disabilities are thus spread through the awareness campaign. Skills, merits and expectations of people are better known, in a multidimensional perspective more adherent to the characteristics of today's society, in the world of work, school, sport, art, theatre, music and leisure places.

We would like to ask the panellists: what communication strategies resulted so far to be more effective in awareness raising under art. 8 of the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities?

Thank you!

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/43/27