



 **Rehabilitation International**



May 2014 Newsletter



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Dates & Venues of Upcoming 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

RI News

Executive Committee Meeting: Auckland, New Zealand

In mid-April, the RI Executive Committee (EC) convened in Auckland, New Zealand to discuss the future of the organization. Upcoming initiatives will revolve around three main project areas: disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction, assistive technology, and women with disabilities.

The next EC meeting will take place in Warsaw, Poland in October 2014. For more information, please contact info@riglobal.org.

Mainstreaming Disability in Disaster Risk Reduction Breakfast Presentation

On April 16, RI President Jan Monsbakken spoke at a cross parliamentary event in Wellington, New Zealand. His presentation was titled, "*Mainstreaming Disability in Disaster Risk Reduction – Changing Mindsets Through Knowledge*", which covered strategies for including disability in disaster risk reduction policies and the work RI is doing to advocate for inclusion in disaster risk work. This event was held by Ruth Dyson, MP for Port Hills – Labour Party, and ComVoices, an independent network of community and voluntary organizations.



Asia-Pacific Meeting on Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction- Changing Mindsets through Knowledge: Sendai, Japan

The **Asia-Pacific Meeting on Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction**, organized by [UN ESCAP](#), Rehabilitation International and [Nippon Foundation](#), took

place April 22-25 in Sendai, Japan. The meeting brought together disaster risk policy experts, disability policy experts and disability rights experts to discuss disability inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

Asia-Pacific is the region most adversely affected by disasters, and persons with disabilities are approximately two to four times more likely to die than the general population when a disaster occurs. Often, disability perspectives are not included in legal frameworks, policies and action plans for DRR, and physical infrastructure and disaster response services do not incorporate universal design principles. Public service announcements are often issued in inaccessible formats, and shelters and other facilities often are not barrier-free.

RI President Jan Monsbakken introduced the event and spoke about meeting objectives, format and expected outcomes. Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction is a focus of RI in 2014, and this event was one facet of our mission to make DRR more inclusive and accessible.

[Watch video of the event](#)

[Read more about the meeting from UN ESCAP](#)

[Aide memoire](#)

[European Conference on Rehabilitation Cancelled](#)

The planned European Conference on Rehabilitation in Warsaw, Poland, previously scheduled for October 7-9, has been **cancelled** by organizer [PFRON](#). Please make any necessary schedule changes to accommodate this update.

[Civil Society CRPD Forum and Conference of States Parties](#)

The Seventh Session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN CRPD was held at the UN Headquarters in New York from June 10 – 12. For detailed information on the Conference, including a draft agenda, please see the [UN Enable website](#).

The Civil Society CRPD Forum, co-organized by Rehabilitation International, was also held on Monday June 9 in advance of the Conference of States Parties to the UN CRPD. The Forum ran from 10am – 6pm at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. More information about the conferences will be included in the June 2014 newsletter.

[World Health Assembly](#)

The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Disability Action Plan 2014-2021 was adopted on May 23rd at the 67th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

After a call for a comprehensive action plan regarding better health care for people with disabilities at the 66th World Health Assembly last year, a long consultative process began and a draft was developed. In January 2014, the plan was submitted to the 67th World Health Assembly for adoption.

[Rehabilitation International \(RI\)](#) has been extensively involved in the process leading to this adoption, with RI leadership providing key insights into the needs of people with disabilities at consultative meetings around the world.

“This action plan recognizes the growing disparities people with disabilities face when it comes to receiving adequate health care services. With this comprehensive plan in place, access to health care and appropriate support are achievable goals on a global scale,” said Rehabilitation International President Jan Monsbakken, who attended the Assembly in Geneva.

“For over 90 years, Rehabilitation International has lobbied for changes in the way people with disabilities are treated, and we have seen great changes and

developments over the years. This action plan is sure to be yet another significant step towards achieving universal accessibility and inclusion for all.”

[According to the WHO](#), people with disabilities have the same general health care needs as others, but they are twice as likely to find health care providers’ skills and facilities inadequate. They are also three times as likely to be denied health care as the general population, and twice as likely to suffer catastrophic health expenditure.

One in seven people worldwide experience disability. Approximately 200 million people need low-vision devices but do not have access to them, and only 5 to 15 percent of people who need a wheelchair have access to one.

[Learn more about the WHO Global Disability Action Plan 2014-2021.](#)

[Conference on Disability and Education](#)

On May 8, RI President Jan Monsbakken attended the Conference on Disability and Education in Oslo, Norway. Following the meeting, Mr. Monsbakken met with Norway’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to discuss potential partnership opportunities.

