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## Dates & Venues for Upcoming RI Meetings

October 4-5, 2014	RI EC Meeting	Warsaw, Poland
October 5, 2014	RI Commission Meetings	Warsaw, Poland
October 6, 2014	2014 Annual General Assembly	Warsaw, Poland
March 2015 (days TBA)	EC Meeting	Kuwait
September 26-29, 2015	EC Meeting and 2015 GA	Malmö, Sweden

For more information, please see our website [www.riglobal.org](http://www.riglobal.org)

## RI News

### Civil Society CRPD Forum

*New York, June 9<sup>th</sup> 2014*

***Co-organized by the International Disability Alliance, Disability Rights Fund, Human Rights Watch, the International Disability and Development Consortium and Rehabilitation International***



The Civil Society CRPD Forum (CSF) was held on 9 June 2014, the day prior to the United Nations (UN) Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The focus of this year's CSF was the post-2015 development agenda, which currently represents one of the most relevant international advocacy goals for the disability community worldwide. Panel discussions included an overview and explanation of the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, an important step in the process of defining the post-2015 framework.

By early June, the Open Working Group (OWG) will have concluded its eleventh session. Two final sessions will be held in June and July, in which the future Sustainable Development Goals will be refined. At this juncture, it is crucial for the disability community to unify its advocacy work regarding concrete and measurable targets for the relevant goals that are inclusive of persons with disabilities. The CSF sessions focused on a number of ways in which this can occur, including coordinating national, regional and international advocacy work and building alliances with other vulnerable/marginalized groups such as women, children, youth, aging and indigenous. In this way, the disability community will be able to address potential inequalities in the Sustainable Development Goals and encourage Member States to uphold their responsibility to safeguard human rights for all, eliminate discrimination, diminish inequalities and ensure that no one is left behind.

Rehabilitation International Secretary General Venus Ilagan co-chaired Session 3 of the forum alongside Prince Mired of Jordan. Featured included representatives from [Pacific Disability Forum](#), [Uganda National Association of the Deaf](#), [NGO Committee on Ageing](#), [Beit Issie Shapiro](#), and [Feminist Task Force](#). The objective of the session was to provide a forum for discussion to promote full inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the post-2015 process through building alliances among vulnerable/marginalized groups, such as women, children, youth, ageing populations and indigenous people.

RI President Jan Monsbakken closed the 2014 Civil Society CRPD Forum alongside Maryanne Diamond, President of International Disability Alliance (IDA).

Watch video of the Civil Society CRPD Forum [here \(first half\)](#) and [here \(second half\)](#).

## **Seventh Session of the Conference of State Parties**

*June 10 – 12, 2014*

As part of the Seventh Session of the Conference of State Parties, hundreds of activists and Government delegates gathered at United Nations Headquarters to identify practical ways to take the rights, needs and concerns of persons with disabilities into consideration as they strive to advance inclusive, sustainable development. The event was the largest international meeting on disability issues of the year.

“As the international community discusses a universal post-2015 development agenda, we need to make sure that the new framework will not leave the one billion persons with disabilities behind,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message to the seventh session of the Conference of States Parties to the

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was delivered by Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Wu Hongbo.

The three-day meeting reviewed the implementation of the Convention, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006, as well as the development agenda that Member States are currently designing as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

As part of the meeting, nine new members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were elected. Representatives of the following countries were added to the Committee: Germany, Lithuania, Serbia, Nigeria, Korea, Denmark, Colombia, Mauritius and China.

For more information, please [click here](#).

## **COSP7 Side Event: Roundtable Discussion on Disability– Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience**

*June 11, 2014*

On Wednesday, June 11, a [Conference of State Parties](#) side event on Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) co-organized by Rehabilitation International was held at United Nations headquarters in New York.

The event featured speakers from co-organizers [UN DESA](#), [UNISDR](#), [Permanent Mission of Japan](#), [Japanese Disability Forum](#), [Nippon Foundation](#), [UN ESCAP](#), [DAISY Consortium](#), and [Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments \(GAATES\)](#). RI President Jan Monsbakken also spoke, referencing the [Sendai Statement to Promote Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilient, Inclusive and Equitable Societies in Asia and the Pacific](#).

One of the main topics of conversation centered on the March 11, 2011 earthquake in Japan, which led to disastrous implications for persons with disabilities (pwd). The mortality rate of pwd after the earthquake was double that of the general population, which signaled a major need to bring disability perspectives into disaster risk reduction frameworks.

The event included a screening of [“Messages of Life”](#), a documentary on the effects of this disaster on persons with disabilities.

