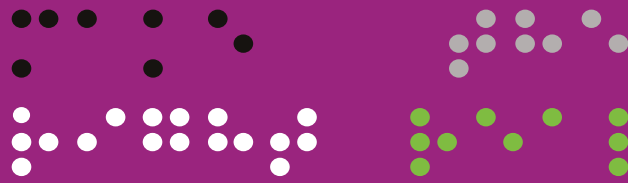


make the right real



Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia



21-22 September 2011 British Council Centre and BPKS Complex, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Participants Support
Make the Right Real Campaign





Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia

Organized by

Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh
South Asian Disability Forum (SADF)
Bangladesh Prodigandi Kalyan Somity (BPKS)
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD)
British Council
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

21-22 September 2011
British Council Centre and BPKS Complex, Dhaka, Bangladesh

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This report is available in a text format for persons with visual impairments and blind persons

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WHAT IS “MAKE THE RIGHT REAL”!

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) launched the “Make the Right Real” Campaign in October 2010 to accelerate the regional implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Twenty-one out of some fifty countries in the Asia-Pacific region have thus far ratified the Convention. The Campaign aims to promote more awareness and action on the Convention through collaboration among Governments, organizations of persons with disabilities and other stakeholders in advocacy, research and capacity-building activities. A series of national-level campaigns have been initiated in countries of the region. The Campaign website will be launched soon. We invite you to join us in the Campaign. Let us make the right real for persons with disabilities!

SUMMARY REPORT

The Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia was held from 21 to 22 September 2011 at the British Council Centre in Dhaka. More than 100 delegates attended the Conference.

It was organized by the South Asian Disability Forum (SADF), the Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the British Council. The Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS) managed the local arrangements for the Conference.

The Conference was inaugurated by His Excellency Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Minister of Information and Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh and began with a recitation from the Quran.

A welcome address was given by Ms. Shirin Akther, the newly elected Chairperson of the SADF. She expressed her feeling of great honour to have been elected as the Chairperson of SADF, and as a visually impaired woman, considered it an achievement not only for her, but also for all women with disabilities in Bangladesh and other South Asian countries. All eight countries in South Asia agreed to develop a forum which would be very effective for promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

Ms. Jo Seaman, Business Development Manager, British Council South Asia Region in her opening remarks said that she felt honored to be a part of this initiative, an outcome of the recommendations adopted in Islamabad in 2010.

Mr. Ghulam Nabi Nizamani, Chief Barista, APCD Empowerment Café and a guest of honor, said that APCD had been collaborating in eight countries in South Asia and aimed to empower persons with disabilities through collaboration among persons with disabilities, Government, the United Nations, the private sector and other development agencies, in order to promote an inclusive society for all.

Mr. Patrik Andersson, Chief of Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and a guest of honor said that ESCAP was the only regional governmental platform which could bring together countries in the Asia-Pacific region to facilitate dialogue and cooperation. The focus of the first Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons was on awareness-raising and advocacy on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. A key highlight of the second Decade came in 2006, with the adoption of the first disability-specific international human rights Convention. He commended Bangladesh for being one of the first Asia-Pacific countries to sign and ratify the Convention in 2007.

Mr. Mohammed Moshir Rahman, Director General, Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh noted that it was very difficult for the Government alone to address all issues and provide all necessities and therefore appreciated the large number of NGOs such as BPKS taking a lead in this sector. Those organizations made significant contributions and provided a great deal of support for disability and development. He concluded by stressing that now was the time to move forward together.

Mr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas, Secretary in Charge, Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh began his speech by expressing his confidence in SADF as an effective forum for raising the voice of persons with disabilities for the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He emphasized that the Government of Bangladesh was aware of disability issues and that the Prime Minister was fully committed to working for persons with disabilities. The Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh, in collaboration with other ministries was overseeing a number of initiatives to meet the needs of Bangladeshis with disabilities. He announced that the Disability Act of Bangladesh was in the final stage of being revised. The Government of Bangladesh had increased the budget for the development of persons with disabilities and was also planning to identify persons with disabilities by carrying out a survey of the needs of persons with disabilities. He said that the Conference would provide his Government with more inputs from the South Asian perspective that it would be able to apply for the revision of the Disability Act..

