

## **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

To help raise awareness about the UN Convention and what it means for disabled people, the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) is looking at the possibility of holding an event – or events – for disabled people and their organisations in 2010 to share information about the Convention and explore, for example, what future work will be done in respect of implementation, monitoring and reporting.

**ODI would like to have ideas about what such an event might cover.**

### **Background**

The Convention is an international treaty which explains that all disabled people in the UK – and around the world – have and should be able to enjoy the same human rights as other people. It sets an international benchmark for the human rights of disabled people. The Convention is a very detailed document which covers all areas of life, including employment, health, culture, liberty and accessibility. More information about it can be found on the ODI website [www.odi.gov.uk](http://www.odi.gov.uk) and on the UN Enable website <http://www.un.org/disabilities>

When countries ratify a Convention it means that they agree with what it says. So by ratifying the Convention, the UK Government is showing that it is committed to the equality of human rights for disabled people at home, and abroad.

Now that the Convention has been ratified there is more work to be done. It is important that what the Convention says is put into practice in a way that makes a real difference to the lives of disabled people. So for example, that means the Government will have to take the principles of the Convention into account in the development of new policies and programmes, and it means that in 2011 the Government will make a report to the United Nations Committee that has been established to look at the way in which all countries are implementing the Convention.

The ODI has a particular responsibility for co-ordinating work on the Convention for the UK Government, and will work with other Government Departments and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on this. Outside Government, the four Equality and

Human Rights Commissions (the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Scottish Human Rights Commission, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland) have agreed to be designated as the independent element of the framework for monitoring and reporting on the Convention. They will be looking at how the UK is implementing the Convention independently from the Government, and will make their views known separately to the United Nations.

Disabled people and their organisations have a key role to play in work on the Convention as well. One of the Convention's important principles is that disabled people and their organisations should be involved in putting it into practice. So the ODI is interested in learning what disabled people themselves already know about the Convention, what they want to learn, and how they want to be involved in future Convention work.

To help in the planning of the event, ODI would be interested in receiving views on the following questions:

1. What would you like to know more about and discuss in respect of the Convention?

For example:

What are the respective roles of Government, the Equality and Human Rights Commissions, and others?

Do you have views about the processes that could be used for monitoring and reporting, and how disabled people can be involved?

2. Where do you think an event should be held? Do you think that there should be regional events?
3. Do you have suggestions about fully accessible venues where you think the event/s could be held (venues should be able to accommodate between 50 and 200 people)?
4. How long do you think the event/s should be and what format would you like it to take? For example, would you prefer short events with speeches and lunch, or a longer event with speeches, workshops, networking opportunities and lunch?

5. Are there any speakers that you would like to hear – from Government or elsewhere?

In addition, if you are interested in being involved further and working with the ODI to co-produce and take work on the event/s further please let us know. We would be interested at gaining your commitment and some of your time to help take this work forward (depending on the number of responses we receive, it may not be possible to involve every organisation that tells us they would like to be involved in co-production).

**We would be grateful for responses no later than 1 January 2010, to the following address:**

**By email to:** [ODI.International@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ODI.International@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

**Or to:** UN Convention Team  
Office for Disability Issues  
Ground Floor, Caxton House  
London  
United Kingdom  
SW1H 9NA

If you would prefer to speak over the telephone to ask for more information or to provide your response please email us with your contact number and when is best to call you, and we will arrange for you to be contacted.

**Thank you for spending time thinking about this.**