“This is very much about changing minds: in governments, in UN agencies, and in civil society,” said RI President Jan Monsbakken, referring to DiDRR.

“Persons with disabilities are agents for change with unique knowledge and experience that must be included in Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction management,” said Elina Palm of UNISDR, explaining the importance of including disability perspectives in disaster risk reduction and the relative recent development of these perspectives in high-level considerations.

Beyond the human cost of the 2011 earthquake, there were also major financial implications, as explained by Aiko Akiyama of UNESCAP. Approximately 138,000 buildings were destroyed with \$360 billion in economic losses incurred, and pwd were particularly effected in terms of finances due to access issues and more. The 2011 disaster was the most [expensive disaster](#) in human history, and the financial implications continue to plague pwd in Japan.

“Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction is a human rights issue, but it is also an economic issue,” said Akiyama.

[Read more about the event.](#)

## The 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

*June 22-26*

The week of June 22-26 marked the [6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction](#), which took place in Bangkok, Thailand. Rehabilitation International collaborated with [Disability Inclusive DRR Network \(DiDRRN\)](#), [United Nations ESCAP](#), and [Nippon Foundation](#) to bring disability-inclusive perspectives to the forefront of disaster risk reduction (DRR) discussions at the conference.

Watch video from the conference here: <http://www.thaipbs.or.th/webtv/>



RI'S HIROSHI KAMAMURA PRESENTS THE [SENDAI STATEMENT](#) ON INCLUSIVE DRR STRATEGIES AND POLICIES.

## Find RI on Social Media

Recently, RI launched a new online presence, which includes Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube pages, as well as a new website.

This initiative will allow RI to better communicate its message and work around the world, which will enhance public knowledge of the organization and lead to new partnerships, memberships, and the like.

The new website includes many features, such as responsive design, which will allow it to be viewed on any device, including smartphones and tablets. Other new features include a login-only member's area, where private information directed to members will be shared and questions can be asked.

With a modern layout and updated information, our new web presence is sure to bring RI into today's technological world and show how we can adapt to changing times.

**Please be sure to “Like” and “Follow” us, and share our updates. Every new person we can reach is a new opportunity for outreach.**



**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/riglobal](http://www.facebook.com/riglobal)

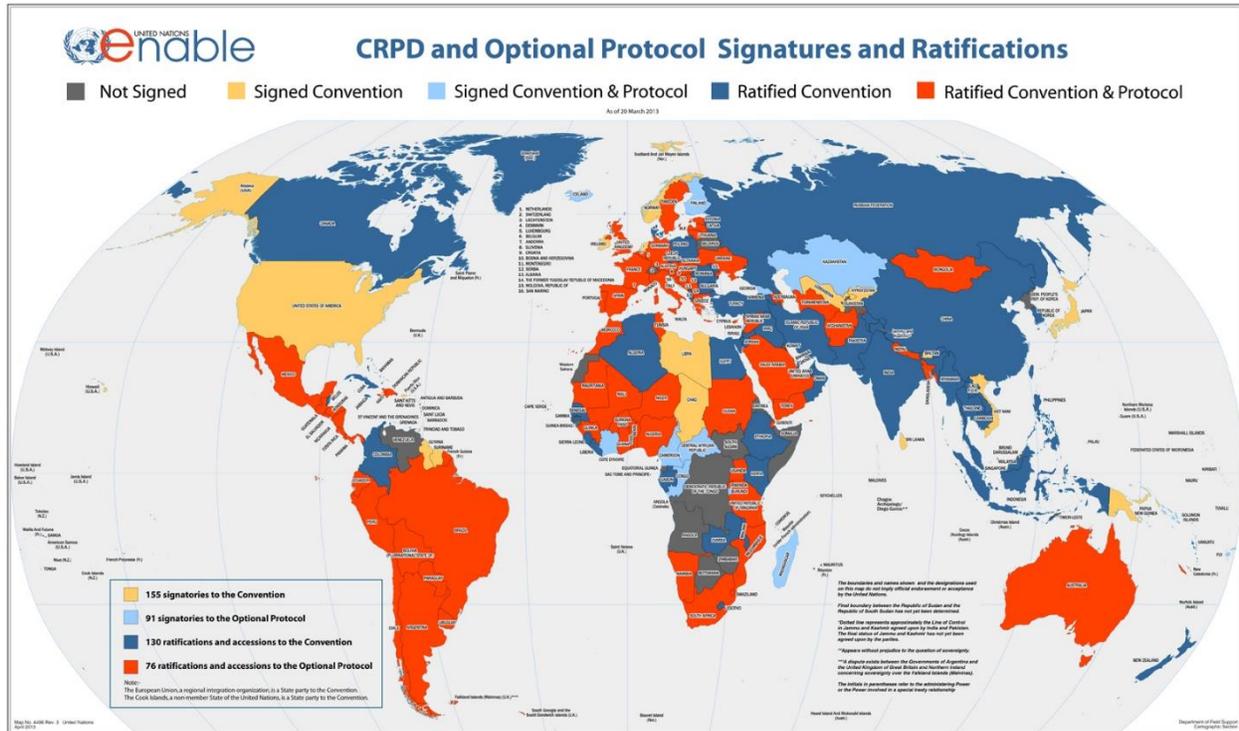
**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/ri\\_global](https://twitter.com/ri_global)

