17 September 2004

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the *Right to Participate, Rights to Win* International Paralympic Symposium on Disability Rights hosted by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and Rehabilitation International (RI). Today marks the official opening of the 12th Paralympic Games and we are excited to have this opportunity to address the interrelated issues of sport, disability and human rights in an international context.

On 3 September 2004, the Fourth United Nations Ad Hoc Committee meeting on a human rights convention for people with disabilities was concluded. UN Member States and non-governmental organizations advocating for the rights of people with a disability are working towards a convention which will codify the rights of the over 600 million people with disabilities living in the world today. The conclusion of this historic international process will affect generations to come, as the enjoyment of human rights by people with a disability is ultimately a concern for all human beings. Where the rights of some are violated, the rights of all are in jeopardy.

Included in this packet are six items:

- Toolkit on disability, human rights and sport that has been distributed to the over 4,000 athletes attending the Paralympic Games in six languages: English, Spanish, French, Russian, Arabic and Chinese;
- Background paper on the need for a convention and its current status in the UN system;
- Chronology of international events in the development of the human rights approach to disability;
- The existing international human rights treaty framework – core treaties (chart);
- Website resource list; and
- Organizational fact sheets.
We welcome your participation and interest in the convention process.

IPC and RI would like to thank Landmine Survivors Network and the Center for the Study of Sport in Society for their contribution to this toolkit.

For more information on human rights, sports and disability, you are welcome to contact either Amy Farkas at IPC (amy.farkas@paralympic.org) or Michele Morgan at RI (michele@rehab-international.org).

Sincerely,

Phil Craven, MBE
President
International Paralympic Committee

Tomas Lagerwall
Secretary General
Rehabilitation International
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SECTION 1

ATHLETE TOOLKIT
DISABILITY – A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

“Much has been accomplished, but the world continues its struggle to create societies in which disabled persons enjoy the same opportunities as other members of the human family, and are viewed and treated as equal partners in the social, cultural, political and economic life of our communities.”

– Kofi Annan, Beirut, Lebanon, 3 December 2001

What are human rights?
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948 states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

We have all heard about human rights and have a rough idea of what they are. To give a few examples they include: freedom from discrimination, the right to work, the right to education, the right to participate in sports and recreation, and the right to form a family. Human rights enhance the well-being and dignity of an individual and ensure the provision or the protection of basic needs. Their denial signifies that a person’s inherent value is not being respected.

Are the human rights of persons with a disability respected?
Unfortunately the answer is no. Persons with a disability face persistent barriers to the enjoyment of basic human rights such as education, employment, access to buildings and transportation and participation in public life. Terrible abuses, including institutionalization based on disability, and violence toward persons with a disability do not receive the attention they deserve by society.

With over 600 million persons with a disability in the world, this is not an issue that can be ignored. It is estimated that 80% of persons with a disability live in low-income countries and most often they are among the poorest of the poor. Poverty can lead to disability, for example, through poor sanitation and healthcare, and disability can lead to poverty through limited access to work and employment opportunities.

Why do we need a convention on the rights of persons with a disability?
Currently persons with a disability are denied the enjoyment of basic rights guaranteed to all people, including, for example, the right to equality and non-discrimination, the right to education, the right to work, and the right to
Section 1: Athlete Toolkit

participate in sport and recreational activities. The issue of disability has been addressed at the international level for more than 20 years. One important document, the United Nations (UN) Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, encourages governments to undertake a moral and political commitment to work towards equalization of opportunities for persons with a disability. While we cannot underestimate this document in effecting positive change for persons with a disability over the last several years, it is important to note that the Standard Rules are not legally binding.

What does this mean?
A UN convention on the rights of persons with a disability will be a legally binding document where UN Member States will subscribe to a set of principles and standards and they will be obliged to maintain their promises. In addition, a convention will have a monitoring and implementation framework, which will play an important role in ensuring that States live up to their convention obligations. As a legally binding document, this convention will empower persons with a disability and will guarantee their rights all across the world, no matter their socio-economic level.

