



## **Bangkok Recommendations on Hard of Hearing and Deafened in Asia and the Pacific**

The representatives who are hard of hearing and deafened from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, and Vietnam in Asia and the Pacific, in total 24 persons, participated in the Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Hard of Hearing and Deafened from 29 February to 2 March, 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand.

We, the participants in the Workshop, thank the organizers, Danishkadah of Pakistan, Center for Research and Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CED) of Vietnam, the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), for supporting an idea of this new initiative by persons who are hard of hearing and deafened in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as successful arrangements of the Workshop;

Appreciating the efforts by people concerning disability including governments in Asia and the Pacific in enhancing the quality of life of persons with disabilities and their families;

Also appreciating the efforts by governments in Asia and the Pacific to accelerate the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD);

Observing that self-help organizations of persons with disabilities have played an active role in making our society more inclusive in the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012;

Acknowledging that such regional networks as the Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) Asia-Pacific Network, ASEAN Autism Network (AAN) and South Asian Disability Forum (SADF) have great impacts for the empowerment of persons with disabilities at the community, national and international level;

Recognizing that APCD has been playing a major role to facilitate and strengthen the movement on disability and development in the Asia-Pacific region, in partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), JICA and other partners;

Supporting the proposed new "Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022" by the United Nations ESCAP to mainstream disability in the development agenda;

Mindful that, despite the above significant achievements, there still remains challenges to be addressed for the realization of the rights of persons who are hard of hearing and deafened in the Asia-Pacific region. These challenges include a lack of recognition of persons who are hard of hearing and deafened according to specific needs in their daily life; lack of access to information and communication including assistive devices for persons who are hard of hearing and deafened; less number of leaders who are hard of hearing and deafened in each community; no strong movement to set up self-help groups of persons who are hard of hearing and deafened in each country;

Noting that there is a clear consensus to support the establishment of a regional platform for persons who are hard of hearing and deafened in the Asia-Pacific region;

Hereby unanimously recommend as follows:

1. An emphasis should be given to persons who are hard of hearing and deafened to enhance their recognition, taking into account different views on hearing impairment;
2. The newly established "Asia-Pacific Federation of the Hard of Hearing and Deafened (APFHD)" should be the key platform to promote the hard of hearing and deafened movement regionally in collaboration with APCD;
3. Hearing aids and other assistive devices should be provided in an affordable manner according to the basic needs of persons who are hard of hearing and deafened, regardless of the development stage of each country;
4. Further consideration should be given to information and communication accessibility including speech to text, Communication Access Real Time Translation (CART);
5. A sufficient system for data collection on hard of hearing and deafened should be developed and well managed at the country level in Asia and the Pacific; and
6. Attention should be paid to persons who are hard of hearing and deafened in the proposed new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, to address the specific perspective on hard of hearing and deafened.
7. Importance should be given to the formation and development of groups and organization of persons who are hard of hearing and deafened in countries where there is no such groups and organizations.

Presented and unanimously adopted  
at the Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Hard of Hearing and Deafened,  
2 March, 2012