For RI EC, RIF AND RI Members

Topics

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Dates & venues for the upcoming RI meetings

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For more information please visit the Congress website www.riincheon2012.org

Upcoming Meetings and Events

**2012, September 24 – 27** RI - Arab Region’s 5th International Conference themed "Together for a better life for all... Including Persons with Disabilities in Development" in Doha, Qatar. The conference is under the Patronage of H.H. Sheikha Hissa Bint Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani, President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, Qatar. For more information please contact: nrdc@destination.com.lb or call Tel: (+961) 3 206633

**2012, October 9 – 12** Southwest Conference on Disability in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. This year the main focus of this annual Conference is to strengthen on increasing access for people with disabilities to all aspects of community and economic living. For further information please go to: [http://cdd.unm.edu/swconf](http://cdd.unm.edu/swconf)

**2012, October 10 – 12** 8th International Short Break Association 2012 in Toronto, Canada. This biennial 3 day Conference is the only international forum for the sharing of innovation, best practice and policy development in the field of short breaks/respite care for people with disabilities. The theme of the conference is “Respite is Key”, focusing on four themes: Opening the Door to the Community, The Key to Strengthening Families, Unlocking Resources, Treasures Found. For further information please go to: [http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1025177](http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1025177)
2012, October 10 – 13 **REHACARE INTERNATIONAL in Dusseldorf, Germany.** REHACARE is a unique combination of trade fair, “theme parks”, congress, seminars and workshops addressing four main topics - rehabilitation, prevention, integration and care. Over 700 national and international exhibitors will showcase the latest products and services for people with disabilities, chronic illnesses or those requiring care – from simple products to sophisticated systems. REHACARE is an important platform for individuals with disabilities or those in need of care, family members and nursing staff as well as healthcare equipment retailers and decision makers from authorities. For further information please go to: [www.rehacare.com](http://www.rehacare.com)

2012, October 25 – 28 **Inclusion International Global Inclusion Conference in Washington, DC, USA.** At this International event participants from around the world will come together to discuss the implications on persons with intellectual disabilities, of **Article 19** of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: **Living independently** and **being included in the community**. Inclusion International’s two year Campaign to promote Art.19 will culminate at the Conference with the launch of a Global Report. For further information please go to: [http://www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org) and [http://www.inclusion-international.org](http://www.inclusion-international.org).

2013, June 18 – 20 **38th World Hospital Congress “Future Health Care-The opportunities of new technology” in Oslo, Norway.** The Norwegian Hospital and Health Service Association (NSH) and The International Hospital Federation (IHF) is behind this Congress. The planning of the conference is underway to present great solutions for improved opportunities to make good diagnoses and provide appropriate treatment in healthcare services worldwide. Online **registration opens one year prior** on June 18th 2012. For further information and to register please go to: [http://www.oslo2013.no](http://www.oslo2013.no)
CRPD Ratification Update

Latest Developments
- Greece ratified the Convention on 31 May 2012
- Estonia ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocol on 30 May 2012
- Mauritania ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocol on 3 April 2012

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 153 signatories
- 114 ratifications

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 90 signatories
- 65 ratifications

For more Information please visit following website: http://www.un.org/disabilities/

Preventing and eliminating barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities should be a condition to be fulfilled by recipients of European money/funding. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should be at the core of the European Funds allocated to Member States and the European regions. It is crucial that the funds are used effectively and ensure implementation of the UN treaty. During a workshop in May the European Parliament sent a strong message to Members States: the removal of crucial conditionalities is not acceptable; the future Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 will have to include persons with disabilities. The European Parliament is now in the driver’s seat concerning the future cohesion policy with the Treaty of Lisbon, it has become a formal
co-legislator in the cohesion field. This provides the Members of Parliament with a unique opportunity to ensure that the Structural Funds meet the needs of all European citizens, including 80 million Europeans with disabilities. The new Regulations on the EU Structural Funds have been released by the Commission last year in times of financial cuts. The MEPs together with key actors have brought to the EDF’s workshop a strong political message supporting people with disabilities. They have focus on four main issues: the importance and support to the ex ante conditionalities, the need to enhance accessibility provisions in the regulation, ensure partnership on equal footing with the representative organizations of persons with disabilities, the Structural Funds are a crucial test for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For further information please go to: http://www.edf-feph.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=13855&thebloc=29976

The fifth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will be held from 12 to 14 September 2012 at UN Headquarters. The theme of this year’s session is currently under discussion in the Bureau of the Conference. It will be posted on the Enable website next month along with information on NGO accreditation and participation, as well as side-events to the Conference. Prior to the convening of the Conference, a Civil Society CRPD Forum will be organized on 11 September by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) with the support of DESA. The Forum will provide an opportunity for NGOs and DPOs to engage in a discussion and coordinate their involvement in the Conference of States Parties and in the preparatory process for the High-level meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development to be held on 23 September 2013. UNICEF will host a Global Partnership Forum on Children with Disabilities and the Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD) will also convene a Development Partners Forum in conjunction with the Conference. For more information please see: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=46&pid=1595.

