



*Permanent Mission of Italy to the
International Organizations in Geneva*

***Side event on “promoting quality family and community based care for
children with disabilities”***

(5th March 2019, 1.30-3.00 p.m., Palais des Nations, room XXIV)

Welcome remarks

Distinguished panellists,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

*I’m really pleased to welcome you to this side event on the theme “**promoting alternative care for children with disabilities**”. Let me thank particularly the organizers ATD Fourth World, ISS and the numerous NGOs listed in the flyer, as well as UNICEF, the EU Delegation and the Permanent Mission of Uruguay for co-sponsoring the panel. I am convinced that our discussion today will fruitfully complement the annual day on the rights of the child which focuses on the empowerment of children with disabilities. This year, we will also celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and we must bear in mind that children with disabilities hold the same rights as all children. Even though the risks and challenges that children with disabilities face are extensive, including the placement in institutions where poor conditions endanger their health, development and well being, there are however great opportunities to empower them and realize their rights. Our panellists will present promising practices from different regions of the world on preventing unnecessary separation and institutionalization of children with disabilities as well as promoting quality family and community based care.*

Let me introduce our first panellist who will also be our moderator: Mr Alfredo Ferrante, Head of Unit of international relations at the Department for family policies in Italy and former President of the Committee of the rights of persons with disabilities at the Council of Europe.

Mr Ferrante, the floor is yours.