

ARE DISABLED PEOPLE INCLUDED?

An exposure document on the violation of disabled people's human rights and the solutions recommended within the UN Standard Rules.

"All Human Beings are born free and equal in Dignity and Rights."

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Produced by Disabled Peoples' International, Inclusion International, World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf, World Psychiatric Users Federation.

This exposure document has been published by the five disability International Non-Governmental Organisations to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Published by Disability Awareness in Action. Edited by Rachel Hurst. Printed by Freeways Print ISBN No: 1 898037 36 1 This publication is available in ordinary and large print, on audio tape, in ASCII on computer disk and in English Braille. (c) Disability Awareness in Action.

This publication is kindly funded by IHC New Zealand Incorporated, PO Box 4155, Wellington, New Zealand, Fax (64) 4 47 20 429

FOREWORD

by Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Human Rights and Disabled Persons

The United Nations General Assembly, in 1981, adopted as the theme of the Year of Disabled Persons the slogan "Full Participation and Equality"; this meant recognition at the highest possible political level of the right to full participation of disabled people in the societies to which they belong. This has since become widely accepted as the overall goal of all development efforts in the disability field.

During the UN Decade of Disabled Persons, 1983-1992, when the policies and programmes outlined in the World Programme of Action were to be implemented, some significant developments were achieved but there was too little progress. So the international disability community requested that the United Nations should assume a strong leadership role and find more concrete guidelines for development. As a result the Standard Rules were elaborated and unanimously adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/96 of 20 December 1993.

UN Special Rapporteur Lindqvist stated that: "The ideas and concepts of equality and full participation for persons with disabilities have been developed very far on paper, but not in reality. In all our countries, in all types of living conditions, the consequences of disability interfere in the lives of disabled persons to a degree which is not at all acceptable When a person is excluded from employment because he is disabled, he is being discriminated against as a human being. If a general education system is developed and disabled children are excluded, their rights are being violated".

Even though it is difficult to have precise figures, it is estimated that more than 10 per cent of the world's total population have some type of disabling physical or mental impairment. This translates into the fact that approximately 25 per cent of the entire population are directly affected by disability. These figures are testimony to the enormous size of the problem and highlight the impact of disability on every society.

Quantification alone is not a sufficient basis for evaluating the actual gravity of the problem; disabled persons frequently live in deplorable conditions, owing to the presence of physical and social barriers which prevent their integration and full participation in the community. Millions of children and adults worldwide are segregated and deprived of their rights and are, in effect, living on the margins. This is unacceptable.

This year of commemoration by the international community of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, provides an opportunity to examine what has been achieved and to reflect what needs to be accomplished in the future. The motto of the anniversary 'All Human Rights for

All' expresses what we must commit ourselves to securing in the years ahead.

The provisions of the Declaration call for the respect of the rights of all human beings - recognition of the dignity of all humans, with or without disabilities. We must all be aware that no society can enjoy full development without proper consideration of all members and that there is no acceptable future for a society where individuals are excluded and deprived of their rights and dignity.

Let us recall the names of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Frida Kahlo, Beethoven and other women and men who in addition to their achievements have bequeathed to us the living testimony that those who have to cope with pain, adversity or disability are able to move humanity through their art, science and genius; through their leadership.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is:

- to raise awareness of the conditions in which the majority of over 500 million disabled people live in the world today.
- to show that disability is a visible, human rights issue
- to influence all those in a position to implement social change to take action.

Disabled people are human beings and have the right to equality of treatment.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is the cornerstone of international human rights law. It is not legally binding but is a list of principles which should not be broken by any nation calling itself civilised.

Subsequently, the UN drew up two separate International Covenants elaborating on the principle of the Universal Declaration. The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are both legally binding on those states who have signed them.

A violation occurs when a human right is breached or not implemented.

Discrimination is defined as: any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on grounds, such as race, colour, sex ... or any other status and has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms.

All the individual cases documented here are just examples - there is evidence of hundreds and thousands of other cases of similar violations.

In this booklet, we document violations alongside the relevant section of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and then give a solution from the the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

There is also evidence of thousands of examples of good practice demonstrating that these violations need not take place. Through the influence of disabled people's organisations everywhere, these examples of good practice have been put in place by governments, policy and programme-makers and statutory authorities, proving that disabled people can be fully participating and equal citizens in their own communities.

All cases of violations in this document have been verified and are documented either in court records, the press or in research evidence published since 1990. In order to protect disabled individuals and ensure confidentiality, only the country in which the violations took place, are given.