Her Excellency Tasanawadee Miancharoen, Ambassador, Royal Thai Embassy in Bangladesh in her speech as a special guest recalled that the Royal Thai Government had established APCD in 2002 in collaboration with the Government of Japan through JICA. APCD had been recognized by ESCAP as a regional cooperation agency for the empowerment of person with disabilities. She pointed out that persons with disabilities made up the world's largest and most disadvantaged group. Few children with disabilities in developing countries could attend school and. an estimated that 30 percent of the world's street children lived with disabilities. Women with disabilities in particular could play a key role in national policy making and community development to improve the quality of life for persons with a disability in South Asia..

His Excellency Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Minister of Information and Culture Affairs of Bangladesh pointed out that Stephen Hawking, the world renown scientist had severe disabilities, yet that had not prevented him from having a prominent career and a happy family life. He went on to say that most people with disabilities were very intelligent, hardworking and enthusiastic. The Constitution of Bangladesh under the article 27 and 28 ensures equal rights of all citizens and the Government is committed to promoting respect for the equal rights of all citizens. He concluded by expressing his belief that the newly formed SADF would be fully committed to working towards the empowerment of persons with disabilities in South Asia.

Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal, Founder and Executive Director, BPKS in his opening statement stressed the importance of improving the status of persons with disabilities and acknowledged the powerful leadership, initiatives and work which was making a positive contribution,

Under the theme “Make the Right Real”, the Conference participants discussed dimensions of an inclusive society and formulated recommendations for the effective implementation of policies relating to disability in South Asia, which was signed by key participants in support of. “Make the Right Real”

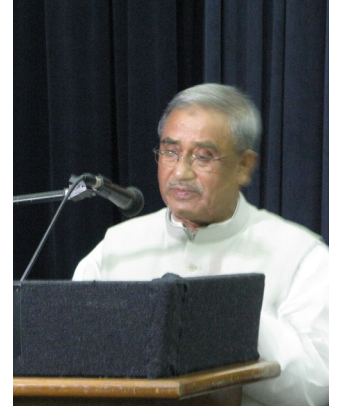
The followings were major outcomes of the Conference:

- The “Dhaka Recommendations to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in South Asia” was adopted.
- The establishment of a South Asian Disability Forum (SADF) and its plan to organize the next conference in Nepal in 2013 was supported by the organizers.
- Participants expressed their support for the proposal for a new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022.

The closing ceremony on 22 September 2011 was presided over by Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal, Executive Director of BPKS. Mr. Gazi Md. Nurul Kabir, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh and Managing Director, National Foundation for the Development of Disabled People, Mr. Akiie Ninomiya Executive Director, APCD, and Mr. Shigeki Furuta, Senior Representative, JICA Bangladesh, were present as Special Guests. Mr. Prodip Ranjan Chakrabarti, Director of Administration, National Foundation for the Development of Disabled Persons was also present at the closing session. Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal expressed his thanks to the Government of Bangladesh, ESCAP, APCD, JICA, the British Council and the master minds of SADF for their making the Conference a success.

Prepared by
Md. Alamin Shovan
Mohd. Nazmul Kabir

KEYNOTE SPEECH BY CHIEF GUEST



Mr. Abul Kalam Azad

Minister for Information and Cultural Affairs

The chairperson of today's opening ceremony and Founder & Executive Director of Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal,

Special Guests:

Mr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas, Secretary in charge, Ministry of Social Welfare,

Mr. Moshiur Rahman, Director General, Department of social Services,

Mr. Sture Patrik Andersson, Chief of Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Mr. Akiie Ninomiya, Executive Director, Asia-pacific Development Center on Disability,

Mr. Takao Toda, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency Bangladesh,

Ms. Shirin Akther, Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, and

Ms. Rosemary Arnott, Director, British Council Bangladesh,

Leaders and representatives of Disabled Peoples' Organizations of home and abroad and other development organizations,

Distinguished Guests, ladies & Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum and Very Good Morning to you all.

I am happy to be here today at the opening ceremony of the 'Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia.

I would like to thank the organizer, South Asian Disability Forum, for their initiatives and its associate partners-Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Asia-pacific Development Center on Disability, the Japan International Cooperation Agency Bangladesh and the British Council Bangladesh.

I would also like to appreciate Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity, the local partner of the conference for their involvement in the movement of disabled people. The theme of today's conference is "Make the Right Real" which reminds us of keep our commitment to the disabled people.

I hope, this conference will facilitate to strengthen the partnership of persons with disabilities and Disabled people's Organizations within South Asia, and with stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is necessary to create social and legal framework to mitigate sufferings of the challenged people, especially the women with disabilities, to protect their rights and promote their causes.

