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GLOBAL NEWS

• CRPD ratifications and signatories

Currently, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has 138 ratifications, while the Optional Protocol (OP) has 78 ratifications.

The number of signatures to the CRPD is 158 while the OP has 92 signatures.

[List of signatories and States Parties](#)

• Former WFD President Receives 2013 UN Human Rights Prize

On 10 December 2013, during the celebration of the UN Human Rights Day, Dr. Liisa Kauppinen, former President of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), an IDA member organisation, was awarded the 2013 UN Human Rights Prize.

IDA extends its sincerest congratulations to Dr. Kauppinen on her receipt of this prestigious prize. With this award the UN recognises her tireless efforts to strengthen the human rights of millions of persons with disabilities worldwide.

Related information:

- [IDA Press Release: Former WFD President Receives 2013 UN Human Rights Prize, 10 December 2013](#)

NEW YORK NEWS

• [UN General Assembly](#)

The 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) continued in New York during October and November 2013. IDA reviewed a number of draft resolutions of the UNGA Second (Economic and Financial) and Third (Human, Cultural and Social Rights) Committees, and provided guiding language, information and support for Member States involved in negotiations related to the rights of persons with disabilities. The Third Committee concluded their negotiations in the last week of November. A more comprehensive report on specific resolutions will be provided in the next bulletin.

• **International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2013**

The United Nations held a daylong event celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities at the UN Headquarters in New York on 3 December 2013. IDA's Acting Executive Director, Mr. Vladimir Cuk, spoke at the opening session. Please click the link below to access the IDA press release, in which IDA appeals to the international community to ensure the full and effective inclusion of persons with disabilities in the post-2015 development framework.

Related information:

- [IDA Press Release: International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3 December 2013](#)

• **New Accessibility Centre, UN Headquarters New York**

On 4 December 2013, Mr. Vladimir Cuk—in recognition of IDA's extensive advocacy work advancing the rights of persons with disabilities within the UN system—lead UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon on the inaugural tour of the first UN Accessibility Centre during its opening at the Headquarters in New York. Over 200 diplomats, UN agency staff and civil society representatives

attended the inauguration ceremony held in advance of the opening, which included keynote addresses from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; President of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe; the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the UN, Mr. Oh Joon; and President of the World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section, Ms. Jenny Nilsson. During the tour of the centre, Mr. Cuk introduced the Secretary-General to the technologies and systems available free-of-charge to persons with disabilities in the UN complex.

Related information:

- [IDA Press Release: Accessibility Centre Opens at UN Headquarters, New York, 4 December 2013](#)

• **Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals**

IDA continues to engage in preparations related to consultations and negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. The focus of the New York office is now on the eighth and final session of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals, to be held from 3 – 7 February 2014. During the session, IDA will co-sponsor a high-level side event alongside a number of partners including Member States and UN agencies. The session will include discussions on the theme “Promoting equality, including social equality, gender equality and women’s empowerment.”

GENEVA NEWS

Treaty Bodies

- The [Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD Committee) has published its observations on the revision of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (SMR). The SMR were approved by Economic and Social Council resolutions in 1975 and 1977, and are considered to be among the most important soft law instruments for the interpretation of various aspects of the rights of prisoners. Adopted in 1955, the Rules are out-dated and there is a current review process of the open-ended intergovernmental Expert Group on SMR. In particular, regarding the rights of prisoners with disabilities, there is much that needs to be brought up to date and brought in line with the CRPD.

The CRPD Committee’s opinion highlights the need for the SMR review process to introduce the new contents and principles of the CRPD concerning, among others:

- the abolition of all deprivation of liberty based on disability (Article 14, CRPD);
- the recognition that the denial of reasonable accommodation in custody facilities or any other detention institutions constitutes a form of discrimination and in some instances a form of torture and ill-treatment; and
- priority to be given to the dignity of the individual and to the preservation of their autonomy.

The Special Rapporteur on Torture also published a report on the revision of the SMR in Au-

gust 2013 ([A/68/295](#)) in which he recommended that the SMR should be reformulated to integrate principles of equality and non-discrimination as enshrined in the CRPD, including the duty to provide reasonable accommodation, need for the informed consent of the person concerned, duty to respect the choices of persons with disabilities, establishment of effective mechanisms to support individuals’ decision-making, duty to create accessible environments and access to all amenities without reliance on fellow inmates.