Throughout this report, references to 'disabled people' include people with sensory, intellectual and physical impairments and people with mental health difficulties.

THE EXPOSURE DOCUMENT

LIFE, FREEDOM and DIGNITY

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Examples of violations:

- "To be imprisoned inside one's own body is dreadful. To be confined in an institution for the profoundly retarded does not crush you in the same way; it just removes all hope.

I went to St. Nicholas Hospital when I was three. The hospital was the state garbage bin. Very young children were taken into permanent care, regardless of their intelligence. If they were disfigured, distorted, or disturbed then the world should not have to see or acknowledge them. You knew that you had failed to measure up to the standard expected of babies. You were expected to die."
(Australia)

- "I am 22 years old and severely disabled. Till 1990, people in Romania had no idea about the existence of disabled persons and the mentally impaired; even now we don't know the real number of disabled people. We had only the right to die.

Now, we are recognised but we have no possibilities for social integration because of the existence of architectural barriers, lack of working conditions for disabled people and no access to any public means of transportation. In spite of the fact that I would like to learn, there were and are no possibilities for study for people with severe impairments. I cannot write or read but I can think. My dream is to have my own life, a dignified life, independent and fulfilled". (Romania)

- A family kept a disabled woman in a stinking 6ft hole for 40 years. (Spain)

- 6 disabled children starved to death at a hospital because staff stole the food that was destined for them. (Ukraine)

- An 18-month little girl was refused use of ventilator or antibiotics because of a legal and medical judgement on the quality of her life. (UK)

- A mother kept her disabled daughter in a room as a family servant. (Israel)

- Seeing the ragged disabled people begging on the streets of Lagos elicits sympathy from the passers-by so that they go as far as dipping their hands into their lean pockets to give alms to the beggars. It is therefore disheartening to know that these so-called unfortunate members of society, who have no choice but to go on the streets to beg, are planted by able-bodied people who go to remote villages and lure disabled people to Lagos on the pretext that they want to help them. These unsuspecting disabled people and the elderly are kept at various strategic points on the streets in the most pathetic conditions to draw out the greatest amount of sympathy. Their managers who live in comfort in posh houses, now organise vendors to supply food to their money-making 'beasts'. These beggars give their daily proceeds to their managers. (Nigeria)

- A woman tortured her adopted disabled daughter for years, beating her, kicking her in the stomach, pulling her hair. She kept her in a coffin-shaped box at night "for wanting more food or for talking too much. (Austria)

What the UN Standard Rules say:

Excerpt from Preamble: The principle of equal rights implies that the needs of each and every individual are of equal importance, that these needs must be made the basis for the planning of societies and that all resources must be employed so as to ensure that every individual has equal opportunity for participation.

Rule 9. Family Life and Personal Integrity: 4. Persons with disabilities and their families need to be fully informed and educated on how to avoid the occurrence of abuse, recognise when abuse has occurred and report on such acts.

Rule 15. Legislation: States have a responsibility to create the legal bases for measures to achieve the objectives of full participation and equality for persons with disability.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13.

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.
2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Examples of violations:

- A woman with MS who needed a word board to communicate was not allowed to give evidence in court regarding the rape and assault she suffered when in a residential home. (UK)
- Many people with intellectual impairments are detained and arrested without evidence just because of their impairment. (Worldwide)
- People who have been sectioned under Mental Health law have no system of redress under law. In some countries, people with Aids are also compulsorily detained. (Worldwide)
- In Kumasi Central Region, a prisoner was carried into court on someone's back and tried lying down on the floor. (Ghana)
- In many countries, deaf people who are unable to express themselves in writing are considered legally incapacitated. (Africa, Latin America)
- There is no official sign language and few interpreters for deaf people in courts. (Ghana)
- A man who was charged on two counts of sexually abusing his blind daughter was acquitted because the judge stated that the visual disability of the girl prevented her from making a reliable identification. (Hong Kong)
- In many countries, blind or deaf people are not permitted to vote or stand for election. (Africa, Asia and Latin America)
- 100 People with severe intellectual impairments in an institution in Ireland were to be used as guinea pigs in a pharmaceutical trial requiring monthly injections without their permission or understanding. (Ireland)
- I need a motorised wheelchair but there is no such thing here and I don't even have enough money to buy a manual chair. (Brazil)
- IATA regulations regarding disabled people to fill in form to travel by car which asks if they are offensive in any way: smell/appearance/conduct. (Worldwide)
- Most institutions do not allow inmates to marry or have relationships. (Worldwide)
- 5 women raped by the same doctor in 'exchange' for obtaining new wheelchairs. (EU)