We must recognize that the disabled need not just food, education and shelter, but to be recognized as persons along with greater attention of the society.

We should call upon all to work in cooperation with one another so that as a region we can develop scientifically sound practices, which are socially applicable and economically feasible.

There should be partnership in south Asia so that the disabled persons could have and easy access to services on affordable expenses.

We should find out ways to overcome barriers to healthcare, rehabilitation, education, employment, and support services, and to create the environment which will enable people with disabilities to flourish.

I like to mention about the world reputed Scientist Stephen W Hawking Who had motor neuron disease for all his adult life. But it couldn't prevent him from having a prominent career in astrophysics and a happy family life.

To achieve the long-lasting better development prospects of the Millennium Development Goals and beyond, we must empower people living with disabilities and remove their barriers which prevent them participating in their communities, getting a quality education, finding decent work and proper information along with having their voices heard.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Constitution of Bangladesh ensures equal rights of all citizens. The government under the prudent leadership of Honb'le Minister Sheikh Hasina is firmly committed to addressing the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.

The Prime Minister and her daughter the internationally reputed Autism expert, Saima Hossain, have a keen interest for the development of people with disabilities. For their initiatives the first ever international conference on Autism in the region was held on last July in Dhaka with hope of generating greater awareness on the plight of the "gifted children".

The Prime Minister also has urged entrepreneurs to recruit physically-challenged people in their organizations. I like to mention about the success of our physically challenged cricketers in the Specialized Olympic Games who have been the Champions in cricket in the tournament. For welfare of handicapped people, the government has planned to build a full-fledged complex for disabled people in Dhaka.

The National Disable Foundation is also implementing development projects to turn these physically or mentally challenged persons into national resources.

The Ministry of Social Welfare is planning and implementing programs for the protection, care, education, training and rehabilitations of persons with disabilities.

The government also carried out the 5th Population and Housing Census with a new approach to identify the total number of physically challenged people which will help it with better planning as well as strengthen our advocacy programme of work.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The government is taking necessary steps to make the Information Technology suitable to the disabled people to include them in process of building Digital Bangladesh by 2021. We know that mass media could play the most vital role in establishing the equal rights of the people with disability as ensured by the concerned UN Chapter.

Our media is playing an active role in this regard. Now a days, sign language is being used in electronic media and Right to Information Act 2009 has been introduced which will, of course, help our people with disabilities to get information of their choice.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the governments, civil society and disabled people's organizations of the South Asian region should work together for creating enabling environments, develop rehabilitation and support services, ensure adequate social protection, create inclusive policies and programmes, and ensure new and existing standards and legislation, to benefit of people with disabilities and wider community.

Our driving vision is of an inclusive world in which we are all able to live a life of comfort and dignity. Hopefully, today's conference would reinforce our understanding of disability as human right and development priority.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh through its path-breaking innovations in micro-finance, education, women's empowerment and health is running towards the fulfillment of Vision-2021.

We are working to build Sonar Bangla of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We also want to have regional cooperation for making a world where all, also the persons with disabilities, get equal chance to shine.

Lastly I wish you all the best and all-out success of the conference titled "Regional leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia". Special thanks to the delegates from South Asian countries. Thank you for your time.

Khoda Hafez.

Joy Bangla Joy Bangabandhu

May Bangladesh Live Forever.

May the world be equally habitable to all.

SPEECH BY SPECIAL GUEST



**Her Excellency Madam Tasanawadee Miancharoen
Ambassador, The Royal Thai Embassy in Bangladesh**

Honorable Minister, Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh

Mr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas, Secretary in Charge, Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh

Mr. Sture Patrik Andersson, Chief, Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal, Founder & Executive Director, BPKS

Ms. Ms. Shirin Akhter, Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum

Ms. Jo Seaman Business Development Manager, British Council South Asia Region

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be with you today for the Opening of the Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia: “Make the Right Real” here at British Council, Dhaka Bangladesh.

The Royal Thai Government established the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) in collaboration with Japan International Cooperative Agency (JICA), which was endorsed by the United Nations Economics and Social Commission (ESCAP).

APCD was identified as the Regional Cooperation Agency to implement the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, in line with so called Biwako Millennium Framework towards inclusive barrier-free rights based society for all.

