

Model United Nation of Hamburg

Research Report for the Human Rights Council

Forum: Human Rights Council

Issue: Fighting against the discrimination of disabled people

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Description of the problem

According to the very first Article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”.

However, persons with disabilities make up the world’s largest and most disadvantaged minority. Discrimination of

persons with disabilities has an impact on their civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights: They have little hope of going to school, getting a job, having their own home, creating a family and raising their children, socializing or voting. As the world’s population grows, the number of persons with disabilities also does. Currently, over 650 million people everywhere in the world are affected.



Background

According to the UN handbook “From Exclusion to Equality: Realizing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, 20% of the world’s poorest people suffer from disabilities, 98% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school. Around a third of the world’s street children live with disabilities, and the literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3%, and 1% for women in some countries.

Mostly, poor people are more likely to acquire disabilities during their lifetime. This is often aggravated by inaccessible, exclusive governments and development policies and programmes which do not support the rights of disabled persons and therefore

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exclude them in the socio-economic life of the society. However, due to discrimination and exclusion people with disabilities can also end up in poverty. Factors like illiteracy, poor nutrition, lack of access to clean water, low rates of immunisation against diseases, and unhealthy and dangerous working conditions are correlated with disability.

In developing countries, injuries are caused by poor medical conditions during pregnancy and at birth, infectious diseases, natural disasters, armed conflict, land mines and small-arms proliferation all of which cause injuries, impairment and lasting trauma on a large scale. Furthermore, traffic accidents result in millions of injuries and disabilities each year among young people.

However, countries that take a stand against the discrimination of disabled people by passing comprehensive legislation to secure, protect but also promote the basic human right of people with disabilities have achieved to abolish physical and cultural barriers with the result that those individuals affected can enjoy their life without any restrictions and can fully participate in society for instance as student, worker, family member and citizen.

What has the UN done so far?

With the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, the International Community responded to the lengthy history of exclusion, dehumanization and discrimination against disabled people. The Convention as well as its Protocol were adopted on 13th December 2006 and are the latest additions to the body of core international human rights instruments. This Convention ensures that people with disabilities can enjoy the same rights as non-disabled people.

Furthermore, the UN human rights office is dedicated to stop the discrimination for instance by carrying out activities to raise awareness, understanding and recognition of disability as a human rights issue but also by mobilizing support for anti-discrimination measures against prejudices. By that, it tries to convince states and organizations to implement the Convention to fight against discrimination. Moreover, it supports the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which monitor the implementation of the Convention.

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Questions for delegates

What is the current situation in your country?

What rights do disabled people have compared to non-disabled people in your society? Are they a part of the socio-economical society?

What will your country do to improve the current situation?

What has your country done to fight the discrimination of disabled people?

Has your country ratified any conventions, declarations or resolutions?

Useful links

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/CRPDIndex.aspx>

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=214>

Sources

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Discrimination/Pages/discrimination.aspx>

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=217>

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/dispaperdes3.htm>

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=214>

<http://www.thejournal.ie/esri-workplace-discrimination-disability-754955-Jan2013/>

http://www.abc.net.au/reslib/201405/r1276053_17236799.jpg