**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/RIGLOBAL1](http://www.youtube.com/RIGLOBAL1)

**LinkedIn:** [www.linkedin.com/company/rehabilitation-international](http://www.linkedin.com/company/rehabilitation-international)

**Website:** [www.riglobal.org](http://www.riglobal.org)

# CRPD Ratification Update



**147** ratifications and **158** signatories to the CRPD

**82** ratifications and **92** signatories to its Optional Protocol (OP)

**Burundi** ratified the Convention on 22 May 2014

**Burundi** ratified the Optional Protocol on 22 May 2014

**Angola** ratified the Convention on 19 May 2014

**Angola** ratified the Optional Protocol on 19 May 2014

**Switzerland** ratified the Convention on 15 April 2014

**State of Palestine** ratified the Convention on 2 April 2014

**Georgia** ratified the Convention on 13 March 2014

**Andorra** ratified the Convention on 11 March 2014

**Andorra** ratified the Optional Protocol on 11 March 2014

**Japan** ratified the Convention on 20 January 2014

Cote d'Ivoire ratified the Convention on 10 January 2014

For more information please visit the following website: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

## Other News / Resource Updates

*RI does not necessarily support the organizations and events featured*

### **WHO calls for case studies and personal stories**

The *Guidelines on health-related rehabilitation*, currently under development by the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners, aim to provide guidance to governments and other relevant actors on how to develop, expand and improve the quality of rehabilitation services (including assistive technology) in less-resourced settings in line with the recommendations of the *World report on disability* (in particular chapter four of the report on "Rehabilitation"). They will also support the implementation of the rehabilitation aspects of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the *WHO global disability action plan 2014-2021: Better health for all people with disability*. The guidelines, which will be released in 2015, will position rehabilitation within the context of universal health coverage and the WHO "Framework for Action" for strengthening health systems, which consists of six clearly defined building blocks: leadership and governance; service delivery; human resources; medical products and technologies; financing; and information systems.

In conjunction with the forthcoming launch of the guidelines, WHO is pleased to announce a call for case studies and personal stories. WHO welcomes contributions from all stakeholders, in particular those from low- and middle-income countries. Successful case studies and personal stories will be reflected in the *Guidelines on health-related rehabilitation*.

- **Case studies:** Case studies are used in many WHO publications to highlight examples of good practice in terms of policies, programmes and other measures. WHO is calling for evidence-based case studies of good practice that demonstrate progress related to one or more of the "building blocks" mentioned above and/or the [eight guiding principles of the CRPD](#). Case studies should include details of how people with disabilities and user groups have been actively involved in the formulation, implementation, monitoring or evaluation of the project, programme or intervention.
- **Personal stories:** Personal stories and quotes are used by WHO to put names and faces to people. WHO is calling for personal stories from people who use or have used rehabilitation services, including assistive technology; parents, partners or siblings whose family members use or have used rehabilitation services including assistive technology; and people who provide rehabilitation services, including assistive technology.

The due date for submissions for both case studies and personal stories is 20 July 2014. For detailed information about specific requirements, visit the website indicated below.

RELATED LINKS

[Call for case studies and personal stories for Guidelines on health-related rehabilitation](#)

[WHO global disability action plan 2014-2021](#)

## **NEW WWDA REPORT NOW AVAILABLE**

*‘Gender Blind, Gender Neutral: The effectiveness of the National Disability Strategy in improving the lives of women and girls with disabilities’*

The National Disability Strategy (NDS) is the national policy framework to guide Australian governments to meet their obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which entered into force in Australia in 2008. The NDS is a ten-year Strategy that was formally endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2011. Under the NDS, a high-level Progress Report will be submitted to the COAG every two years. The first of these is due in late 2014.