What do we want to achieve through a convention?
The goal is a convention in which the rights of persons with a disability are clearly articulated and which takes into account the barriers they face in realizing their human rights. In short, it will clarify in one legally binding document that persons with a disability have the same rights as all human beings. Recognizing that diversity of people is a societal asset, the convention’s aim is the elimination of discrimination against persons with a disability and ensuring the full enjoyment of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Who will benefit?
Everyone will benefit. As the title of the convention implies, the principal beneficiaries of a convention are persons with a disability because their rights will be clearly outlined in a legally binding document. However, the enjoyment of human rights by persons with a disability is ultimately a concern for all human beings. Where the human rights of some are violated, the human rights of all are in jeopardy. A convention will represent an important tool in the effort to ensure that States live up to their commitment to build inclusive societies in which persons with a disability are empowered citizens.

What about a right to sports?
In the context of sport and recreation, sportsmen and women with a disability have, among others, the right to:

- Participate in sporting and recreational activities at all levels and, as appropriate, offer disability-specific programming;
• Organize and participate in sporting activities and to receive the necessary instruction, training and resources; and
• Access sporting, recreational and leisure venues.

In addition, children and youth with a disability have the right to equal access to participation in sporting, recreational and leisure activities, including within the education system, and to engage in play.

And yet it is all too often the case that persons with a disability do not enjoy their rights to participate in sport and recreational activities. This form of discrimination is particularly acute in the case of persons with an intellectual, psychiatric or psychosocial disability who are so often kept in institutions and are rarely given the opportunity for meaningful activities and stimulation to nurture their person and development.

Even in cases where access to sporting and recreational activities is open to persons with a disability, they may nonetheless face restrictions owing to prohibitive costs, inequitable services and programmes, or the poor quality of integration. Lack of understanding and awareness of how to include persons with a disability in sport and recreational activities has contributed to exclusionary practices and, accordingly, their participation remains undervalued and ignored.

Diversity is important as it enriches society and in order to have diversity, all people – including persons with a disability – must have the right to participate in every level of society: in the community, at work, at school, in politics and in sport.

Ensuring that the Right to Participate in Sport and Recreational Activities is included in the convention: we need your help!

International human rights law recognizes that all people have a right to rest, to leisure time and to participate in recreation and sports. In 1976, the first International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education held by UNESCO affirmed, among other things, the right of persons with a disability to participate in physical education and sport. The treaty body which monitors the implementation of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in General Comment 5 on Disability has recognized the relevance of these broad rights for persons with a disability which extend to participation in tourism and recreational activities, including sport. Rule 11 of the UN Standard Rules provides:
UN Standard Rule 11: Recreation and Sports

States will take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities for recreation and sports.

1. States should initiate measures to make places for recreation and sports, hotels, beaches, sports arenas, gym halls, etc., accessible to persons with disabilities. Such measures should encompass support for staff in recreation and sports programmes, including projects to develop methods of accessibility, and participation, information and training programmes.

2. Tourist authorities, travel agencies, hotels, voluntary organizations and others involved in organizing recreational activities or travel opportunities should offer their services to all, taking into account the special needs of persons with disabilities. Suitable training should be provided to assist that process.

3. Sports organizations should be encouraged to develop opportunities for participation by persons with disabilities in sports activities. In some cases, accessibility measures could be enough to open up opportunities for participation. In other cases, special arrangements or special games would be needed. States should support the participation of persons with disabilities in national and international events.

4. Persons with disabilities participating in sports activities should have access to instruction and training of the same quality as other participants.

5. Organizers of sports and recreation should consult with organizations of persons with disabilities when developing their services for persons with disabilities.

The participation of persons with a disability in recreational and sporting activities is a basic human right, yet it is all too frequently denied. Persons with a disability often face discrimination both in their receipt of leisure time and also in terms of their access to and participation in recreational activities, including sports activities and spectator sporting events. In some cases, this discrimination manifests itself in the complete denial of access to these activities. Even in cases where access to sporting and recreational activities may be open to persons with a disability, they may nonetheless face restrictions owing to physical access, prohibitive costs, inequitable services and programmes, or the poor quality of integration. Lack of understanding and awareness of how to include persons with a disability in sport and recreational activities has contributed to exclusionary practices and, accordingly, their participation remains undervalued and ignored. It is therefore essential that the convention currently being drafted within the UN
explicitly include a provision on this right and its specific application to persons with a disability.

