



STATEMENT

as delivered by Mr. David Cassar,

*Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta to
the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva,
2nd October 2018, 15:45 Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XVIII,
during the third thematic session: Inequalities, social inclusion and rights
of the UNECE Regional Conference on ICPD+25:
“Enabling Choices: Population Dynamics and Sustainable Development”*

Inequalities, social inclusion and rights

Madame Chair,

Through Agenda 2030, the responsibility of all States, to “*respect, protect and promote human rights, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national and social origin, property, birth, disability or other status*” was firmly at the forefront.

Unfortunately, the world is still plagued by inequality and social exclusion that tear at the fabric of society, create turbulence and pose a threat to human rights. This is particularly felt by vulnerable groups, such as migrants, religious minorities, LGBTI, persons with disabilities and the elderly. We believe that through strengthened worldwide cooperation – at the bilateral, regional and global level - these forms of discrimination can eventually be eradicated. Nonetheless, Malta believes that it is vital that each country seeks to lead by example.

Madame Chair,

With this in mind, this year, Malta has not only retained but strengthened its top ranking on the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map. Furthermore, in 2017, Malta adopted its very first migrant integration strategy and action plan noting that diversity has become a characteristic of Maltese society and is set to stay as a way of life.



In order to improve the lives of the elderly, Malta recently launched an initiative which covers the delivery of medications to the homes of patients eligible for this service. Additionally, a holistic National Action Plan on Dementia will soon be implemented.

We believe that every person deserves the appropriate structures to exercise their autonomy and that every person should live in an environment which is easily accessible. Against this background, Malta is currently developing the concept of the Office for Disability Issues, which will better manage policy implementation and direction, as well as to coordinate discussions between all relevant stakeholders.

On a wider scale, Malta remains actively engaged in international efforts to achieve gender equality, women's empowerment, and the advancement of women' rights as a matter of priority, and closer to home, our Government is currently addressing gender-balanced representation in political and public life, from which society can benefit as a whole.

Madame Chair,

This is only a drop in the ocean. However, only through our strong commitment can we collectively make a difference that will be enjoyed by future generations. Let us all continue to work hard, within the United Nations, to make inequality and social exclusion a part of history, not a part of our present.

Thank You, Madame Chair!