

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the
Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons,
2003-2012 (Second Session)

14-16 December 2011

Bangkok

**REPORT OF THE
REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION FOR THE
HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE
FINAL REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
ASIAN AND PACIFIC DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS, 2003-2012
(SECOND SESSION)***

* This report has been issued without formal editing.

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I. BACKGROUND

1. The Commission, at its sixty-sixth session, adopted resolution 66/11 of 19 May 2010 on “Regional preparations for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012”. That resolution, *inter alia*, called upon all members and associate members and key stakeholders to actively contribute to the preparatory process leading up to, as well as to participate in, the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea from 29 October to 2 November 2012 in Incheon, Republic of Korea. The resolution also requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP “to encourage the participation of all key stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities from Asia and the Pacific, in the preparatory process leading up to the High-Level Intergovernmental Meeting”.
2. In pursuance of the above-mentioned resolution, the secretariat convened the first session of the Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, in Bangkok from 23 to 25 June 2010.
3. The second session of the Regional Stakeholder Consultation for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, was held in Bangkok from 14 to 16 December 2011 (hereafter referred to as the “Stakeholder Consultation”).
4. The Stakeholder Consultation was attended by 41 experts from government and disabled people’s organizations (DPOs), seven representatives of intergovernmental and international organizations, including the United Nations system, and 67 observers. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to the Report.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

5. The objectives of the Stakeholder Consultation were to:
 - A. Review the key issues identified by Governments and civil society as contained in the responses to surveys conducted by the secretariat on the regional implementation of the Second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012; and
 - B. Seek the inputs and views of stakeholders as a basis for the preparation of the proposed outcome document for the above-mentioned High-level Intergovernmental Meeting.

III. OPENING SESSION

6. The Director of the Social Development Division of ESCAP, in her welcoming remarks, recalled the first session of the Stakeholder Consultation that had been held in June 2010 to initiate regional preparations for the final review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, and the lead-up to the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to be held in October 2012. She noted the valuable guidance that had been provided by the first session of the Stakeholder Consultation to the secretariat in its planning and

implementation of the roadmap for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting. The Director indicated that the secretariat was on course in implementing the key recommendations of the first session of the Stakeholder Consultation. Those included the conduct of the regional survey of the achievements and remaining challenges of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012; initiation of the action research on poverty, disability and livelihoods; the Commission's anticipated proclamation in May 2012 of a new decade to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific; launching of the "Make the Right Real" Campaign in the region to accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); and the preparation of the outcome document for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting, which was being presented to the current session of the Stakeholder Consultation for review prior to submission to governments for consideration in March 2012. The Director concluded by emphasizing the importance of benefitting from the expertise and experience of the Stakeholder Consultation to ensure that the outcome document would be relevant and responsive to the aspirations of persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.

7. Mr. Shuaib Chalklen, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Disability, in his opening remarks, focused on the global situation of persons with disabilities. Mr. Chalklen stated that most States Parties were considering how to overcome the many obstacles to implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Mr. Chalklen highlighted the important role of civil society in giving persons with disabilities a voice and a monitoring role and expressed his appreciation of the work of the International Disability Alliance alongside the work of formal institutions. Mr. Chalklen also welcomed the proposal for the establishment of an Asia-Pacific disability rights tribunal. Mr. Chalklen stated that he planned to give particular attention to the most marginalized persons with disabilities, including persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psycho-social disabilities and women and girls with disabilities. Mr. Chalklen indicated that he would aim to also strengthen international cooperation and regional coordination and information exchange. In concluding, Mr. Chalklen expressed his desire to facilitate a dialogue between the different regions of the world as regards their implementation of regional decades of persons with disabilities.

