



*Government of Bermuda*

**Ministry of Social Development and Seniors**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

by

**The Hon. Tinee Furbert, JP, MP  
Minister of Social Development and Seniors**

**International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

*Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020*

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**Mr. Speaker**, yesterday people worldwide participated in events in recognition of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities. Bermuda held several events to recognise the day, the most notable being a Motorcade held by the Bermuda Hospitals Board through Hamilton.

**Mr. Speaker**, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities is observed on 3<sup>rd</sup> December and has been promoted by the United Nations since 1992. The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

**Mr. Speaker**, the UN estimates that fifteen percent of the world's population live with some form of disability. That's one billion people. They define disability as a condition or function judged to be significantly impaired relative to the usual standard of an individual of their group. It is often used to refer to individual functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness, and various types of chronic disease.

**Mr. Speaker**, this year's theme is 'Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post Covid-19 world'.

The Secretary General of the UN, Mr. António Guterres, asked that *“As the world recovers from the pandemic, we must ensure that the aspirations and rights of persons with disabilities are included and accounted for in a -inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world. “*

**Mr. Speaker**, There is an opportunity for us all, in Bermuda, to recognize that as a community we can do more for and with people who have seen and unseen disabilities particularly post Covid-19.

**Mr. Speaker**, the UN highlight the fact that evidence and experience shows that when barriers to inclusion are removed and persons with disabilities are empowered to participate fully in societal life, the entire community benefits. Barriers faced by persons with disabilities are, therefore, a detriment to society as a whole, and inclusion and accessibility is necessary to achieve progress and development for all.

**Mr. Speaker**, yesterday we observed the successes we have had over the years to be more inclusive in Bermuda. It was also a day for us to commit to doing more. I encourage everyone to take the time to investigate how they can help to make Bermuda more inclusive and accessible for those with disabilities as we prepare for the post Covid-19 economy.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker**.