This Submission from Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) to the COAG, assesses whether, if and how the NDS is promoting, protecting, respecting and fulfilling the human rights of women and girls with disabilities in Australia. Importantly, this assessment from WWDA includes the provision of a critical analysis of where the NDS appears to be failing women and girls with disabilities. This Submission from WWDA is critically important given that to date, despite Australia’s international human rights obligations in relation to gender equality - all aspects of the NDS are un-gendered. WWDA’s Submission sends a strong and urgent message to all Governments that public policy which treats people with disabilities as a homogenous group only serves to perpetuate the stereotype of people with disabilities as asexual, genderless human beings, and gives rise to a policy, program and service vacuum whereby the human rights of women and girls with disabilities remain violated, denied, ignored and trivialized.

WWDA’s Submission demonstrates the vital importance of gender as a central consideration in the development of legislation, policy and programs to advance gender equality and to promote the human rights of women and girls with disabilities. It also includes, for the consideration of COAG, key areas for future directions in order to strengthen the NDS as a mechanism to advance the human rights of women and girls with disabilities. This includes ensuring the NDS provides gender specific measures and women-specific initiatives, programs and projects in order to address the undisputed gender inequalities and ultimately, to achieve the NDS vision of *‘an inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens’*.

WWDA’s Submission *‘Gender Blind, Gender Neutral: The effectiveness of the National Disability Strategy in improving the lives of women and girls with disabilities’* can be downloaded in either PDF or Word formats from WWDA’s website at: <http://wwda.org.au/papers/subs/subs2011/>

For direct PDF download, go to: [http://wwda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WWDA\\_Sub\\_NDS\\_Review2014.pdf](http://wwda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WWDA_Sub_NDS_Review2014.pdf)

For direct Word download, go to: [http://wwda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WWDA\\_Sub\\_NDS\\_Review2014.docx](http://wwda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WWDA_Sub_NDS_Review2014.docx)

## ***ISPO World Congress***

In about a year's time, ISPO will be holding its 15th World Congress in Lyon, France under the theme AIM: Assessment, Integration & Mobility. Set to take place on 22-25 June 2015, this event will attract representatives from the Orthopaedic, Prosthetics & Orthotics and Rehabilitation fields from around the world.

### **Why attend?**

By participating in the ISPO World Congress 2015, you can contribute today to paving the way to the Orthopaedic, Prosthetics & Orthotics and Rehabilitation services of tomorrow.

The World Health Assembly recently adopted a resolution endorsing the "WHO global disability action plan 2014-2021: Better health for all people with disability". Building on 40 years of education, capacity building and awareness-raising activities worldwide and a long-standing partnership with the highest instances such as the World Health Organization and the United Nations, **ISPO is the natural platform to drive international developments in the Prosthetics & Orthotics and Rehabilitation fields.**

For this reason, by participating in the ISPO World Congress, you will bring your contribution to shaping the future of the Prosthetics & Orthotics and Rehabilitation profession and **be an actor of change for the millions of people who are or will soon be in need of assistive technology.**

Learn more: <http://us5.campaign-archive2.com/?u=bf350b2411922c8d36073ae76&id=eec97944fc&e=b847fa14d4>

## ***Eight College Students and Recent Graduates Selected for the 2014 U.S. International Council on Disabilities Youth in International Development and Affairs (YIDA) Internship Program***

*Internship Program is Funded by the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation and the Reeve Foundation*

The U.S. International Council on Disabilities (USICD) announces its second class of eight Youth in International Development and Affairs (YIDA) summer interns funded by a two-year, \$160,000 grant from the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, with additional support from the Reeve Foundation.

In its second year, the USICD YIDA internship program brings a diverse group of college students and recent graduates with disabilities from a variety of locations across the U.S. to intern in international development and affairs agencies in Washington, D.C. This summer, eight participants have secured placements at: **Burton Blatt Institute, National Democratic Institute, International Medical Corps, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, Inter-American Development Bank, World Learning, Management Sciences for Health, and Human Rights Watch.** The group recently arrived in Washington to participate in orientation sessions and get settled into their accommodations at George Washington

University. USICD is thankful to these participating international organizations that help facilitate the strategic objective of the YIDA program for full inclusion of professionals with disabilities. It is through initiatives like these that stereotypes and prejudice against people with disabilities are tested and eliminated. [Meet the interns.](#)

“Programs like YIDA show that people with disabilities can contribute to the field while projecting more inclusive practices globally,” says David Morrissey, executive director of USICD. “These interns are empowered to contribute their talents in meaningful ways, help reduce attitudinal barriers and open up new career opportunities.”

