

INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY ALLIANCE (IDA)

Member Organizations:

Arab Organization of Disabled People, Down Syndrome International, European Disability Forum, Inclusion International, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families, Pacific Disability Forum, World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf, World Federation of the DeafBlind, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

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Calling for the Global Sport Community to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

To ensure full and effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), IDA calls upon the entire global sport community, including Governmental and Non-Governmental actors, to acknowledge and promote the rights of persons with disabilities to participate in all forms of sport and recreation. This includes, but is not limited to, organized and non-formal sport, physical education, physical activity and fitness, recreation and play. The promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities to participate in sport and recreation must be consistent with the principles of the CRPD and must likewise reflect the social model understanding of disability.

The CRPD articulates the scope of the right of persons with disabilities to participate in sport, recreation and leisure, as well as the right of children with disabilities to play, in the fullest expression seen to date in a human rights convention.^[1] Under the CRPD, States must encourage and promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities. Applying the general principles of the CRPD to this provision, persons with disabilities have the right to enjoy equal access to sport (at all levels) and recreational facilities (such as swimming pools and playgrounds) and must be reasonably accommodated in exercising their rights in this context.^[2]

Article 30(5) requires States to provide opportunities for participation in both disability-specific sport and recreation (e.g., wheelchair basketball) and mainstream sport programming.^[3] It further affirms the rights of persons with disabilities to organize, develop, and participate in sport and recreation with other persons with disabilities, which includes activities organized specifically for persons with disabilities in both mainstream programs as well as disability-specific sport.^[4]

In addition to ensuring their right to access and to use sporting, recreational and tourism facilities such as sport arenas, community pools, and recreational facilities, States also must take specific measures to ensure that persons with disabilities are included as recipients of services and programming by organizers.^[5] Finally, Article 30 recognizes the right of children with disabilities to play and to participate in recreation, leisure and sporting activities in the school system.^[6] This includes access to playgrounds and other child-specific sport, recreation and play venues in the

community and adaptive physical education in schools.

The CRPD evokes a robust non-discrimination and equality framework. In implementing the right to participate in sport, recreation and play, States Parties must ensure persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are engaged in meaningful consultation on law, policy and programming in the areas of sport, recreation and play. Further, States must ensure that there is a legislative base for guaranteeing Article 30(5) rights and put forward specific measures to ensure access to sporting and recreational facilities, such as accessibility guidelines to direct implementation. Other measures include whether and how school physical education curriculum and play periods are adjusted or adapted to accommodate children with disabilities and whether and how individualized educational plans are crafted in a way so as to include sport and play for students with disabilities.

Yours sincerely,



Maryanne Diamond
Chair, International Disability Alliance

[1] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, GA Res 61/106, UN Doc A/RES/61/106 (13 December 2006) (CRPD).

[2] CRPD, art. 30(5).

[3] Id.

[4] Id.

[5] Id.

[6] Id.