**What can you do?**
There are many ways to get involved. The most important thing is to build your own knowledge!

- Learn about the convention process – visit the UN website dedicated to disability issues where you will find useful information on the convention, including the most current documents: [www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable).
- If you are still not a member of a Disabled Peoples’ Organization (DPOs), join one! The International Disability Alliance (IDA) is made up of eight global organizations. To find out more about the organizations and to get contact information for local chapters, visit: [www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org).
- Make your voices heard! Contact your government delegate, the media, and DPOs to discuss your priorities.
- Follow-up on the actions taken by your government and representative DPOs.
- Publicize the convention by informing friends, organizations or community groups you belong to and through web sites.

**We need your input!** Go to the International Paralympic Committee website: [www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org) to share your views about the convention, as well as personal experiences in sport and recreation related to your human rights, and specific examples of advocacy activities around disability, sport and human rights.
SECTION 2

BACKGROUND PAPER

PROGRESS OF THE PROPOSED UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
PROGRESS ON THE PROPOSED UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

“One of every 10 persons on earth has some form of mental, physical or sensory impairment, making this a challenge for all countries, regardless of their level of development. How can any society develop and truly flourish without the full and equal participation of so many of its citizens?”

– Nane Annan, on behalf of Kofi Annan, at the United Nations, November 17, 2003

“Convention. YES!” – Kofi Annan, Second Ad Hoc meeting towards a disability Convention, 27 June 2003

The situation of persons with a disability in the world today

Persons with a disability of all ages live in every region, country and community in the world. All races, social classes, and cultural groups include persons with disabilities. Current government estimates of the percentage of persons with a disability vary from 5% to 20% or more of country populations. According to these estimates, each of us, in all likelihood, if not a person with a disability, knows a person with a disability. We should see around us persons who use wheelchairs, sign language or service animals such as guide dogs. In addition, persons with an intellectual disability, mental and psychiatric disabilities should be an ordinary part of our world. The numbers suggest that we should find persons with a disability in our schools, workplaces, shopping centres, playing fields, apartment buildings, cinemas, train stations, and government offices.

In reality, persons with a disability are largely invisible in society. Discrimination and the violation of rights of persons with a disability often result in the exclusion from most parts of society, including sports, education, work and family. Physical barriers obstruct access and prevent free movement of persons with mobility and visual impairments. Social and communication barriers, in the form of attitudes and practices, both explicitly and implicitly, exclude persons with a disability. Sexual exploitation, the denial of education and work opportunities, inaccessible public services, the denial of voting rights, forced institutionalisation, drugging and other abusive practices, are all violations of human rights that persons with a disabilities face.

Societies around the world are often unwilling to incorporate persons with a disability into the mainstream of human life. Historically, persons with a disability have been viewed as charity cases, or from a purely medical perspective, yet this view is rapidly changing. Today, disability is viewed within a human rights framework. This shift in perspective and the
marginalization of persons with a disability has pushed the issue of the rights of persons with a disability to the forefront of international debate.

**A new Convention?**
The push for a Convention on the rights of persons with a disability began in 1987 when Italy, following the recommendation of a United Nations (UN) Global Meeting of Experts, drafted the outline of a Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against persons with a disability. Subsequently, Sweden made a similar effort to draft a Convention. On both occasions, however, no consensus was reached and the process lost momentum.

In 1999, Rehabilitation International (RI), in an effort to reenergize the effort, called upon the international community, in its Charter for a New Millennium to again pursue the drafting of a Convention on the rights of persons with a disability. This call to action spurred a meeting in China in March of 2000, where representatives from the main international disability organizations signed the Beijing Declaration, advocating for all governments to support a Convention. The groups that signed the Beijing Declaration—Disabled People’s International, the World Blind Union, the World Federation of the Deaf, the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry and RI—now work together with other groups in the International Disability Alliance to present a common voice on disability issues to the UN and other world bodies.

