

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA**

**ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE
BUREAU REGIONAL DE L'AFRIQUE**

**SEMINAIRE INTER-PAYS SUR L'AMELIORATION
DES SERVICES DE READAPTATION A BASE COMMUNAUTAIRE
Cotonou (BENIN), du 28 Octobre au 1^{er} novembre 2002**

*Disabled Peoples' International
Saffron Platform.*

Disabled Peoples' International (DPI)

Sapporo Platform

October 2002

A DPI call to disabled people throughout the world:

Peace

As disabled people we are opposed to wars, violence and all forms of oppression. Daily, men, women and children are being disabled by land and personnel mines and other forms of armed destruction and torture. We must work for a world where all people can live in peace and express their diversity and their desires.

A Strong Voice of Our Own

Disabled Peoples' International must continue to grow in strength and voice. We are the experts on our situation and we must be consulted at all levels, on all initiatives concerning us. If we are to achieve a strong voice we must be united in our work, we must build a strong organization. We must share our knowledge, our experiences and our resources and encourage youth leadership. We must use technology as a vehicle to communicate, to discuss and to promote our issues and concerns.

Human Rights

As a human rights organization, we must seek support for a convention that will protect and respect our human rights. We must educate our selves, civil society as well as our government representatives at all levels. We must learn from the strategies and successes of others such as landmines survivors and women. Our rights are violated on a daily basis; we must continue to gather the evidence.

Diversity Within

In our work, our organization at all levels must ensure the inclusion of women, youth and other minorities. We must ensure participation through equality of language. We must strive to uphold our commitment to our official languages of French, Spanish and English. We are a cross disability organization and we must ensure all materials are accessible in format.

This platform must be considered in conjunction with the Sapporo Declaration and resolutions of the Sapporo workshops. Together these documents form the 2002 - 2006 Action Plan for Disabled Peoples International.

Bioethics

We must become part of the discussions on genetics and bioethics. We must assert our right to be different. We must repudiate any discussion that links the concept of "person" to a set of abilities. We must promote disability studies to change the image of disability in a positive way among academics.

Independent Living

Self-determination and independent living is fundamental to our human rights. We must undertake a program of education of people with disabilities and civil society on the concept of independent living. We must consider our cultural differences in adapting independent living in some countries.

Public Education

Our issues are many – income generation, education, impact of poverty etc. We must educate civil society as well as our political representatives on our concerns. We must use every opportunity to seek publicity and awareness. We must seek to change negative images of disabled people so that future generations will accept disabled people as equal participants in our society.

Share the Knowledge

As participants of this assembly, we are the fortunate few who have come here to listen to each other, to discuss our views and opinions and to reaffirm our commitment to our work. We must therefore make it our duty and responsibility to communicate to our grass roots comrades what has taken place here. While we feel empowered by this great assembly of 3000 people we must now empower other who could not attend.

This is our challenge. This is our task.

Disabled Peoples' International

Sapporo Declaration

October 2002

In 1981 at the 1st World Congress in Singapore, disabled people recognized that we must unite and we must fight for our rights. Today in 2002, we are united, and we stand together as never before. We have national assemblies in some 135 countries in every continent of the world. We are ready to fight for our rights!

In Sapporo, our largest gathering yet, more than 3,000 people from some 109 countries have heard presentations and debated issues, we recognize that much has been achieved since our inception in 1981; we also recognize that much remains to be achieved. According to the United Nations statistics, there are 600 million disabled people worldwide, 82% live in developing countries. Unlike other citizens of their societies, disabled people live in the most deplorable conditions, isolated and excluded from their communities by barriers of policy, environment and attitude. For this reason, we fight against wars, poverty and the eradication of all forms of discriminations especially against disabled persons.

Disabled people are unquestionably the largest and most discriminated minority group in the world, whose human rights are systematically violated. These violations against the poorest of the poor result in worsening living conditions, degrading in human treatment, lack of adequate housing, healthcare, education, employment, social inclusion and, often face death. Our rights under existing UN conventions are generally ignored or marginalized in monitoring procedures. Therefore:

- **We demand a specific international convention as an instrument of binding norms to protect and respect the full enjoyment of our human rights. This convention must be human rights in nature and not economic and social based.**
- **Disabled people demand a voice of our own in the development of this instrument. We must be consulted at all levels on all matters that concern us.**
- **We urge all countries to support the formulation and adoption of this convention and we encourage all disabled people and their organizations to educate the public and their political representatives on the need and benefits of a convention.**

In addition:

- **We demand that every country adopt and implement anti-discrimination legislation and policies that ensures the equalization of opportunity for disabled people.**

This declaration must be considered in conjunction with the Sapporo Platform and resolutions of the Sapporo workshops. Together these documents form the 2002 – 2006 Action Plan for Disabled Peoples International