



Dhaka Recommendations to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in South Asia

The representatives of disabled people's organizations (DPOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in South Asia, international development agencies and the Government of Bangladesh, in total around 100 persons, participated in the Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia, from 21 to 22 September 2011 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

We, the participants in the Conference, thank the organizers, the Government of Bangladesh, the South Asian Disability Forum (SADF), the Bangladesh Protibandhi Kalyan Somity (BPKS), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD), the British Council (BC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for their successful arrangement of the Conference;

Appreciating the efforts made by the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities in South Asia;

Also appreciating the efforts made to raise awareness of the importance of accelerating the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through the "Make the Right Real" Campaign;

Acknowledging that the Governments of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan have ratified the CRPD;

Supporting the official establishment of SADF, and its plan to organize the next conference in Nepal in 2013;



Also supporting the proposal of a new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 and the preparatory process for the High-level Inter-governmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012 to be held in October 2012, at Incheon, the Republic of Korea;

Noting that the main causes of disability in South Asia are often linked to poverty, health conditions, situations of conflict and disasters;

Encouraging SADF to take actions and collaborate with the governments and other stakeholders including civil society organizations and the business sector;

Mindful that persons with disabilities in South Asia continue to face social exclusion, economic deprivation and physical as well as psychological mistreatment, often as a result of cultural perceptions and stereotypes.

The participants of the Conference therefore recommend:

1. The governments in South Asia to review existing laws and to harmonize domestic legislation with the CRPD, in close collaboration with SADF and other DPOs, domestic and international NGOs, inter-governmental agencies and regional key partners such as ESCAP and APCD;
2. The governments in South Asia, DPOs including SADF and other stakeholders to support persons with disabilities by providing full access to information in Braille, sign language and in other accessible formats in both national and local languages;
3. The governments in South Asia to provide comprehensive capacity development programmes for DPOs and to ensure their involvement in the implementation of the CRPD;
4. The governments in South Asia to support the proposal of a new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022;
5. The governments in South Asia, DPOs including SADF and other stakeholders to collaborate for leadership development, and promote inclusive business development and community-based inclusive development to address gaps and challenges still faced by persons with disabilities;
6. The governments in South Asia to enhance the collaboration with SADF and other DPOs as well as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC),



regional key players such as ESCAP and APCD, media, human rights organizations and academic institutions;

7. All religious and spiritual leaders to enhance their efforts to eliminate all discrimination against persons with disabilities and to encourage their inclusion in all religious and social rituals;

8. The governments in South Asia to establish a data collection mechanism for comprehensive disability statistics, including the reporting of different impairments, employment situations, public accommodations and services and other socio-economic variables;

9. The governments in South Asia to strengthen social protection programmes and measures to improve the livelihoods of persons with disabilities;

10. The governments in South Asia to mainstream the gender dimension in all relevant policy measures in close consultation with DPOs including SADF and other stakeholders;

11. The Government of Bangladesh, SADF and other DPOs, and other stakeholders in Bangladesh continue to partner with ESCAP and APCD to further regional cooperation from the perspective of the CRPD.

22 September 2011

Present

Ms. Shirin Akhter,
Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, Bangladesh

Mr. Hamid Nasheed Mohamed,
Vice Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, Maldives

Ms. Hendawijharane Kishara Manique Gunaratne,
Vice Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, Sri Lanka



My Saur.

Ms.Mridu Ram Goel,
Honorable Secretary, South Asian Disability Forum, India

Mr.Kiran Shilpakar,
Treasurer, South Asian Disability Forum, Nepal

Mr.Abdul Ghafar Muhammad Omar Khan,
Executive Committee Member, South Asian Disability Forum, Afghanistan

Mr.Pema Chhogyel,
Executive Committee Member, South Asian Disability Forum, Bhutan

Mr. M. Srinivasulu,
Executive Committee member, South Asian Disability Forum, India

Mr.Muhammad Atif Shiekh,
Executive Committee Member, South Asian Disability Forum, Pakistan