Statistics show that the world population is approximately 6.8 billion and continues to grow; 60% is in the Asia-Pacific region, 24% in South Asian sub-region, compared with 15% in the African region, 9% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 15% in Europe and 5% in North America. This means that the South Asia sub-region has the largest population. According to the World Report on Disability compiled with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank, an estimated 15% of the world's population are persons with disabilities. If we consider that there are 6.9 billion people globally, more than 1 billion would be persons with disabilities. If we include the families of persons with disabilities, approximately 50% of the world's population would be impacted. Therefore, the disability issue is not a minor issue, but a major development issue.

Persons with disabilities make up the world's largest and most disadvantaged group. Ninety-eight per cent (98%) of children with disabilities in developing countries cannot attend school, and an estimated 30% of the world's street children live with disabilities. The literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3%, and in some countries, as low as 1% for women with disabilities. Disability is associated with literacy, malnutrition, lack of access to clean water, low rates of immunization against disease as well as unhealthy and dangerous working conditions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) emphasized that "Persons with Disabilities" and "Organizations of Persons with Disabilities" are experts and consultants for policy on disability.

Especially, women with disabilities are key persons to develop quality of life for the families and communities.

I would like to congratulate the South Asian Disability Forum (SADF) to have great women leaders with disabilities. So that women with disabilities may become experts on not only family, community development for the CRPD, but also, national policy makers on disability.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the delegates present who are organizing such an epoch-making conference in Dhaka. The Royal Thai Government through APCD will continue to strengthen its collaboration with South Asian Disability Forum (SADF) to promote further empowerment of persons with disabilities in South Asia as "Agents of Change" in society and promote an inclusive barrier-free and right-based society for all.

SPEECH BY GUEST OF HONOR



Patrik Andersson

Chief, Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP

Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs

Mr. Moshiur Rahman, Director General, Department of social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare

Mr. Abdus Sttar Dula, Founder & Executive Director, BPKS

Mr. Akiie Ninomiya, Executive Director, Asia-pacific Development Center on Disability,

Ms. Shirin Akther, Chairperson, SADF

Ms. Rosemary Arnott, Director, British Council Bangladesh,

Mr. Takao Toda, Chief Representative, JICA Bangladesh,

Distinguished participants,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), it is my pleasure to have this opportunity to say a few opening words. At the outset, let me express our appreciation to the organizers of this conference.

As you may know, ESCAP is the only regional intergovernmental platform that brings together all countries in Asia and the Pacific for dialogue and cooperation. This cooperation has – among other things – resulted in two Asian and Pacific Decades of Disabled Persons, with the Agenda for Action and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action as guiding tools.

While the first decade focused on creating awareness through advocacy for the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, the second decade has focused on developing the necessary legal and policy instruments to ensure the protection of those rights. A key highlight of the second decade came in 2006 with the adoption of the world's first disability-specific human rights treaty – the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Bangladesh was one of the first countries in the Asia and Pacific region to ratify the Convention in November 2007. Since then, only 21 Governments in the Asia and Pacific region have ratified the Convention.

It is estimated that Asia and the Pacific is home to around 650 million persons with disabilities. Many of these 650 million persons continue to be discriminated against. Many also face limited education and employment opportunities and often no access to social protection benefits and other support programmes. Most persons with disabilities are not even recognized in official statistics.

For these reasons, we need to significantly step-up our collective efforts to fight disability-related stigma and discrimination that continue to undermine local, national and regional disability responses. A decisive step in this process is to encourage governments in the region to accelerate the ratification and implementation of the CRPD. Mainstreaming disability perspectives in national legislation along the principles of the CRPD will be critical to ensure meaningful improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities.

I am convinced that this Conference will provide an important step toward a more effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. By building stronger partnerships that promote disability mainstreaming through the use of a comprehensive approach at all levels of society we can all be part of Making the Right Real!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Asia and Pacific region has been the world's most dynamic and fastest growing region for much of the past four decades. Even with the recent global economic crisis, Asia-Pacific developing economies are projected to grow by 7.3 percent this year. It is now time to ensure that these economic gains are equally shared by persons with disabilities and that their full rights are better promoted.

For this reason ESCAP is intensifying its efforts and working closely with Governments and all other key stakeholders throughout the region to move the agenda forward. We therefore support the efforts of this Conference and look forward to the Dhaka Declaration that will be adopted tomorrow.

Thank you.

