**55th session of the Human Rights Council**

**ANNUAL DEBATE ON RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (HRC res. 7/9 and 49/12)**

**Oral Statement by the Scottish Human Rights Commission**

Mr. President,

I am pleased to deliver these remarks from the Scottish Human Rights Commission on the Annual Debate on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Alongside our counterparts at the UK Independent Mechanism, last year we published a comprehensive progress assessment to inform the UNCRPD’s upcoming scrutiny of the UK.

Working with members of the Scottish Independent Living Coalition to audit progress, we found that disabled people in Scotland were being forced to choose between breathing and eating.

Our work on UNCRPD has also raised concerns about the ways in which the right to independent living in Article 19 of the CRPD is being experienced. Many people with learning disabilities and autism have little to no autonomy, choice and control over their place of residence and with whom they live. They are denied access to community based services on an equal basis with others.

Progress has been far below what is needed to protect disabled people's rights, amidst the global challenges of a pandemic and economic shock.

There is currently no Disability Equality Strategy and an immediate priorities plan for short term action on disabled people's rights has still not been published. The long promised incorporation of the UNCRPD into Scots law must deliver meaningful change and accountability.

However, DPOs and the Commission are concerned that the model currently being suggested by the Scottish Government will not deliver this to the maximum extent.

The international framework for disabled people's rights provides clear guidance and obligations. We look forward to continuing to engage at every level to secure these rights in practice for every disabled person.

I thank the Council.