

# SÃO PAULO MANIFESTO

## For the Blind and Visually Impaired Youth of the World.

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, in São Paulo, Brazil, youth with visual impairments from around the world gathered at the **World Forum of Youth with Visual Impairments** (From the Present we have to the Future we want) within the framework of the Congress and of the World Blind Union (WBU) Assembly, to make visible what has historically been made invisible: our struggles, our voices, and our ability to politically influence the transformation of reality.

Despite the diversity of contexts, languages, and cultures, we share a common truth: the barriers we face recognize no borders, and we experience double marginalization as young persons and persons with disabilities. This is further multiplied when we are girls, boys, adolescents, women, LGBTIQ+ persons, Indigenous persons, Afro-descendants, migrants, rural youth, among other intersectionalities.

This manifesto was born as a political response to these injustices. It is a collective cry that refuses to be silenced, a tool for advocacy built on dialogue, experience, and youth leadership. We reclaim our right to live with autonomy, dignity, and full social participation. We demand compliance with the **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (CRPD), the implementation of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), and commitment to the **Compact for the Future** and the **Call to Action for Youth with Disabilities**, joining these global agendas to transform realities and build inclusive and sustainable societies.

### Today we declare that:

We continue to face structural barriers, lack of accessibility, and gaps between law and practice, which limit access to education, employment, culture, healthcare, and political participation. Structural prejudices persist that exclude us from decision-making spaces, particularly impacting women, LGBTIQ+ persons, and other underrepresented groups.

At the same time, we live in a time of technological advances, recognition of rights, and youth organization, from where we raise our voices to transform this present into inclusion and social justice.

### We want a future without barriers:

A present where inclusion and accessibility are everyday life; with inclusive education, decent employment, accessible technologies, independent living, and

full participation in civic, political, and cultural life. Communities that value diversity, overcome adult-centrism, and recognize us as rights-holders capable of making decisions, leading, and transforming.

### To achieve this, we propose:

- Organizing and strengthening local, regional, and global youth networks with an intersectional approach.
- Demanding decision-making spaces and the effective fulfillment of our rights.
- Promoting full citizenship based on education, employment, accessibility, and technology.
- Promoting cultural, sports, technological, and awareness-raising campaigns and projects in partnership with other movements.
- Rejecting all forms of discrimination, stereotypes, and hate speech.

### We denounce:

- The lack of effective public policies based on disaggregated data and the setbacks in acquired rights.
- The multiple exclusion of rural, Indigenous, Afro-descendant, LGBTIQ+ youth, and young women with disabilities.
- The ableism and structural prejudices that infantilize us.
- Barriers persist in the key areas already mentioned, including transportation and digital environments.
- The absence of inclusive disaster risk management, which increases our vulnerability to emergencies and climate crises.
- The impact of armed conflicts, which exacerbates poverty, displacement, and exclusion.

### We demand:

- The full recognition of our rights in all their intersectionalities.
- Inclusive and accessible education, decent employment free from discrimination, and universal accessibility in all settings.
- Active and binding participation of youth with visual impairments in the formulation and evaluation of public policies.
- Comprehensive health care, including mental health, sexual and reproductive health, and emotional well-being.
- Access to culture, sports, recreation, reading, and music as fundamental rights.
- Sustained and transparent public funding for youth projects, with intergenerational teams where our voices have real power.

### We commit to:

- Raise our voices against discrimination and make our reality visible.

- Propose concrete alternatives based on our experiences.
- Train ourselves and other youth in human rights, leadership, technology, and the CRPD.
- Strengthen mutual support networks and South-South cooperation to share accessible solutions based on our contexts.
- Work with youth without disabilities and other movements, ensuring the full participation of invisible women and youth.
- Promote the effective implementation of international frameworks.
- Act with transparency, empathy, and solidarity, building an ethical, democratic, and representative movement capable of impacting from the local to the global level.

This Manifesto is our collective voice and our political declaration. We are an active part of social transformation and we will not accept a future without us.

**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US!**

São Paulo, September 1<sup>st</sup> , 2025