The commemoration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd 2012 provides an opportunity to address the exclusion of persons with disabilities by focusing on promoting accessibility, as well as removing all types of barriers in society. The theme of this year’s commemoration is: "Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all". Barriers can take a variety of forms, including those relating to the physical environment or to information and communications technology (ICT), or those resulting from legislation or policy, or from societal attitudes or discrimination. Based on this theme, sub-themes can be selected to cover aspects of society and development, such as: removing barriers to education, employment, transportation, travel and tourism or sports. A sub-theme can be selected so as to address a specific issue of exclusion and accessibility in any community. For more information please visit: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1597.
The 7th session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held in Geneva, from 16-20 April. The Committee considered the initial report of Peru and adopted lists of issues regarding the initial reports of Argentina, China and Hungary. The Committee also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation with United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations, including disabled persons’ organizations. The Committee similarly reviewed the progress of work of the various working groups established to draft the general comments decided on by the Committee, and endorsed the outcome document of the Dublin II meeting on the strengthening of the treaty bodies and the draft guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of treaty bodies. The Committee adopted, for the first time, Views on a Complaint Submitted under the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Also, for the first time, the session was webcast live at http://www.treatybodywebcast.org. The Committee also decided to hold a half day of general discussion on the situation of women and girls with disabilities during its 9th session in April 2013. For further information please see: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/Session7.aspx

Membership News

– We’d love to hear from you...

Please share with us project summaries/reports, articles and announcements on events which your organization is planning to hold or has conducted, and other information which you may want to share with colleagues in the RI network, our partners and to the rest of the world. Send these to us at this email address: newsletter@riglobal.org and we will make sure that these get included in future issues of the RI Newsletter.

RI Norway’s 50th year celebration in Oslo, May 15 - 17, 2012

RI Norway celebrated its 50th year anniversary with different activities held in Oslo highlighted by an International Conference on “What is the status on rehabilitation in Norway” which was held on 15th May. Speakers from ministries, agencies, research-institutions and user - organizations from Norway were invited to discuss and share their views on the topic. Professor Jerome Bickenbach was also asked to speak on ICF in the future. The conference was participated by people from Norway and RI Europe. RI Norway arranged an official dinner to celebrate the milestone with 50 persons from Norway and RI Europe joining. Jan A. Monsbakken, President of RI Norway, gave a welcome speech while Joachim Breuer, Vice President of RI Europe, provided greetings and felicitations on behalf of RI
Global. People with Intellectual Disabilities from the group Pascal Norway performed as part of the dinner. RI Europe and those from the Nordic countries had their meeting in Oslo on 16th May. At that meeting, RI Nordic have agreed to cooperate with other institutions on a Conference on elderly people, housing and environment in the future which will be held in Stockholm in December. All international guests were invited to celebrate the National Day of Norway on 17th May with RI Norway having provided them with special tickets to watch this event from outside of the Royal Palace.