In December 2001, the UN General Assembly, in response to a proposal submitted by Mexico at the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in September 2001 in South Africa, and at the behest of the Mexican president, Vicente Fox, decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to consider proposals for a comprehensive and integral Convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

*The Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with a Disability* met for the first time on July 29, 2002 to debate proposals for a new international human rights treaty that would ensure the rights of children and adults with a disability. Since then, the ad hoc committee has met three times: 16-27 June 2003; 24 May - 4June 2004; and 23 August 3 September 2004. Each two-week meeting was attended by UN Member States delegations, international disability organizations, other non-governmental organizations and experts in the disability rights field.

**What legal and policy frameworks currently exist?**
Two major documents address the needs of persons with a disability: the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons and the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. While both documents have been a step forward in the
process towards equal enjoyment of rights for persons with disabilities, neither is sufficient to ensure this goal.

The UN General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons on December 3, 1982. While the equalization of opportunities was its central theme and achievement of full participation of persons with a disability in all aspects of social and economic life was its guiding philosophy, the World Programme was not able to achieve its goal. A global meeting of experts in 1987 reviewed the implementation of World Programme and recommended that the UN General Assembly convene a special conference to draft an international Convention on the rights of disabled persons. Unfortunately, at that point, the process toward a Convention did not succeed in moving forward.

In 1993, in a further effort to ensure the rights of persons with a disability, the UN General Assembly adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. The Standard Rules is a politically and morally binding document that defines States' responsibilities to promote the full participation of persons with a disability in society and provides for an independent monitoring mechanism. The Standard Rules have proven to be very useful as a basis for policymaking and action in many countries. While the Standard Rules represent progress toward changing the way societies approach the topic of disability, they are not legally binding, thus rendering them only partially effective.

Why do we need a Convention?
International human rights law recognizes that all human beings are entitled to the full range of human rights guaranteed and set forth in various human rights Conventions and declarations. Persons with disabilities, numbering more than 600 million worldwide, are entitled to their human rights on the same basis as all other persons.

Unfortunately, while in theory the existing legal framework does apply to persons with a disability, the conventions and declarations that create the human rights framework do not specifically state that they protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Nor is there presently a specialized international legally binding treaty that addresses the rights of persons with a disability. The absence of specific protection, alongside the pervasive lack of public awareness of the human rights situation of persons with a disability, results in this population being in practice virtually left out of the international human rights law system.

The UN has decided that certain other populations, such as children, women and racial minorities require rights protection in the form of specialized human rights treaties. Thus far, however, persons with a disability have not been successful in gaining legal protection. Only 41 countries out of nearly 200 UN Member States have enacted national legislation that addresses the rights of persons with a disability in some
form. And of these 41, only 19 countries have specific institutions to respond to individual claims of discrimination on the basis of disability or to ensure the implementation of disability laws. ("Reforming Disability Nondiscrimination Laws: A Comparative Perspective." By Stanley S. Herr. In University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform, Vol 35, Issues 1 and 2, Fall 2001-Winter 2002. Pgs 388-398.)

It is clear that the human rights framework is deficient for persons with a disability. Existing human rights treaties do not adequately address the unique physical, social and legal circumstances of persons with disabilities who face persistent barriers to the enjoyment of basic human rights such as education, employment, access to buildings and transportation, and participation in public life. And current international policies and documents that do try to address the needs of persons with a disability are not legally binding. Egregious abuses, including automatic institutionalisation based on disability, and violence toward persons with a disability do not receive the attention they deserve by society or even by the human rights community.

Lex Frieden, the current chair of the United States National Council on Disability, stated that a Convention on the rights of persons with a disability offers the following advantages: “it would be well known to all people in the world, it would serve to collate all of the provisions and rules that address treatment of people with disabilities by member nations, and it would provide clearly understood and organized methods for enforcement of its provisions on behalf of people with disabilities.”


**Substance and process in the development of the new Convention**
A Convention, in order to effectively ensure the enjoyment of rights of persons with a disability, must contain certain concepts and principles. Arthur O’Reilly, former chair of the National Disability Authority of Ireland and former president of RI, outlined the following issues as vital for the new Convention to address:

- The Convention must incorporate a human rights perspective: the overarching principle that all persons with disabilities, without exception, are entitled to enjoy fundamental human rights and freedoms on the basis of equality and without discrimination.
- All international human rights instruments protect the rights of persons with disabilities through principles of equality and non-discrimination. A Convention dealing specifically with the rights of
persons with a disability would serve to elaborate on, specify and add content to rights and freedoms that have already been agreed upon.