[RI Creates Return to Work Guidelines with ISSA](#)

On May 30, RI’s Friedrich Mehrhoff presented Return to Work Guidelines, created by the International Social Security Association (ISSA), the National Institute of Disability Management (NIDMAR), and RI at the European Society of Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine (ESPRM) Congress in Marseille, France.

[Read the guidelines here.](#)

RI Secretariat Bids Farewell to Intern Kenny Paola Ramirez

The RI secretariat has parted ways with Colombian intern Kenny Ramirez after her 2.5 months at the RI office in New York. The RI team was sad to see her go, as she brought warmth and hard work into the office every day. Thank you, Kenny!



“My time in NY was really fantastic. Since I arrived here I met so many incredible people. The first day that I came to the office of RI, I was so nervous because I knew I would finally meet Venus Ilagan, Secretary General of RI, who I spoke with months before my arrival about my internship. That was the day I also met the two staff members, Sangay Sherpa and Kelsey Parsons, who work with RI too. Venus spoke of the organization and explained RI’s functions. Day by day, we began to learn more about each other and my coworkers and I became a lovely team.”

The experience of coming to New York brought me great things, both on a professional and personal level, because this extraordinary organization inspired me to continue to work towards the rights of people with disabilities. At the same time, this has opened doors in different fields in which I am interested in, such as Public Health. I will receive my degree in physiotherapy with an emphasis in social management and public health in July of this year, and I plan to pursue a Master’s degree in Public Health. Thank you for everything, RI!”

[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

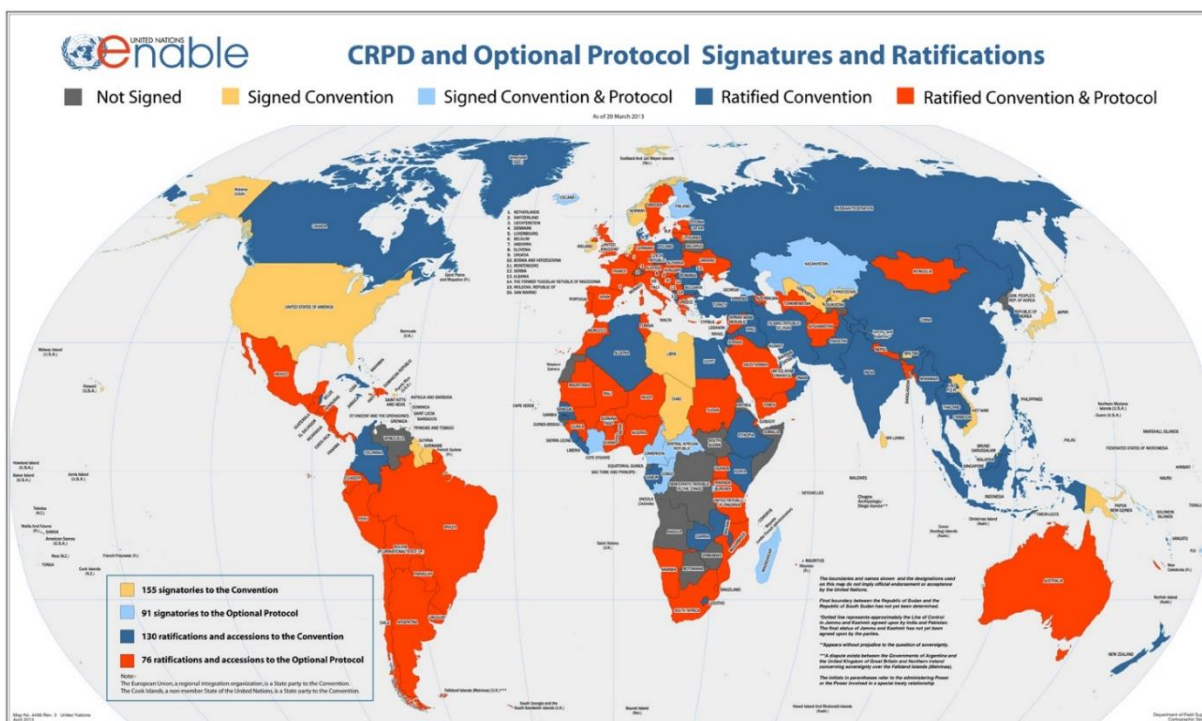
Twitter: https://twitter.com/ri_global

YouTube: www.youtube.com/RIGLOBAL1

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/rehabilitation-international

Website: 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/>

Inspiration



RI President Jan Monsbakken meets with Margareta Wahlstrom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction at the United Nations



President Monsbakken meets with DGUV in Germany to discuss potential partnership opportunities



The World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland



Meeting in advance of the World Health Assembly in Geneva to discuss the Disability Action Plan



L-R: RI Communications Officer Kelsey Parsons, former RI intern Kenny Ramirez, RI Administrative Assistant Sangay Sherpa