- A judge ruled that a wheelchair user was not entitled to accessible transport because he was not a member of the public. (Netherlands)

- Twenty-six countries deny deaf people a driving license. Quarantine of dogs when crossing national borders does not allow guide dog users to travel freely. (UK)

What the Standard Rules say:

Rule 15. Legislation 1. National legislation, embodying the rights and obligations of citizens, should include the rights and obligations of persons with disabilities. States are under an obligation to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their rights, including their human, civil and political rights, on an equal basis with other citizens. States must ensure that organisations of persons with disabilities are involved in the development of national legislation concerning the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as in the ongoing evaluation of this legislation.

Rule 9 Family Life and Personal Integrity States should promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in family life. They should promote their right to personal integrity, and ensure that laws do not discriminate against persons with disabilities with respect to sexual relationships, marriage and parenthood.

Rule 5. Accessibility States should recognise the overall importance of accessibility in the process of the equalisation of opportunities in all spheres of society. For persons with disabilities of any kind, States should (a) introduce programmes of action to make the physical environment accessible; and (b) undertake measures to provide access to information and communication.

ACCESS TO MOBILITY

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 14. 1. Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

Article 15. 1. Everyone has the right to a nationality 2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Examples of violations;

- A British doctor and his family faced deportation because his daughter had cerebral palsy. (Australia)
- In many countries, adults with intellectual impairments are not allowed to hold passports.
- Disabled children were dumped in institutions by families seeking to emigrate to Canada before Chinese take-over. (Hong Kong)
- "Some say to be rich in a rich environment is its own reward. We feel the worst case is for poor people to live in a rich environment. this situation engenders feelings of helplessness and hopelessness which cannot be imagined by ordinary citizens. Most of the two million disabled people in Taiwan know this sort of misery." (Taiwan)

What the UN Standard Rules say

Rule 14. 3. The needs and concerns of persons with disabilities should be incorporated into general development plans and not be treated separately.

States will ensure that disability aspects are included in all relevant policy-making and national planning. 1. States should initiate and plan adequate policies for persons with disabilities at the national level, and stimulate and support action at regional and local levels.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 16. 1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during it and at its dissolution. 2. Marriage shall be entered into only with free and full consent of the intending spouses. 3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. 1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. 2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. 1. Everyone has the right to peaceful assembly and association.

Article 21. 1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Examples of violations

- Many people in institutions are not allowed to form relationships or marry. (Worldwide)
- A physician secretly sterilised a young psychologist with spina bifida during an appendix operation because she could not be a fit mother. (EU)
- Laws in a number of countries forbid marriage between deaf people. (Africa, Latin America)
- Blind people cannot be legal guardians of children (Chile, Uruguay, Honduras)
- "The disadvantages of disabled women begin in childhood, because parents look on their disabled daughters as a curse from God. There is no hope of you bringing cows and other material wealth to the family, since it is widely believed that you will not marry because you are disabled. As if that was not enough, parents say they won't waste their money sending disabled children to school when they don't have enough resources to send their able-bodied children". (Uganda)
- People who are seen as not able to make a decision about their lives can have their right to own a property denied. (Europe)
- Disabled people are not allowed to own businesses. (Venezuela)
- A blind person was incarcerated for more than 13 years for expressing his views. (Turkey)

- Blind persons cannot give evidence in public documents. (Argentina)
- If your support needs cost more than £500 a week then you have to go to live in an institution. (UK)
- Wheelchair users cannot become Church of England priests; disabled people cannot become Buddhist monks; most places of worship are inaccessible. (Worldwide)
- Deaf people are often denied the right of sign language interpreters when attending meetings, committees or in any situations private or public when their voice should be heard. (Worldwide)
- One country reported that organisations of the deaf are not allowed to be officially registered. (Asia)

In 1997, a survey of voting stations showed only 48 per cent were fully accessible to disabled people. (UK)

- "I am Deaf. I have six children, whose father left me a long time ago and is no longer alive. I am orphaned of father and mother with no other means of support. What I need is financial aid to start working and to meet the needs of my poor children, above all with their studies". (Republic of Mali)
- Research showed that only ten national councils of disabled people were funded by the government. In the developing world only a small minority have any support at all from the government. (Europe)
- "We disabled people are in a terrible state. We are four disabled brothers who have received no help or training from the Government except a meagre monthly benefit of 250,000 Turkish lira (about US\$18), which is not at all sufficient to buy even our daily tea." (Turkey)

What the UN Standard Rules say

Rule 9. Family life and personal integrity Persons with disabilities must not be denied the opportunity to experience their sexuality, have sexual relationships and experience parenthood. Taking into account that persons with disabilities may experience difficulties in getting married and setting up a family, States should encourage the availability of appropriate counselling. Persons with disabilities must have the same access as others to family-planning methods, as well as to information in accessible form on the sexual functioning of their bodies.