“Pascal Norway” a group of dancers with Intellectual Disabilities

RI President Elect, Jan Arne Monsbakken, and Deputy Vice President for RI-Europe, Siobhan Barron
China Disabled Persons’ Federation (CDPF) had invited some 430 people to Beijing for a Forum. About 100 of the participants came from outside China. RI Global was represented by President-Elect Jan A. Monsbakken who was one of the keynote speakers, together with representatives from other International NGO’s. Dr. Joachim Breuer, Vice President of RI Europe, was also invited on behalf of Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV) to also make a keynote speech. Several other representatives from the “RI family” have made a great contribution to the Beijing Forum whose main objective was to share insights and experience among participants, discuss further implementation of the UNCRPD and explore new approaches and good practices to mainstream disability into social development so as to achieve inclusive development of persons with disabilities. The Forum was opened by Mr. Hui Liangyu, Vice Premier of China and Mr. Deng Pufang, Honorary Chairman of CDPF. Other guest speakers were from the UNDP, UN- ESCAP and IDA. The Forum included Plenary Sessions and 4 different Working Group breakout sessions. The Working Groups focused on Social Security Systems, Access to Physical Environment, CBR and Education and Empowerment for Poverty Reduction. The 3 days of work in Beijing was produced the “Beijing Declaration on Disability-inclusive Development,” a 4-page document focusing on the implementation of the UNCRPD and progress concerning the Millennium Development Goals. The Declaration will be submitted to the High Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the 2nd Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, to be held in Incheon, South Korea from 29 October-2November 2012 and to the United Nations Secretary General in order to advocate for disability inclusive development within the United Nations system and with all member states.
RI Commission Chairs, Joseph Kwan (2nd from left) and Joseph Kwok (extreme right), with representatives of the Chinese Disabled Persons Federation, Leonard Cheshire Disability and UN-ESCAP at the Forum recently held in Beijing.

Members of a dance troupe of youth with disabilities affiliated with CDPF performed at the Forum.
A success story from the Pakistan Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled (PSRD). The Vocational Rehabilitation Centre of PSRD is providing loan to deserving disabled men and women so that “they can stand on their own feet” and start or upgrade their self-employment enterprise. Mr. Aftab Nazir of Nazir Inayat is one of such men. He has disability in both legs. He obtained a diploma on mobile phone repair from PSRD and decided to run a Mobile Phone Repair Shop after he was granted Rs.35,000 by the Vocational Rehabilitation Centre of PSRD to start his business. Now he is running his shop successfully and is able to support himself and his family. Moreover, he has been able to pay on installment basis the loan that he got from PSRD. For more information please visit: http://www.psrdf.org.pk
ICTA undertakes access project in Kuwait

RI’s International Commission on Technology and Accessibility (ICTA) is currently implementing the Kuwait Access Strategy Project in cooperation with the Kuwait Society for the Handicapped (KSH) through Ms. Munira Al-Mutawa, RI’s National Secretary in Kuwait and the Secretary General of KSH.

Some of the activities in this project include a review of Kuwait’s current legislations and regulations, conduct of access assessment within the State and provision of trainings. The project is also expected to come up with a report on the assessments conducted together with a set of recommendations on improvements necessary to make Kuwait accessible for all its citizens.

At the contract signing held in Kuwait on 12 April 2012, Khaled El-Mohtar, RI’s Vice President for the Arab Region, represented RI and was joined by ICTA Chair Joseph Kwan and RI Foundation Chair Michael Fox. Ms. Munira Al-Mutawa was KSH’s representative in the contract signing. She was joined by Mr. Hashem Tagi, also a member of RI.

Other News

The Government of India has recently created a new Department of Disability Affairs which was earlier a part of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. On the initiative of the Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment, Shri Mukul Wasnik, the proposal for the creation of the new Disability Department was decided to address the needs of the large population of Persons with Disabilities in India. The two Departments created by the government on 12th May 2012 under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment are:

(i) Department of Social Justice and Empowerment
(ii) Department of Disability Affairs.

The new disability department will have a separate Secretary, 3 Joint Secretary level officers and other officers. Staff would be about 150. The Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Shri Mukul Wasnik said that the Government is committed to the cause of PwDs. With the creation of this new Department, they will be able to focus more on the policy issues and other concerns of PwDs. There would be a separate budget for this department which would help in strengthening existing schemes and facilitate formulating new ones, and also for technological innovations which is very much required by this sector. He also stressed that it would now be easier to coordinate with various stakeholders, NGOs, State Governments, other related Central ministries and international organizations like the United Nations, as India is a signatory to the UNCRPD.
The European Commission selected **Salzburg, Austria**, to receive its **Access City award 2012**, the European prize for making cities more accessible to persons with disabilities. Other finalists for the award were Krakow, Poland, Marburg, Germany and Santander, Spain. For more information about the award please go to: [http://www.accesscityward.eu](http://www.accesscityward.eu)

**Polio** - a disease which has disabled millions and pulled people further into poverty – has been reduced by 99% over the past 25 years. The world has made great progress towards ending polio forever, a critical step in protecting children everywhere from vaccine-preventable diseases. India – long a polio safe haven - has gone over a year without a single case and polio is now endemic in just three countries. Yet this progress is threatened by a funding shortfall of almost US$ 1 billion for 2012-2013. The world’s health ministers declared polio an "emergency for global public health". The Global Poverty Project is working with partners to support the Global Polio Eradication Initiative to makes the goal to end polio a reality, ensuring that no child suffers or dies needlessly from polio ever again. To join the call and sign the End of Polio petition please go to: [http://www.theendofpolio.com/home/](http://www.theendofpolio.com/home/)