8. Mr. Ronald Clive McCallum, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in his statement, focused on the progress and challenges concerning the work of the Committee. Out of 18 Committee members, 15 were persons with disabilities. Mr. McCallum stated that 108 countries had thus far ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the latest of which had been Myanmar. Mr. McCallum indicated that 63 States Parties had also ratified the Optional Protocol and encouraged all other States Parties to do so. Mr. McCallum referred to the backlog of reports to be considered by the Committee, as well as the level of States Parties' compliance with reporting obligations, which he hoped would improve. Mr. McCallum further added that a primary function of the Committee was to conduct dialogue with States Parties. The next such dialogue would be held with Peru in April 2012. Mr. McCallum requested States Parties and civil society organizations to support the Committee's request to the United Nations General Assembly for increased meeting time after 2012 so that there could be two sessions of two weeks duration each year to enable more time for meaningful dialogue. Mr. McCallum indicated that he was a supporter of the proposal for an Asia-Pacific tribunal on the rights of persons with disabilities. In concluding, Mr. McCallum indicated that he was honoured to have been elected Chairperson of the Committee that comprised the Chairpersons of all 10 Treaty Bodies.

9. Ms. Kim Hyo Jin, President of the Executive Committee of the Korean Solidarity for Preparation of the Third Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, emphasized that for the new decade to be successful, it would be essential to secure adequate funding to support the work of disabled people's organizations (DPOs) to implement the proposed Incheon Strategy. Ms. Kim also stressed the need to raise greater general public awareness of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Ms. Kim identified research as an important tool for the new decade and emphasized the importance of national coordination, and subregional and regional cooperation, particularly to support developing countries. Ms. Kim drew particular attention to gender and minority perspectives in disability-related policies and concluded by encouraging everyone to work towards fully realizing the aspirations of persons with disabilities for equality, particularly in employment and education.

IV. AGENDA

10. The Stakeholder Consultation adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Adoption of the provisional agenda.
3. Review of the roadmap to the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012.
4. Consideration of the framework of the draft outcome document of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012.
5. Nomination of civil society representation at the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, 14-16 March 2012, Bangkok.
6. Adoption of the Meeting Report.
7. Closing of the Meeting.

11. The Stakeholder Consultation was chaired by the Director of the Social Development Division, ESCAP.

V. REVIEW OF THE ROADMAP TO THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE FINAL REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS, 2003-2012

12. The secretariat presented the status of implementation of the roadmap for the regional preparatory process leading up to the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012. It indicated that the present Stakeholder Consultation constituted an important element of the regional preparatory process, which comprised three tracks: (1)

intergovernmental consensus-building and follow-up; (2) stakeholder engagement and advocacy; and (3) assessment of the achievements and remaining challenges of the second Decade.

13. The secretariat delivered a presentation on the progress on its project on “Action Research on Poverty, Disability and Livelihoods”, and informed the Regional Stakeholder Consultation that eight DPOs had been selected to undertake research with support from the secretariat and that the outcomes of the research would be available around mid-2012. The research was intended to support Goal One of the proposed Incheon Goals and Targets (INGOTS), that being to reduce poverty and enhance the work and employment prospects of persons with disabilities. The project would strengthen effective evidence-based policy making and address gaps in data on the livelihoods of persons living with disabilities. The research methodology was explained as being participatory and empowering, by enabling persons with disabilities to articulate their own views, thereby generating knowledge on their own livelihood needs.

14. The Stakeholder Consultation gave strong support for the project, highlighting the need for such research to be undertaken. It stressed the importance of being inclusive of different forms of disability and disadvantage with particular attention to youth; rural and remote communities; and often neglected groups, including persons who were deaf, persons who were hard of hearing and persons who were deafened; persons with intellectual disabilities; and persons with psycho-social disabilities; and older persons with disabilities. The Stakeholder Consultation further stressed that the research should include the existing and on-going work of organizations which were not formal research partners in the project. Participants also noted the importance of engaging on issues beyond employment. It was further stressed that partner organizations could be encouraged to conduct the research inclusive of experts and organizations which would add value to both the process and outcomes.

15. The secretariat presented the preliminary summary of the results of its questionnaire survey concerning the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and the Biwako Plus Five over the period of the Second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012. There were two questionnaires in the survey, one for Governments and another tailored to civil society entities. The government questionnaire had been sent to 58 Governments in the ESCAP region. The civil society questionnaire had been sent to 129 civil society entities, including DPOs. As of 13 December 2011, the secretariat had received responses from 37 Governments and 42 civil society entities. The response rate for Governments was 64 percent and that for civil society entities was 33 per cent. The highest performing subregion in terms of responses to the Government questionnaire was East and North-East Asia, followed by South and South-West Asia.

