



Press Release

3 May: A New Dawn for Disability Rights

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) welcomes the entry into force of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This new Convention is the first international human rights treaty of the 21st century and was the result of years of activism by disabled people's organizations and NGOs. It aims to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy their rights on an equal basis with others worldwide. The entry into force of the new UN Convention on 3 May will remind governments of their obligations and commitments to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure non-discrimination. If properly implemented, it will bring about a real sea-change in the daily experiences of people with disabilities worldwide.

Chairperson of the IDDC, Johannes Trimmel said, *"this is a huge and historic step forward towards the complete inclusion in the human rights agenda of the 650 million people worldwide with disabilities."* He explained further that 80 % of persons with disabilities live in the world's economically poorest countries and that they often belong to the most marginalized groups in the population. *"That's why the IDDC, as a network of disability and development organisations, will continue to campaign to make sure that persons with disabilities are not forgotten in the international development policies of rich countries and regional bodies such as the EU. Persons with disabilities have been marginalized and effectively ignored in both the design and implementation of development programmes for too long"* concluded Trimmel.

In developing countries, the IDDC will vigorously monitor progress on the ground and at a political level to ensure that States live up to the standards for people with disabilities that they signed up to at the UN.

In the European Union and its member states, the IDDC calls for the immediate inclusion of persons with disabilities in development cooperation policies, in accordance with States' obligations under article 32 of the Convention. This will be vital for the realization of full equality and non-discrimination for the poorest and frequently forgotten in our world. As a grouping of NGOs from throughout the EU, the IDDC also calls in particular on the remaining 24 Number EU Member States and the European Commission itself, as the largest combined aid contributors worldwide, to ratify the Convention as soon as possible. Every human rights and human and social development programme financed by the EU and its member states should take explicit measures to include persons with disabilities. Mechanisms must immediately be put in place to ensure all barriers faced by persons with disabilities in development cooperation are removed - not one euro more should be spent by the EU on infrastructure, healthcare, employment or education that is not accessible to all.

Notes to Editors

The International Disability & Development Consortium (IDDC) is a consortium of 20 international NGOs supporting disability and development work in over 100 countries globally. IDDC led the campaign for the stand alone Article on International Cooperation (Article 32) of the UN Convention. IDDC website: www.iddc.org.uk . Facts on the UN Convention www.un.org/disabilities

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