- The Convention must apply to all categories of persons with a disability.
- Special attention should be paid to the situation of persons with a disability facing multiple discrimination including, in particular, women with disabilities, persons with disabilities living in poverty in developing countries, and those living in remote, rural areas.
- The provisions of the Convention should be regarded as a minimum standard, which States may improve on in national law, policy and practice.
- While this Convention legally binds States Parties, it should also affirm the role of private bodies. States Parties should consult and cooperate with employers’ and workers’ organizations and organizations of and for persons with a disability in implementing their obligations.
- The Convention should incorporate the concept of “reasonable accommodation”. It should recognize that denial of any such reasonable accommodation constitutes disability-based discrimination. The Convention should require governments not merely to abstain from and prevent discrimination against persons with a disability, but also to take affirmative action to reduce or remove barriers to full participation and to give preferential treatment, where necessary, in order to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment. Such affirmative action measures should not be regarded as discriminating against non-disabled persons.
- With public services becoming increasingly privatized, States obligations to ensure non-discriminatory services to persons with a disability on an equal basis with others should extend to the private sector.
- Governments should take proactive measures to raise awareness among persons with a disability of States' obligations under the Convention, and ensure that judicial institutions, legal proceedings and remedies are accessible and easy to use by persons with a disability. Rights can properly be exercised and protected only if persons are aware of their existence and enabled to access them.
- The Convention should recognize the role of national human rights institutions in providing a national framework for planning, and monitoring implementation of, States obligations under the Convention.
- The importance of international cooperation in promoting effective implementation of the Convention should be clearly recognized. States should be encouraged to adopt special measures to help achieve that goal.
- The process by which this Convention is elaborated should be open and transparent. It should enable meaningful participation.
by NGOs, experts, national human rights institutions and, in particular, persons with a disability and their representative organizations.

- The Convention should provide for a comprehensive monitoring mechanism at the international level, with the power to examine states reports, hear individual complaints and determine effective remedies.

**Where are we now?**
The Fourth Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the disability Convention concluded its deliberations on 3 September 2004. While the road to a Convention may be a long one, the continued participation of a broad range of States, the media, NGOs and persons with a disability is essential for this historic human rights process to move forward.

As Venus Ilagan, chairperson of the International Disability Alliance and Disabled people’s International, stated, “Unfortunately, to this day the goal of full participation, the equalization of opportunities and respect for the human rights of disabled persons remains an elusive dream that has yet to become a reality.”

For the over 600 million persons with a disabilities living in the world today, a disability Convention is a must.

“Disability is a human rights issue! I repeat: disability is a human rights issue.

Those of us who happen to have a disability are fed up being treated by society and our fellow citizens as if we did not exist or as if we were aliens from outer space. We are human beings with equal value, claiming equal rights...

If asked, most persons, including politicians and other decision makers, agree with us. The problem is that they do not realize the consequences of this principle and they are not ready to take action accordingly.”

SECTION 3

CHRONOLOGY

TOWARDS A UN DISABILITY CONVENTION: A CHRONOOGY
TOWARDS A UN DISABILITY CONVENTION: A CHRONOLOGY

UN global treaties that currently exist are based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Achievements in international human rights conventions since then are outlined in the following chronology:

1948 Adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly, claiming that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set out in the Declaration, without distinction of any kind.

20 December 1971 The General Assembly adopts the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons.

December 1975 The General Assembly adopts the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons, which states that all persons with a disability are entitled to the rights stipulated, without respect to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, state of wealth, birth or any other situation.

1981 The General Assembly proclaims 1981 to be the International Year of Disabled Persons.

1982 The General Assembly adopts the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons. Disability policy is now structured in three main areas: prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities.


1987 Global meeting of experts reviews the Implementation of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons and recommends that the UN General Assembly convene a special conference to draft an international Convention on the rights of disabled persons.

1987 Italy prepares an outline draft treaty on the rights of persons with a disability and submits it to the General Assembly.