Rule 1. Awareness-raising States should initiate and support information campaigns concerning persons with disabilities and disability policies, conveying

the message that persons with disabilities are citizens with the same rights and obligations as others, thus justifying measures to remove all obstacles to full participation.

Rule 12. Religion States will encourage measures for equal participation by persons with disabilities in the religious life of their communities.

Rule 18. Organisations of disabled people States should recognise the right of the organisations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at national, regional and local levels.

Rule 8. Income maintenance and social security States are responsible for the provision of social security and income maintenance for persons with disabilities. 1. States should ensure the provision of adequate income support to persons with disabilities who, owing to disability or disability-related factors, have temporarily lost or received a reduction in their income or have been denied employment opportunities.

THE RIGHT TO WORK

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 23.

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Examples of violations

- If I lose my job, I will receive only half my current salary which means I won't be able to afford my home and will have to move to an institution. I would rather die than let that happen. There is no system of personal assistance, or home assistance, for disabled people who need help. (Portugal)

- Law 16329 1962 institutes a quota of 0.5 per cent disabled people for public and private employers. Research in 1996 found overall non-compliance. (Ghana)

- A senior official of the Commonwealth Games said integration of disabled athletes was an embarrassment. (Canada)

- "How to get work? I tried many times, always with the same response: 'There is no work for you.' All the doors were shut in my face. I had to fall back on some of the institutions in this country, since my position was very difficult. I got negative results because there are few sources of work for disabled people and the ones that exist are very limited. (Panama)

- A group of disabled people was turned out of a hotel because they upset the other guests. (Germany)

What the UN Standard Rules say

Rule 7. Employment States should recognise the principle that persons with disabilities must be empowered to exercise their human rights, particularly in the field of employment. In both rural and urban areas they must have equal opportunities for productive and gainful employment in the labour market.

Rule 11. Recreation and sport States will take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities for recreation and sport.

THE RIGHT TO REST AND LEISURE

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25. 1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Article 26. 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the base of merit.

Examples of violations

- "Ten years ago, I had a fall which left me in this wheelchair. I am a very humble person, of the lowest class economically. Many disabled people are rolled into a corner of their home, where guests and neighbours cannot see them. When they die, many people say: 'There was a disabled person in that family. I never knew.'" (Mexico)
- "I need crutches and money to go to school. My parents decided to send all the other children to school but me." (Zimbabwe)
- "My mother tied me to heavy furniture while she went out to work in the rice fields. My school days had many difficulties of mockery and fights with little help from teachers." (Guyana)
- There is a 30-year old disabled woman and her mother who, at the age of 80, is declining due to malnutrition and lack of medical attention. She has dropped her twice and fallen herself. The only help they have is her son who has an amputated leg. Who will take care of this young woman when her mother dies? She can't walk, talk or eat on her own. (Mexico)
- A couple, who refused to send their adopted Down's Syndrome daughter to a special school, faced possible prosecution after a judge's ruling. (UK)
- Only 11 out of 25 papers reached Gindin blind students on time for their examination. (Nigeria)

What the UN Standard Rules say

Rule 2. Medical care States should ensure the provision of effective medical care to persons with disabilities.

Rule 3. Rehabilitation States should ensure the provision of rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities in order for them to reach and sustain their optimum level of independence and functioning.

Rule 6. Education States should recognise the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Declaration of Human Rights

Article 27.

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realised.

Article 29.