PROGRAM

21 September 2011

Opening		
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	*BPKS
09:00 – 10:30 (5 Min) (10 Min) (5 Min)	<u>Opening Ceremony:</u> * Recitation of Holy Quran * Welcome Remark * Opening Remark	*Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS) *South Asian Disability Forum (SADF) Ms. Jo Seaman, Business Development Manager, British Council South Asia Region
(5 Min)	* Speech by Guest of Honor	Mr. Ghulam Nabi Nizamani, Chief Barista, Empowerment Café, Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD)
(5 Min)	* Speech by Guest of Honor	Mr. Sture Patrik Andersson, Chief, Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
(5 Min)	* Speech by Special Guest	Md. Moshir Rahman, Director General, Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh
(5 Min)	* Speech by Special Guest	Mr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas, Secretary in Charge, Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh
(5 Min)	* Speech by Special Guest	H.E. Tasanawadee Miancharoen, Ambassador, Royal Thai Embassy in Bangladesh
(15 Min)	* Speech by Chief Guest	Chief Guest Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh
(5 Min) (25 Min)	* Closing: Chairperson * Photo Session	Mr. Abdus Sattar Dulal, Founder & Executive Director, BPKS
10:30 – 11: 00	Tea break	

Session 1: Reviewing Regional Collaboration	
11:00 – 13:00	<p>* Moderator * Chairperson <u>Presentation</u> * Review: Asia-Pacific Decade (2003-2012) * Review: Sub-regional Collaboration in Asia-Pacific * Review : Progress in the Current Decade (2003-2012) in Bangladesh * Review: Disabled People's Organizations at Grassroots Level in the Current Decade (2003-2012) * Q & A</p>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	<p>* Moderator * Chairperson <u>Presentation (cont.)</u> * Disabled People's Organizations at Grassroots Level in the Current Decade (2003-2012) * Q & A</p>
15:00 – 15:30	Tea break
15:30 – 17:00	<p>* Moderator * Chairperson <u>Continue the Presentation on Review</u> * Disabled People's Organizations at Grassroots Level in the Current Decade (2003-2012) * Q & A</p>
17:00	Closing 1st Day

*SADF Member
*SADF Member

Ms. Aiko Akiyama, Social Affairs Officer, Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP

Mr. Akiie Ninomiya, Executive Director, APCD

Mr. Pradip Ranjan Chakraborty, Director (Admin & Finance)
National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons (NFDDP)

Mr. Ashrafun Nahar Misti, Program Operation Chief, BPKS

Mr. Shirin Akhter, Coordinator, National Alliance of Disabled Peoples' Organizations

*SADF Member
*SADF Member

Afghanistan (Mr. Abdul Ghafar Mohammad Omar Khan + Mr. Bashir Ahmad)

Bhutan (Mr. Pema Chhogyel + Mr. Amrith Bdr. Subba)

India (Mr. Mendhikar Srinivasulu + Ms Miridu Ram)

Maldives (Mr. Mohamed Hamid Nasheed)

*SADF Member
*SADF Member

Nepal (Mr. Neera Adhikari + Mr. Kiran Shilpakar)

Pakistan (Mr. Muhammad Atif Shiekh + Mr. Ghulam Nabi Nizamani)

Sri Lanka (Mr. Prasanna Rajiv Kuruppu + Ms. Hendawitharane Kishara Manique Gunaratne)

22 September 2011

Session 2: Asia-Pacific New Decade of Persons with Disabilities	
09:00 – 09:30	Recap: Program of the day *SADF Member
09:30 – 11:00	* Moderator * Chairperson <u>Discussion</u> * A Proposed New Asia-Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013-2022) and South Asia Mr. Sture Patrik Andersson, Chief, Ms. Aiko Akiyama, Social Affairs Officer, Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP *SADF Member
11:00 – 11:30	Tea break
11:30 – 13:00	* Moderator * Chairperson <u>Discussion (cont.)</u> *SADF Member A.S.M. Mosharraf Hossain, Country Representative, ADD Bangladesh
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
Session 3: Endorsement of South Asian Movement	
14:00 – 15:30	* Moderator * Chairperson Discussion * Acknowledgement of SADF * Dhaka Recommendations Ms. Aiko Akiyama, Social Affairs Officer, Social Integration Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP Mr. Gazi Mohammad Nurul Kabir, Managing Director, National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons (NFDDP) *SADF Members/All Participants *SADF Members/All Participants

DHAKA RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE THE RIGHT REAL



Dhaka Recommendations to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in South Asia