October 1987 42nd session of the UN General Assembly discusses the desirability of an international treaty, but comes to no formal agreement to proceed.

1992 The General Assembly declares 3 December of each year to be the International Day of Disabled Persons.
20 December 1993 The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities are adopted by the General Assembly. The Rules summarize the message of the World Programme of Action, state preconditions for equal opportunity, target areas of equal participation, and promote implementation measures and monitoring mechanisms.

1994 Mr. Bengt Lindqvist is designated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to be First Special Rapporteur on Disability of the UN’s Commission for Social Development, to assist in the monitoring and further implementation of the Standard Rules.

September 1999 Rehabilitation International pushes forward work towards a Convention when it calls on UN Member States to support the drafting of a treaty on the rights of persons with a disability in RI’s Charter for a New Millennium.


April 2000 The UN Commission on Human Rights adopts a resolution, which invites the High Commissioner for Human Rights to examine measures to strengthen the protection and monitoring of the rights of persons with a disability. The Office of the High Commissioner commissions a study to evaluate the effectiveness of existing treaties in guaranteeing the rights of persons with a disability. The report of that study (Human Rights and Disability, by G. Quinn and T. Degener) sets out a wide range of recommendations designed to enhance the future use of the UN human rights system for persons with a disability. The report also supports the argument for a specific Convention on the rights of persons with a disability, viewing such a Convention as underpinning, and not undermining, the existing human rights treaties.

September 2001 In 1997 the UN General Assembly decides in resolution 52/111 to hold the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. The conference, which is held in South Africa, recommends that the UN General Assembly consider drafting an international treaty on the rights of persons with a disability.

19 December 2001 The UN General Assembly adopts Resolution 56/168, calling for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to consider proposals for an international human rights treaty for persons with disabilities.

11-14 June 2002 In cooperation with the UN, the Government of Mexico hosts an inter-regional meeting of experts to discuss the treaty.
29 July-9 August 2002 The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 56/168 takes place at the UN in New York. This committee has responsibility for considering proposals for an international human rights disability Convention.

2003 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appoints Sheikha Hessa Khalifa bin Ahmed al-Thani (Qatar) to be the second Special Rapporteur on Disability for 2003-2005.

16-27 June 2003 The second meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 56/168 is held at the UN in New York.

5-16 January 2004 The Working Group of the Ad Hoc Committee meets at UN headquarters, NY, to draft a negotiating text for presentation to the Ad Hoc Committee.

24 May-4 June 2004 The Third Ad Hoc Committee meeting towards a disability Convention begins a “first reading” of the treaty text, as drafted by the U.N. Working Group in January.

23 August-3 September 2004 The Fourth Ad Hoc Committee meeting towards a disability Convention takes place. Discussions about the provisions and monitoring mechanisms of such a Convention continue.
SECTION 4

EXISTING HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

CORE U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES AND YEAR OF ADOPTION
Courtesy of Landmine Survivors Network
Core U.N. Human Rights Treaties and Year of Adoption

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966

- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 1965
  - Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979
  - Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, (CAT) 1984
  - Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989
  - Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities?
SECTION 5

WEBSITE RESOURCE LIST
For more information on the convention process, disability rights and organizations of persons with a disability, please visit:

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social Policy and Development – UN Enable, gives information on the current disability convention process: www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/.


SECTION 6

ORGANIZATIONAL FACT SHEETS
The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is the international governing body of sports for athletes with a disability. It supervises and co-ordinates the Paralympic Games and other multi-disability competitions such as World and Regional Championships as well as developing sporting opportunities around the world for athletes of all levels. It is an international non-profit organization formed and run by around 160 National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) and five disability specific international sports federations (IOSDs). The vision of the IPC is “To Enable Paralympic Athletes to Achieve Sporting Excellence and Inspire and Excite the World”.

The IPC was founded on 22 September 1989 with the aim to create an international representative organization of elite sports for athletes with a disability. It was furnished with a democratic structure and with democratically elected representatives from these organizations. The Paralympic Winter Games in Lillehammer in 1994 were the first Paralympic Games under the governance of the IPC.