**University of Cincinnati students design a better pill bottle for the blind and visually impaired**

The students' design features:

- A lid on "hinges" that flips open, as lost caps are a problem for the visually impaired. And twist caps can be a challenge for the elderly. (At the same time, the students' flip lid is child proof.)
- A small rectangular bottle body, 2-by-2 inches wide and 3-inches tall, that allows a user to easily reach in and pick out a pill or two without the need to pour out a larger supply into the palm for subsequent selection of the required dosage. In addition, this "stout" design prevents the bottle from tipping over and spilling the medication.
- A distinct texture on the bottle's flip lid. There are eight distinct textures available. Each distinct texture would correspond with a different medication. Importantly, the distinct textures are not Braille, as only 10 percent of the blind and visually impaired can read Braille.
- The lid would also sport a dramatic, deep color -- different medication differentiated by a different-colored lid. The reason for this is that many visually impaired individuals do have limited sight, such that they can make out a strong color that is close to the eye.
• A "fail-safe" audio button on the lid could be pressed for an audio statement on the medicinal contents.

The students' design is low-tech, simple and inexpensive, especially compared to currently available options for the visually impaired when it comes to solutions for distinguishing different medication. The students' design, currently titled "Inclusive Pill Bottles for the Blind," recently won a $1,000 prize in the 2012 "Innov8 For Health," a business-concept competition sponsored by a variety of regional institutions and companies. For further information please visit: http://www.sciencedaily.com

Resource Update

OHCHR is preparing a report on work and employment of persons with disabilities, to be presented to the Human Rights Council in March 2013.

You are invited to contribute information about:

1. **Employment of persons with disabilities** – situation, relevant data and statistics, work in the informal sector
2. **Legislative and policy framework** - country's conformity with article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on work and employment, gaps in legislation and policies
3. **Implementation of national legislation and policies** - progress and obstacles preventing persons with disabilities, or specific groups of persons with disabilities (e.g. young persons, women, or persons with intellectual/psycho-social disabilities), from enjoying the right to work on an equal basis with others.
4. **Participation in policy-making** - involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the development, implementation and monitoring of legislation and policies to promote and protect the right of persons with disabilities to work
5. **International cooperation** - programs related to the promotion of work and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, your organization's involvement
6. **Other additional relevant information**

Send information by **31 July 2012** to: disability@ohchr.org

The United States International Council on Disabilities (USICD) is looking for a **Programs Associate** to join the Washington DC-based organization. The Programs Associate will support USICD’s development and management of programs, activities with the disability community abroad, the Global Disability Rights Library project, and efforts to advance greater inclusion and access in the international development sector. A Bachelor’s degree is required and disability, international studies or community activism experiences are preferred. For more details please visit: http://www.usicd.org
The Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) is currently accepting applications for the world’s first virtual Master’s degree in disability studies and public policy. The Master’s in Comparative and International Disability Policy, offered by the School of International Service at American University, is the centerpiece program of the IDPP. Fifteen full fellowships will be awarded by The Nippon Foundation, with preference given to students from the ASEAN regions who are blind, deaf, and/or mobility impaired. For more information, please visit http://aseanidpp.org/.

The Hearing Loss Association of Portland has reported that Oregon State University is conducting a research project entitled Work Place Experiences of People who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing (DEAF/HOH). The researchers are seeking working people who are deaf or hearing impaired. David Baldridge, PhD, is the research manager and a deafened professor at OSU and a former Rochester Institute of Technology professor. His project will collect interview and survey data from experts, people with disabilities, their supervisors and co-workers. Anyone seeking more information about participating in this research study may contact Baldridge directly at david.baldridge@bux.oregonstate.edu.

The International AIDS Society will be holding their 19th International AIDS Conference in Washington, DC, on July 22-27, 2012. Volunteers are needed to provide various types of assistance in the Disability Networking Zone (DNZ) at the Global Village—the part of the conference that is open to the public. Volunteers can include students, retirees, professionals, and ASL interpreters; volunteers are being asked to help with sharing information and supporting educational activities. For more details, please contact Caitlin Hudson caithudson@yahoo.com by email or phone 215-460-5443.

