

69th Commission Session: Agenda item 3 (g)

CR 2: 25 April 2013

Joint Statement of Civil Society Organizations to the Committee of the Whole II

Thank you, Madame Chairperson,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my honour to convey to you the Joint Statement of Civil Society Organizations. Our Statement reads as follows:

“We, 18 civil society organizations gathered in Bangkok on twenty-third April 2013 in the Informal Session of Civil Society Organizations on the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013 to 2022, and decided on which civil society organizations would participate in the Working Group on Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities.

We deeply appreciate the agreement reached by the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003 to 2012, held last year in Incheon, Republic of Korea, to include, on an equal basis with ESCAP members and associate members, civil society organizations in the membership of the Working Group.

In this regard, we are pleased to present to the Commission in alphabetical order the following 15 civil society organizations which are ready to serve as full members of the working Group:

1. ASEAN Disability Forum
2. Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability
3. Asia Pacific Disability Forum
4. Asia-Pacific DPO United
5. Central Asian Disability Forum

6. Digital Accessible Information System Consortium
7. Disabled Peoples' International
8. Inclusion International
9. Pacific Disability Forum
10. Rehabilitation International
11. South Asian Disability Forum
12. World Blind Union
13. World Federation of Deaf
14. World Federation of Deafblind
15. World Network of Users and Survivors Of Psychiatry

We wish to record our gratitude to the following three sister civil society organizations that have offered to extend, in their capacity as observers, full support to the Working Group. They are the ASEAN Autism Network, Christian Blind Mission and the Community-based Rehabilitation Asia-Pacific Network.

We reached a common understanding among ourselves that, by the next ESCAP high level intergovernmental meeting in 2017, priority consideration would be given to these three civil society organizations for full civil society organization membership in the Working Group for the second half of the present Decade.

We reached consensus, based on our shared commitment to two fundamental principles for our mutual support and advancement, namely, solidarity among all of us, and “nothing about us without us”.

We shall endeavor in the Working Group to articulate the concerns of the many civil society organizations that contribute to disability- inclusive development in the ESCAP region, but are not member of the Working Group.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to working closely with Government partners towards the effective implementation of the Incheon Strategy.

The Incheon Strategy is the Asian and Pacific region's pioneering contribution to the High-level Meeting on Disability and Development, to be held in New York on 23rd September

this year. We expect that its outcome document will directly contribute to the explicit inclusion of disability concerns in the post-2015 development agenda.

Permit us to urge all Governments of the ESCAP membership to ensure the active engagement of civil society organizations in the preparatory process at all levels for the September 2013 High-level Meeting on Disability and Development and the post-2015 development agenda.

Finally, our warmest appreciation goes to the ESCAP secretariat for its tremendous facilitation efforts that ensured the inclusiveness of the entire multi-year process for preparing the Incheon Strategy. Through such inclusiveness, we are committed to working closely with all stakeholders for the successful implementation of the Incheon Strategy and its Ministerial Declaration.

We thank you.”

Distinguished Delegates, that concludes the Joint Statement of the 18 civil society organizations.