The IPC aims to promote, without discrimination, the practice of sports for people with a disability; to seek the expansion of sport opportunities from a developmental to an elite level for people with a disability; to create the conditions for athlete empowerment through self-determination; to liaise with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and other international sports bodies; to co-ordinate the calendar of international and regional competitions; and to assist and encourage educational programmes, research and promotional activities.

There are a total of 24 sports on the Paralympic programme (20 summer and four winter) and two so called IPC sports (which are not on the Paralympic programme). For 13 of these sports, the IPC currently serves as the International Sports Federation. Other sports are either governed by independent sport federations or are part of a disability-specific IOSD programme.

In 1999, the IPC opened its permanent Headquarters in Bonn, Germany, run by professional staff. The IPC is currently composed of the General Assembly (its highest decision-making body), the Executive Committee, the Management Committee, the Headquarters and various Standing Committees and Commissions.

In November 2003, the IPC took important steps toward a new future when the General Assembly adopted new governance and management structures following a Strategic Review that was conducted in the preceding years. A motion that will lead the 13 IPC sports towards more self-sustainability and eventually independence from the IPC also passed. In addition to the NPCs and IOSDs, the sports and regional bodies will also become full members of the IPC.

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Rehabilitation International (RI) is a federation of national and international organizations and agencies. It develops and promotes initiatives to protect the rights of persons with a disability, to improve rehabilitation and other crucial services for persons with a disability and their families, and to increase international collaboration towards these objectives.

RI is currently composed of several hundred member and affiliated organizations in more than 80 nations, in all of the world’s regions. Rehabilitation International maintains official relations with the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNESCO, UNICEF, the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe, the UN Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific (UNESCAP), and others.

RI is governed by an annual Assembly representing its member organizations and by an Executive Committee elected every four years by the members. The Executive Committee selects the Secretary General.

RI is an open forum for the exchange of experience and information on research and practice.

It advocates for policies and legislation recognizing the rights of persons with a disability and their families.

In 1999, on the basis of a unanimous call from its Governing Assembly, RI revived efforts to establish a UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. RI then played a major role in the 2000 Disability Sector Summit in China, which together with other international disability organizations issued, “The Beijing Declaration,” calling for the development of such a UN Convention.

In 2000 and 2001 RI officers presented its Charter for the Third Millennium, calling for a UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to nearly 100 national and international leaders. Currently, RI is actively working towards a UN Disability Convention by participating in UN Ad Hoc Committee meetings and in a non-governmental organization (NGO) disability caucus.

**RI's Current Activities:**

- Provides practical support to the disability focal point within UNICEF, including a regular newsletter on childhood disability;
- Works with the UN and other disability organizations to promote implementation of the UN Standard Rules for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities;
Publishes comprehensive periodicals and reports on disability issues including the *International Rehabilitation Review* and *One in Ten*;

Produces, with the World Institute on Disability and other groups, an international online magazine (www.disabilityworld.org) issues every other month in English and Spanish;

Administers commissions of specialists working on the following aspects: education; medical; organization and administration; recreation, leisure and physical activities; social; technology and accessibility; work and employment;

Organizes quadrennial World Congresses. Recent World Congresses were held in New Zealand (1996), Brazil (2000) and Norway (2004);

Facilitates annual regional conferences. Recent regional conferences were held in Lebanon (2001), Japan (2002), Germany (2002) and South Africa (2003);

Distributes information regularly in more than 150 countries;

Organizes international disability film/video festivals, most recently in Moscow in 2002, and in 1998 developed a catalogue of the best audiovisual materials for public education and training;

Participates in the International Working Group on Disability and Development (IWGDD), which is dedicated to increasing the participation of persons with a disability in development assistance programs at every level. The IWGDD is placing special attention on inclusive education; and

Participates in the International Disability Alliance (IDA), a coalition of the world’s largest international disability organizations.

Founded in 1922, Rehabilitation International celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2002. Its unique history includes presenting a “Bill of Rights for the Disabled Child” to the League of Nations, originating the International Symbol of Access, and creating the foundations of community based rehabilitation.

The current President is Michael Fox, elected in 2004 for a four-year term, and the current Secretary General is Tomas Lagerwall, appointed in 2001.

For additional information, contact:

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