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## GLOBAL NEWS

### • CRPD ratifications reach 99

The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol (OP) by Togo on 1 March 2011 has increased the number of the States Parties to the CRPD to 99, while the OP has 61 ratifications. The number of signatures of the Convention is 147 while the OP has 90 signatures.

### • State Reports submitted to the CRPD Committee

Costa Rica and Sweden have recently submitted their national reports to the CRPD Committee. For the moment, the reports are only available in Spanish for Costa Rica and in English for Sweden.

Spain, Tunisia, Peru, China, Argentina, Austria, Hungary, Paraguay, Australia and El Salvador were the first ten countries to submit their national reports to the CRPD Committee. Please [click here](#) to access the CRPD Committee website section where you can find all reports presented so far to the CRPD Committee.

### • Parallel reports to the CRPD Committee

The disability movement from Sweden has recently submitted a parallel report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities providing information on how Sweden complies with the UN CRPD. The report also includes recommendations on how the situation could be improved. 50 disability organisations and 7 human rights organisations endorse the report. Please [click here](#) to access this report in word version.

### • The Commission on the Status of Women

held its 55th Session from 22 February to 4 March 2011. The priority theme for this session was “access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”. Two of the resolutions adopted by the Commission have included references to women with disabilities: Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies; and Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS. The Commission also agreed conclusions on the priority theme of the session, which provide action-oriented recommendations for all States, relevant non-governmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the UN System and other relevant stakeholders. For detailed information on the references to women with disabilities in resolutions and agreed conclusions, please [click here](#).

During the session, a panel discussion also took place on “Expanding Access to Education and Employment Opportunities for Girls and Women with Disabilities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Fields”, please [click here](#) for more information on this event.

## Treaty Bodies

• From 14 March – 1 April 2011, the **Human Rights Committee** met in New York for its 101st session to review the reports of Mongolia, Serbia, Slovakia, Togo and Seychelles (in the absence of a report). [Click here](#) to read the disability analysis of the Concluding Observations, [here](#) to read IDA's disability analysis of the State reports and [here](#) for IDA's recommendations for the Concluding Observations.

At this session, the **Human Rights Committee** also commenced the second reading of its draft **General Comment** on Freedom of Expression (Article 19, ICCPR) which it will continue at its 102nd session in July 2011. To read the latest draft, [click here](#). To read IDA's submission on the draft General Comment, [click here](#).

**The Committee's Country Report Task force** has also adopted Lists of Issues, which will be available shortly on the Human Rights Committee website, on the Dominican Republic, Iran, Norway, Yemen and Malawi (in the absence of a report). [Click here](#) to read IDA's disability analysis of the State reports and [here](#) for IDA's suggested questions for the List of Issues.

## Human Rights Council

**The Human Rights Council's sixteenth session** took place from 28 February to 25 March 2011 in Geneva.

**Annual panel on the rights of persons with disabilities**  
During the session, the Council held an interactive dialogue panel

on "the role played by international cooperation in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)". [Click here](#) for a summary by OHCHR on the panel, and [click here](#) for the webcast. During the panel, many panellists and speakers, including IDA, focused on the need to ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream cooperation, the need for disability-specific initiatives and also to ensure that those are in line with the CRPD, as well as the need for increased resources.

### **Resolution on the rights of persons with disabilities**

The Council adopted a resolution on the same topic (the role played by international cooperation in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), led by the traditional main co-sponsors of the annual disability resolution, Mexico and New Zealand. [Click here](#) for a copy of the resolution (still only available in draft form). The resolution highlights the new UN multi-donor trust fund, the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and encourages States to donate to that. It requests OHCHR to report to the Council on the UN Partnership in two years. It also encourages Special Procedures mandate holders of the Council to coordinate with the Special Rapporteur on Disability. Finally, the resolution also requests OHCHR to do a study on participation of persons with disabilities in public and political life, and decided to make this the topic of the panel next year. During the sixteenth

session, a side event on that topic was held, co-sponsored by Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand and IDA.

### **Other resolutions**

The following resolutions adopted at the session also refer to persons with disabilities: the UN draft declaration on human rights education and training, the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the rights of children working and/or living on the street, Review of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council, the right to food, and the protection of human rights in the context of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Please [click here](#) to access the disability analysis of the resolutions adopted by the Council during this session.

### **Human Rights Council Review**

The Council also adopted the outcome of the Human Rights Council review process in Geneva (A/HRC/RES/16/21). The Council took the important step of recognizing that it needs to be more accessible to persons with disabilities and in effect starting to address the gap on this left by Council resolution 5/1, which mentions nothing about accessibility. The Council also decided to set up a task force to study accessibility for persons with disabilities, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, and in particular persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. The task force will submit concrete recommendations to the Council at its nineteenth session.

### Oral statements made by IDA

During this session IDA made three oral statements: on [human rights education and training](#), in which IDA supported the existence of the right to human rights education and training, and indicated where in the CRPD such obligations exist; on the [right to adequate housing](#), where IDA highlighted the serious barriers facing persons with disabilities in enjoyment of the right to adequate housing; and on the [Universal Periodic Review](#), where IDA welcomed the fact that the UPR is speeding up universal ratification of the CRPD and encouraged States to make and accept recommendations to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, in line with the CRPD.

### Upcoming Meetings

- From 11 to 15 April 2011, the **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** will be meeting for its 5th session in which it will undertake its first review of a State party- Tunisia. It will also adopt a List of Issues on Spain. [Click here](#) for access to the session documents, including the State reports and submissions made by civil society organisations.

In the lead up to this session, IDA held two consultation workshops in Tunisia from 28 to 31 March to meet and discuss with local and national associations with a view to learning more about the situation of persons with disabilities on the ground and relaying their concerns to the Committee to ensure that the Committee issues pertinent and purposeful Concluding Observations. To access the IDA recommendations for the Con-

cluding Observations on Tunisia, please click the following links: [English](#) or [Spanish](#).

On 13 April, IDA will host a side event on the List of Issues for Spain. IDA has not made a submission to the CRPD Committee with respect to Spain as CERMI, the umbrella group of Spanish organisations of persons with disabilities has submitted a document with suggested recommendations for the List of Issues on Spain. This document is based on the parallel report, which CERMI has submitted to the CRPD Committee. [Click here](#) for the side event's flyer, [here](#) to access the recommendations for the List of Issues on Spain and [here](#) for the full parallel report presented by CERMI to the CRPD Committee.

- From 19-21 April 2011, the Korean National Human Rights Commission will be hosting a consultation dedicated to the **strengthening of the UN human rights treaty body system** that will take place in Seoul. The consultation aims at reflecting on the future of the treaty bodies and is a response to the 2009 call by the High Commissioner for Human Rights to initiate a process of reflection on how to better streamline and strengthen the treaty body system. IDA along with other international human rights NGOs has been invited to participate in this consultation.

#### ***About the IDA Disability Rights Bulletin***

*This bulletin is intended for experts advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities, in particular within the Geneva-based human rights framework. It is prepared by IDA Secretariat, which also provides support to the Group of States Friends of the CRPD.*

*For more information about IDA, its CRPD Forum and its member organisations, please visit:*

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