The representatives of disabled people's organizations (DPOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in South Asia, international development agencies and the Government of Bangladesh, in total around 100 persons, participated in the Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia, from 21 to 22 September 2011 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

We, the participants in the Conference, thank the organizers, the Government of Bangladesh, the South Asian Disability Forum (SADF), the Bangladesh Protibandhi Kalyan Somity (BPKS), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD), the British Council (BC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for their successful arrangement of the Conference;

Appreciating the efforts made by the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities in South Asia;

Also appreciating the efforts made to raise awareness of the importance of accelerating the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through the "Make the Right Real" Campaign;

Acknowledging that the Governments of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan have ratified the CRPD;

Supporting the official establishment of SADF, and its plan to organize the next conference in Nepal in 2013;



Also supporting the proposal of a new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 and the preparatory process for the High-level Inter-governmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012 to be held in October 2012, at Incheon, the Republic of Korea;

Noting that the main causes of disability in South Asia are often linked to poverty, health conditions, situations of conflict and disasters;

Encouraging SADF to take actions and collaborate with the governments and other stakeholders including civil society organizations and the business sector;

Mindful that persons with disabilities in South Asia continue to face social exclusion, economic deprivation and physical as well as psychological mistreatment, often as a result of cultural perceptions and stereotypes.

The participants of the Conference therefore recommend:

1. The governments in South Asia to review existing laws and to harmonize domestic legislation with the CRPD, in close collaboration with SADF and other DPOs, domestic and international NGOs, inter-governmental agencies and regional key partners such as ESCAP and APCD;
2. The governments in South Asia, DPOs including SADF and other stakeholders to support persons with disabilities by providing full access to information in Braille, sign language and in other accessible formats in both national and local languages;
3. The governments in South Asia to provide comprehensive capacity development programmes for DPOs and to ensure their involvement in the implementation of the CRPD;
4. The governments in South Asia to support the proposal of a new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022;
5. The governments in South Asia, DPOs including SADF and other stakeholders to collaborate for leadership development, and promote inclusive business development and community-based inclusive development to address gaps and challenges still faced by persons with disabilities;
6. The governments in South Asia to enhance the collaboration with SADF and other DPOs as well as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC),



regional key players such as ESCAP and APCD, media, human rights organizations and academic institutions;

7. All religious and spiritual leaders to enhance their efforts to eliminate all discrimination against persons with disabilities and to encourage their inclusion in all religious and social rituals;

8. The governments in South Asia to establish a data collection mechanism for comprehensive disability statistics, including the reporting of different impairments, employment situations, public accommodations and services and other socio-economic variables;

9. The governments in South Asia to strengthen social protection programmes and measures to improve the livelihoods of persons with disabilities;

10. The governments in South Asia to mainstream the gender dimension in all relevant policy measures in close consultation with DPOs including SADF and other stakeholders;

11. The Government of Bangladesh, SADF and other DPOs, and other stakeholders in Bangladesh continue to partner with ESCAP and APCD to further regional cooperation from the perspective of the CRPD.

22 September 2011

Present

Ms. Shirin Akhter,
Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, Bangladesh

Mr. Hamid Nasheed Mohamed,
Vice Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, Maldives

Ms. Hendawijharane Kishara Manique Gunaratne,
Vice Chairperson, South Asian Disability Forum, Sri Lanka



Ms. Mridu Ram Goel

Ms. Mridu Ram Goel,
Honorable Secretary, South Asian Disability Forum, India

Mr. Kiran Shilpakar

Mr. Kiran Shilpakar,
Treasurer, South Asian Disability Forum, Nepal

Mr. Abdul Ghafar Muhammad Omar Khan

Mr. Abdul Ghafar Muhammad Omar Khan,
Executive Committee Member, South Asian Disability Forum, Afghanistan

Mr. Pema Chhogyel

Mr. Pema Chhogyel,
Executive Committee Member, South Asian Disability Forum, Bhutan

Mr. M. Srinivasulu

Mr. M. Srinivasulu,
Executive Committee member, South Asian Disability Forum, India

Mr. Muhammad Atif Shiekh

Mr. Muhammad Atif Shiekh,
Executive Committee Member, South Asian Disability Forum, Pakistan

PHOTOS



Organizers Welcoming Participants



Group Photo in the Opening Ceremony



Reviewing the Second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012



About 100 Delegates Participating in the Conference