Related documents:

- [CRPD Committee’s observations on the revision of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#)
- [Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture on the review of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#)

- The [Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW Committee) met for its 58th pre-sessional working group from 21- 25 October during which it adopted lists of issues on Central African Republic, Georgia, India, Lithuania, Mauritania, Peru, Swaziland and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Related documents:

- [IDA compilation of disability-relevant questions of the adopted list of issues](#)
- [Submission on list of issues on India by DPI India](#)
- The [Human Rights Committee](#) met for its 109th session from 14 October – 1 November during which it adopted lists of issues on Burundi, Georgia, Ireland, Japan, Latvia and Sudan.

Related documents:

- [IDA compilation of disability-relevant questions of the adopted list of issues](#)
- [Joint submission for the list of issues on Japan](#)

• The [Committee against Torture](#) (CAT Committee) met for its 51st session from 28 October - 22 November during which it reviewed Andorra, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Mozambique, Poland, Portugal and Uzbekistan, and adopted lists of issues prior to reporting on Belarus, Germany and Ireland. The public sessions were webcast live and are now archived at www.treatybodywebcast.org

Related documents:

- [IDA compilation of disability-relevant recommendations of the adopted Concluding Observations](#)
- [IDA compilation of disability-relevant questions of the adopted list of issues prior to reporting](#)

• The [Committee on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (CESCR Committee) met for its 51st session from 4- 29 November during which it reviewed Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Kuwait and Norway. The public sessions were webcast live and are now archived at www.treatybodywebcast.org

The CESCR Committee also met for its pre-session in which it adopted the list of issues on Armenia, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Finland, Indonesia, Monaco, Nepal, Portugal, Serbia and Ukraine.

Related documents:

- [IDA compilation of disability-relevant recommendations](#)

of the adopted [Concluding Observations](#)

• [Submission on Norway on Forced psychiatric interventions as disability-based discrimination by We Shall Overcome](#) (WNUSP Norwegian member)

• [Submission by the Belgian Disability Forum: parallel report & response to list of issues](#)

• [Parallel report by the Forum of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Austria to which the Austrian National Council of Disabled Persons \(OeAR\) contributed](#)

• [IDA compilation of disability-relevant questions of the adopted list of issues](#) (outstanding list of issues will be shortly posted on the [Committee's website](#))

• The [Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture](#) met for its 21st session from 11-15 November. During the session, it announced that in 2014 it will carry out country visits to Azerbaijan, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Ecuador, Malta, Netherlands and Togo, and plans a follow-up to a previously visited country. Following previous practice, some of the SPT's visits will focus on providing advice and assistance to national preventive mechanisms, which are bodies that themselves monitor places of detention. During a country mission, the SPT delegation visits places of deprivation of liberty. At the end of the visit, the SPT communicates its recommendations and observations to the State by means of a confidential report, and if necessary to NPMs. However, State parties are encouraged to request that the SPT makes these reports public. For more information, visit the [SPT's website](#).

• OHCHR – Guide on How to follow up on United Nations human rights recommendations

On 29 November, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, launched the new OHCHR Guide on *How to follow up on United Nations human rights recommendations*. The Guide describes methods and activities that civil society actors can use to promote the implementation of human rights recommendations, as well as existing follow-up procedures and practices of UN human rights mechanisms.

For the launch ceremony, IDA was one of two NGOs invited to present remarks from civil society. Vladimir Cuk, IDA's Acting Executive Director, highlighted IDA's role of support and facilitation to DPOs, mainly from the Global South, before the CRPD Committee, as well as other treaty bodies and in the UPR process.

IDA actively contributed to the guide by providing practical examples of how organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) have been engaging in follow up recommendations of treaty bodies. IDA received a very positive welcome from participants at the launch ceremony, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OHCHR's Civil Society Section, which praised IDA's work and advocacy efforts on behalf of persons with disabilities worldwide.

This guide and other relevant practical guides for civil society are available at the [OHCHR Civil Society webpage](#). The Guide will be available in the six UN languages in the coming weeks.

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

This bulletin is intended for experts advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities in the UN system. It is prepared by the IDA Secretariat, which also provides support to the Geneva Group of States Friends of the CRPD and to the New York informal network on States Friends of the CRPD.

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

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