1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Examples of violations

- The manager was extremely arrogant and unhelpful and told us that we can't come to the theatre because it no facilities. (UK)

- As you know, in our country there has been a war for [several years]. The situation is becoming more and more difficult. Right now in Sarajevo there are about 500 Deaf and hard of hearing people, who have lost limbs as a result of the shelling. (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

- Images of disabled people in the media are generally negative and stereotyped. Disabled characters in films and plays are mostly played by non-disabled actors. (Worldwide)

- Afghanistan being a war-torn country, there is much destruction and much grief. There are hundreds of thousands of disabled people who are facing very hard circumstances. (Afghanistan)

- Agonies and problems faced by disabled people have obviously been neglected in the past and are still neglected. Although there are organisations for disabled people, as well as government agencies providing welfare, facilities and limited protection, there are still hidden solutions to be found by disabled people themselves. Only they can solve their own problems, supply their own needs and lessen their agonies. (West Malaysia)

- In 1990 of a total of 129,000 deaths by all causes, 2,300 were caused by intentional life-terminating acts without explicit request and a further 4,000 caused by withdrawal or withholding treatment without explicit request. (Netherlands)

- In institutions, hospitals and homes all over the world, people with mental health problems are given tranquillising drugs, are being strapped to chairs and beds and incarcerated in locked rooms to modify their behaviour. These treatments are not sanctioned by law but are seen as acceptable to the authorities of the particular institutions. (Worldwide)

- In 1994, China introduced a law designed to eliminate 'inferior births' and heighten the standards of the whole population through enforced sterilisation of disabled people, compulsory abortion of disabled fetuses and the prohibition of marriage between people with certain hereditary conditions. (China)

What the UN Standard Rules say

Rule 10. Culture States should ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to utilise their creative, artistic, and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of their community, be they in urban or rural areas.

Rule 14. Policy-making and planning States will ensure that disability aspects are included in all relevant policy-making at national planning. 1. States should initiate and plan adequate policies for persons with disabilities at the national level, and stimulate and support action at regional and local levels.

Rule 20. National monitoring and evaluation of disability programmes in the implementation of the Standard Rules States are responsible for the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of national programmes and services concerning the equalisation of opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The 54th UN Human Rights Commission encourages all human rights treaty monitoring bodies to respond positively to its invitation to monitor the compliance of States with their commitments under the relevant human rights instruments in order to ensure full enjoyment of those rights by disabled people.

PUBLICATION SPONSORS

Disabled People's International (DPI)

DPI advocates the rights of disabled people. Its philosophy is that disabled people should achieve full participation and equality in all societies. The DPI network has over 120 national assembly members, over half of which are in developing countries. National affiliates aim to be cross-disability, grassroots organisations.

Inclusion International

Inclusion International (formerly the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap - ILSMH) is the only organisation which speaks for the world's 50 million people with mental impairments, their families and those who work for them. It now includes 169 societies in 105 countries. It exists to help its members to fulfil their own objectives in response to local need and to fight for the rights of persons with mental handicap.

World Blind Union (WBU)

WBU is the international voice of over 50 million blind and visually impaired people. It has member organisations in virtually every country of the world. Fundamental to WBU's activities is its commitment to securing equality of opportunity and full participation in society for those it represents.

World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)

WFD is an international organisation of national associations of the Deaf. The WFD was established in 1951 and is working towards full participation and equal rights for Deaf people.

World Federation of Psychiatric Users (WFPU)

WFPU is the international voice of users and ex-users of psychiatric services with diagnoses of "mental illness". It is a support and campaigning organisation.

Each of the above organisations has representation on the Panel of Experts advising the UN Special Rapporteur on the Standard Rules.

Disability Awareness in Action (DAA)

DAA was established in 1992 by the international disability NGOs to provide an information network for disabled people and their organisations worldwide; to support their self-help activities; to ensure their equality of opportunity and to raise awareness that disability is a human rights issue.

THE STANDARD RULES

The Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 December 1993.

Very importantly, the Rules offer an international instrument with a monitoring system to help make sure they are effective. The monitoring system is implemented through a UN Special Rapporteur, advised by a Panel of Experts.

Although states cannot legally be forced to carry them out, the Rules should become an accepted standard internationally when they are used by a large number of states.

The Rules cover all aspects of a disabled person's life and show how governments can make social, legal and political changes to make sure that disabled people become full and equal citizens of their countries. They also provide the basis for technical and economic cooperation among states, the United Nations and other international organisations.

COLLECTION OF VIOLATIONS

The violations listed here form part of a DAA data-base of the individual and collective experience of disabled people.

We are daily up-dating this data base and welcome any instances of violations and abuse - either individual or collective - that you can add to the collection.

To raise world-wide awareness of the real status of disabled people we will be publishing regular reports on the violations of the rights of disabled people as well as giving examples of good practice in overcoming the obstacles to the implementation of disabled people's rights.

Please send the information, in English, giving details of the violation or abuse, where it happened, the person or persons involved and the data that verifies the violation (such as newspaper or court reports, signed personal verification) if they are available. The data on the individual/s and their personal details will be kept absolutely confidential. E-mail the data to DAA, director@daa.org.uk

