



Canada

Voir au-delà du handicap
Promoting a new perspective on disability

United Nation's International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

2008

December 3rd is the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This year's international theme is the "Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities: Dignity and Justice for All of Us". "Dignity and Justice for All of Us" is the theme for this day as well as the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Did you Know?

- A United Nations' (UN) Convention is a legally binding document between two or more countries.
- The international Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) is a comprehensive Human Rights treaty which promotes and protects all human rights of people with disabilities, typically divided into five categories: economic, cultural, civic, political and social.
- The CRPD and its Optional Protocol were adopted by the UN General Assembly on Dec. 13, 2006.
- On March 30, 2007, this Convention was opened for signature with 82 UN member states signing the treaty, the highest number ever to sign on an opening day. Canada was a signatory (agrees with the main idea of the convention but is not legally required to comply); however, the second step, "ratification" has not yet taken place in Canada.
- Ratification is where a country officially decides that it wants to join a convention and when it does we say that it has "ratified" a convention.
- An Optional Protocol is an addition to an existing convention which addresses additional issues not covered by the original convention. This current Optional Protocol to the CRPD includes individual complaint procedures and countries can decide whether they want to agree to this Optional Protocol.
- On May 2, 2008, all federal political parties supported a NDP motion in the House of Commons to ratify the UN Convention in the House of Commons.
- On November 3, 2008 a committee of experts was elected in New York, their job will be to review reports on how countries that have ratified the Convention are meeting their obligations.

Solutions:

- Become informed and learn more about how this international convention and how it will provide a framework which will link disability issues to human rights. The UN has a very good website with more information. Go to www.un.org/disabilities/
- Educate your local Members of Parliament (MPs), other people with disabilities, mainstream and disability organizations, businesses and the general public on the importance of our country ratifying the Convention (including the signing of the Optional Protocol). Canada just had a federal election and there are new MPs that will benefit from this information and others that may need an update.
- Tell others that this Convention was the fastest negotiated human rights law in the history of international law, and it is also the first convention to have been drafted with such extensive participation by stakeholders. This means that this UN Convention is a human rights convention written both *by* and *for* persons with disabilities. Spread the news! An accessible and inclusive country will benefit everyone! For more information to www.ccdonline.ca
- Let politicians know that organizations run by and for people with disabilities are excited and enthusiastic about helping them to create pro-active programs, policies and other measures that demonstrate and facilitate the intent of the Convention.
- This ratification has yet to be obtained - ask your Member of Parliament to support and encourage the ratification! Go to Disabled People's International to see their amazing ratification toolkit at <http://www.icrpd.net/implementation/en/toolkit/>
- Contact IL Canada or an IL Centre near you. Contact info below.

“The Convention is a big win for you, the United Nations and the world. The Challenge now is translating this landmark instrument into reality, both in letter and in spirit. Only then will the real benefit be felt by millions of people with disabilities.”

Ban Ki-Moon
UN Secretary General
To DPI World Assembly, Seoul September, 2007