16. The secretariat indicated that, drawing from the responses received thus far, progress concerning the second Decade had been identified in three areas: rights-based policy making; policy coordination and specialization; and financial resources for disability.

17. The secretariat further indicated that the survey results had identified the following 10 areas which would need stronger policy attention: poverty reduction and employment; participation; accessibility; social protection; children with disabilities; women with disabilities; disaster risk reduction; data collection; national legislation and CRPD; and technical expertise and good practice.

18. The secretariat informed the participants that, as of 13 December 2011, 23 Governments in the region had ratified the CRPD; this represented a 46 percent ratification rate, the lowest among the five regions of the world.

19. The secretariat drew the attention of the participants to the extension of the deadline for the submission of the two questionnaires till 31 January 2012. It informed the participants that the full report on the analysis of the survey responses would be submitted to the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, to be held at Incheon, Republic of Korea.

20. Views were expressed concerning the importance attached to the final analysis of the survey responses as the source of information on the effective review of the second Decade. In particular, the Consultation requested the secretariat to compile information on good practices identified by the survey to make that available as useful references to support disability work in Asia-Pacific.

21. The Stakeholder Consultation was informed that the secretariat had made provision for the Regional Secretariat in Asia-Pacific, World Federation of the Deaf, to produce the civil society questionnaire in sign language video format to facilitate deaf organizations' access to the questionnaire.

22. The Consultation welcomed the secretariat's confirmation that the final report on survey findings would be made available in accessible formats.

23. The Stakeholder Consultation identified good practices concerning the implementation of the second Decade, including the establishment of self-advocacy groups of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities in countries of the region; inclusive business; active engagement of the private sector in mainstreaming disability perspectives in its operations; expansion of national social protection programmes; creation of accessible materials that enabled persons with intellectual disabilities to participate in decision-making processes without inhibition; recent establishment of the Electronic Publication standard as EPUB3, an accessible open standard for commercial e-books, which incorporated DAISY technology and supported the use of Asian languages.

24. Drawing from their own experiences of the issues that many persons with disabilities faced, participants proposed consideration of additional areas for stronger policy attention. These included partnership building between persons with disabilities and government decision makers; political participation of persons with disabilities; local production of affordable assistive devices; legal provisions that had discriminatory effects on persons with disabilities which would require amendment or nullification; and mainstreaming of disability perspective in disaster risk reduction.

25. The secretariat delivered a presentation on its efforts and progress made in the region to improve disability data collection and analysis. It highlighted the considerable variations of disability prevalence across the region and the main challenges in the collection of data on disability. The secretariat addressed the urgent need to collect accurate, reliable and internationally comparable data on disability for effective policy making, as well as to measure progress made in support of the CRPD, INGOTS and the new decade.

26. The Stakeholder Consultation welcomed the initiative of the secretariat to develop appropriate tools and standards to address disability issues and emphasized its importance in measuring progress in the implementation of the CRPD. In response to concerns about the link between the WHO International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) and the CRPD, the secretariat clarified that the ICF served only as a framework to assist in the measurement of the prevalence of disabilities and that it was in line with the Convention. The Stakeholder Consultation highlighted that, without reliable data on disability, it would be difficult to assess improvement in the situation of persons with disabilities. Hence, the Stakeholder Consultation strongly urged the secretariat to continue in this line of work.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE DRAFT OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE FINAL REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS, 2003-2012

27. The secretariat presented document SDD/DIS/RSC_2011/1 entitled Draft Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

28. The secretariat informed the Stakeholder Consultation that the document had been developed on the basis of feedback obtained from governments and civil society entities through the ESCAP end-of-Decade questionnaire survey and experiences in the implementation of the first two Asian and Pacific Decades of disabled Persons spanning the period 1993-2002, and 2003-2012.

29. The secretariat explained that the document contained four sections as follows:

- I. Preamble
- II. Key Policy Directions and Principles
- III. Incheon Goals and Targets
- IV. Modalities for Effective Implementation

30. Section III of the Strategy, namely the Incheon Goals and Targets (INGOTS), formed the core component of the Strategy composed of 10 goals, 22 targets and 35 indicators.

31. The secretariat emphasized that the Incheon Strategy was not intended to replicate the comprehensive coverage of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the

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