Mr. Morrissey adds: “USICD is enormously grateful to the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation and the Reeve Foundation for their financial assistance to advance the inclusion of people with disabilities in the foreign affairs and international development arena. Receiving support from these organizations is a vote of confidence in the YIDA internship program.”

The Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation recently launched its *M>PWR Initiative* – a national effort to empower youth with disabilities to lead productive lives – and support for YIDA helps further this goal. “As part of our effort to empower young people, the Foundation is pleased to provide USICD with the dollars it needs for its YIDA program,” states Kevin R. Webb, senior director of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation. “It is vital that young people with disabilities have an opportunity to explore their career interests so they can demonstrate their capabilities to potential employers.”

### ***Senate Votes 95-3 for Jobs for People with Disabilities***

At a time when 70% of working age Americans with disabilities are outside of the workforce and more than 9 million working age Americans with disabilities are living on government benefits, the U.S. Senate voted 95-3 on legislation ([S. 1356](#)) to increase job opportunities for people with disabilities.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) ([S. 1356](#)) will now move to the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote on its counterpart, [H.R. 803](#). If passed and signed into law, the new WIOA legislation will streamline programs and make them more accountable to people with disabilities and taxpayers alike. Indeed, as has been highlighted by RespectAbilityUSA, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) identified 45 programs that supported employment for people with disabilities in fiscal year 2010, reflecting a fragmented system of services. The programs were administered by nine federal agencies and overseen by even more congressional committees. All programs overlapped with at least one other program in that they provided one or more similar employment service to a similar population—people with disabilities. However, there was little coordination or [collaboration](#) and only 10 of the 45 programs reported that an evaluation had been conducted the last five years before the GAO report was issued in 2012. Many of the failed programs will now be eliminated, and all future programs will now be required to have successful outcomes.

*"Polls show that the majority of [people with disabilities want to work](#). Hiring people with disabilities can also make companies more profitable. Nationally Walgreens, hospitals, AMC theaters, EY and others have*

*found this to be true as employees with disabilities, when aligned with their talents and interests, are productive, loyal and successful,"* commented Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi, president of RespectAbilityUSA, a non profit working to empower people with disabilities to achieve the American dream. Recently the organization released a [major report](#) on jobs for people with disabilities. *"This legislation recognizes that hiring Americans with disabilities can be win-win-win for people with disabilities, employers and taxpayers alike. The U.S. spends billions each year on benefits to people who, in most cases, would rather have a hand up than a hand out. They need to be included in employment because of the talents they bring to the table. Their work and commitments to success can be a part of how the U.S. can compete successfully."*

Continued Mizrahi, "We don't see much bipartisan agreement in Washington these days, but thanks to U.S. Senators Patty Murray (D-WA), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Tom Harkin (D-IA), and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) we saw it today as Senators from both parties came together for a better future. We look forward to a vote on [H.R. 803](#) led by Congresspeople John Kline (R-MN), Virginia Foxx (R-NC), George Miller (D-CA) and others."

The bill was previously known in the House as the [SKILLS Act](#) and is supported by a broad group of [leaders and organizations](#). According to the U.S. Census 56 million Americans have disabilities and people with disabilities (PwDs) represent 18.6% of our population.

If signed into law, this bill will build on the work done over the past two years by the [National Governors Association \(NGA\) and individual governors](#) who are shifting dramatically to "employment first" policies. The NGA has put employment of people with disabilities at the center of their work with both ["A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities"](#) as well as the new focus, ["America Works: Education and Training for Tomorrow's Jobs"](#) on workforce development.

To find out how your Representatives and Senators will vote on this important legislation, call the Congressional switchboard at 1-202-224-3121 or 202-225-3121 and ask to speak with their office.

For more information contact: Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi at [JenniferM@RespectAbilityUSA.org](mailto:JenniferM@RespectAbilityUSA.org)

## Inspiration



**SESSION 3 OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY CRPD FORUM, CO-CHAIRLED BY RI SECRETARY GENERAL VENUS ILAGAN**



**THE SIDE EVENT ON DIDRR, FEATURING RI PRESIDENT JAN MONSBAKKEN**



**RI SECRETARY GENERAL VENUS ILAGAN WITH PRINCE MIRED OF JORDAN**



**RI PRESIDENT JAN MONSBAKKEN AND AKIKO ITO, CHIEF OF THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE CRPD, AT THE DIDRR SIDE EVENT**