The Scientific Committee of the 5th Africa Conference on Sexual Health and Rights is asking for Abstracts (oral presentations and posters) relative to the overall theme of the conference - "Sexual Health and Rights in Africa - Where Are We?" and through the following sub-themes: Adolescent and Youth Sexuality, Women’s and Girls Sexuality, Disabilities and Sexual Rights, Sexual Rights and Sex Work, HIV/AIDS and Sexuality, Sexuality, Culture and Religion, Sexual and Reproductive Rights (Legal, Policy and Program Issues-financing, equity, access, implementation, enforcement and redress), Sexual Orientation, Sexual/Gender Identity and Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Capacity building and Knowledge Management. Abstract Submission Deadline is 30th June 2012. For Abstract Formats and Submission Criteria please go to: www.africasexuality.org.
The EU-funded project End Exclusion - lead by International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) member LIGHT FOR THE WORLD - has launched "Show Me Inclusion". This is a creative competition that gives young people the opportunity to stand up and get creative about the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Submissions - such as videos, audio files, drawings, and sketch books - will be accepted until Sunday 16 September 2012. The 10 submissions with the most votes, as well as an additional 20 selected submissions, will be given to an international jury composed of experts from film, sport, politics and the disability movement. They will select the best “Show me Inclusion” idea, which will be made public on World Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17 October 2012. The winning entry will be professionally produced and used worldwide as an awareness raising tool. For further information please visit: http://www.iddcconsortium.net/joomla/index.php/home/38-news-and-events/867-invitation-to-participate-in-show-me-inclusion-creative-competition

Resource Material

People with disabilities have the same zeal and appreciation for life as the rest of us does. But they often get stunned, doubted, mocked and insulted. Access to public places and buildings is restricted and doors are closed for schooling and employment. Watch the famous Indian actor, film director and producer, Aamir Khan’s Satyamer Jayate Episode 6 online Persons with Disabilities – We Can Fly! http://video.lyricsmint.com/video/6th-episode-satyamev-jayate/

An ambitious 200 page Guide to Accessible Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has been published by the Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development and is available at http://www.ecdd-ethiopia.org

The first ever World report on disability, produced jointly by WHO and the World Bank, suggests that more than a billion people in the world today experience disability. People with disabilities have generally poorer health, lower education achievements, fewer economic opportunities and higher rates of poverty than people without disabilities. This is largely due to the lack of services available to them and the many obstacles they face in their everyday lives. The report provides the best available evidence about what works to overcome barriers to health care, rehabilitation, education, employment, and support services, and to create environments which will enable people with disabilities to flourish. The report ends with a concrete set of recommended actions for governments and their partners. This pioneering World report on disability will make a significant contribution to implementation of the Convention on
the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. At the intersection of public health, human rights and development, the report is set to become a "must have" resource for policy-makers, service providers, professionals, and advocates for people with disabilities and their families. For further information or to order a hard copy please visit: [http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/index.html)

**Inspiration**

💡 **100-Year-Old Man Goes for Doctorate Degree in India**

One man in India shows us it's never too late to go back to school. With a passion for learning, he's now studying for his PhD, at the ripe old age of 100. At 100, Bholaram Das is the oldest student in the world enrolled in a doctorate program in India's Assam state. Mr. Das recently celebrated his 100th birthday. He enrolled at Guwahati University in 2008 for the doctoral program at the age of 98. "My sons have encouraged me in everything, especially my third son, who is also a doctorate. He has encouraged me the most, and he is helping me with my thesis too." His zeal and passion to study at this age has impressed and inspired many, including his family members. Bholaram's Grandson said that "everyone is very excited seeing his enthusiasm to study, and people will understand that it is difficult to study, but once you get the recognition and complete your studies, it makes all the hard work seem like it's worth it." Mr. Das's research topic is the role of his native village of Bohori in Assam state, in the spread of a branch of Hinduism. Mr. Das, a freedom fighter who even underwent a jail term in 1930, has worn various hats, including a teacher, a lawyer and a judge. To watch a video about Bholaram Das please go to: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSF5q7XVHuc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSF5q7XVHuc)
We hope you enjoyed reading this issue of the RI Monthly Newsletter. Tell us about your activities and other stories so we can share it with RI members and the world.

Anne Hawker, RI President  Venus Ilagan, Secretary General

Thank you for supporting RI Global and let’s make change happen together

Picture by Franck Boston