# United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Government response and proposed mechanisms to support implementation Summary and recommendations

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This summary is of a paper that went to Cabinet to seek agreement to recommendations for a Government response to feedback from the United Nations Committee who examined New Zealand’s progress implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in August 2022. New Zealand was last examined in 2014.

The UNCRPD is an international treaty on the rights of disabled people. It does not create new rights for disabled people. Instead, it sets out what is required to implement existing human rights as they relate to disabled people. Every country that ratifies (agrees to) to the Convention has an obligation to implement it. The New Zealand Government ratified the Convention in 2008.

The United Nations Committee is an independent international committee of 18 experts on disability rights and policy and issued 60 Concluding Observations for New Zealand to address.

The paper recommends that cabinet agree to carry out the response to the Concluding Observations through the next Disability Action Plan or a similar process, with a Domestic forum no later than December 2027. This is so that work can continue through the Disability Action Plan while the Domestic Forum provides the opportunity to receive feedback from the Disability Community on progress being made mid-term.

The Minister for Disability Issues believes this process reinforces New Zealand’s reputation as a leader in the development and implementation of human rights for disabled people internationally.

It also recognises the importance disabled people and the wider public place on the role of the United Nations Committee and domestic protection mechanisms (such as the Independent Monitoring Mechanism) to hold Government to account for furthering disabled peoples’ rights meaningfully.

New Zealand will be next examined on implementation of the UNCRPD no later than October 2030.

## Relation to Government Policy

The paper aligns with the Government’s commitment to ensure that disabled people have their needs and potential considered across all significant policy and service development that’s supported by the New Zealand Disability Strategy and Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

The Concluding Observations cover most of the important areas of government policy including, but not only, Disability System Transformation, Accessibility, Welfare Reform and Health and Disability System Reform.

The Concluding Observations made specific and extensive reference to the needs and goals of tāngata whaikaha Māori (disabled Māori). This is consistent with the obligations of Te Tiriti O Waitangi in relation to disabled Māori.

## Recommendations

The Minister for Disability Issues recommends that the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

1. Note that New Zealand was examined on its implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the UNCRPD) in August 2022.
2. Note that New Zealand received 60 Concluding Observations towards implementing the UNCRPD.
3. Note that New Zealand must report on progress on implementation of these Concluding Observations by October 2030.
4. Note that New Zealand’s leadership role in developing and ensuring best practice in the implementation and monitoring of the UNCRPD, and the proposed Government response is consistent with this leadership role.
5. Note that consistent with this leadership role, agencies have indicated their agreement to progress planning for an implementation of the Concluding Observations.
6. Note that agency responses are both a commitment to Cabinet to progress the recommendations as well as a commitment to the disabled people of New Zealand.
7. Agree to the New Zealand Government’s overall response to the Concluding Observations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as outlined in Appendix One.
8. Invite the Minister for Disability Issues to report back to Cabinet on agencies’ implementation progress and seek Cabinet agreement on an appropriate monitoring mechanism by December 2023
9. Agree to a Domestic Forum process, based on the 2022 Forum, to be implemented no later than December 2027.

You can find the full paper and appendix 1 at [whaikaha.govt.nz/UNCRPD-paper](http://www.whaikaha.govt.nz/UNCRPD-paper)

**End of: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Government response and proposed mechanisms to support implementation  
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