



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



47th DIRECTING COUNCIL
58th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 25-29 September 2006

RESOLUTION

CD47.R1

**DISABILITY: PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION IN THE CONTEXT OF
THE RIGHT TO THE ENJOYMENT OF THE HIGHEST ATTAINABLE
STANDARD OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND OTHER RELATED
RIGHTS**

THE 47th DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having seen the report, “Disability: Prevention and Rehabilitation in the Context of the Right to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health and Other Related Rights,” (Document CD47/15) and Resolution WHA58.23 of the World Health Assembly of WHO (2005) on disability;

Bearing in mind that approximately 60 million people in the Region of the Americas are currently living with some type of disability;

Aware that disability may arise from perinatal risks and childbirth, chronic diseases, malnutrition, accidents of all types, violence (especially gender violence), armed conflicts, occupational risk factors, poverty, drug and substance abuse, and the aging of the population;

Underscoring that persons with disabilities often have limited physical and financial access to treatment, essential drugs, and good quality health products, services, and rehabilitation compared to other human beings;

Recalling the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health, officially ratified during the 54th World Health Assembly in 2001, the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, and Resolution CD43.R10 of the Directing Council of PAHO (2001), which

urges the Member States to update the legal provisions protecting the human rights of persons with mental disabilities;

Considering that the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee has adopted the draft text of the “Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities;” and

Mindful of Declaration AG/DEC.50 (XXXVI-0/06) on the “Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (2006-2016), approved by the OAS General Assembly during its Thirty-Sixth Regular Session in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Member States to:
 - (a) consider ratifying or acceding to the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against People with Disabilities (OAS) and raise public awareness to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities;
 - (b) adopt national policies, strategies, plans, and programs on disability, its prevention, and rehabilitation that respect international standards on disability such as the United Nations Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities;
 - (c) adopt a comprehensive rehabilitation model, whose primary objective is to prevent, minimize, or reverse the consequences of the loss or alteration of functions and influence the factors that impede full participation;
 - (d) adopt measures to facilitate the safe use and access by all people to shared infrastructure and spaces, public and private, urban and rural, including furnishings and other supportive equipment, transportation, communication, and information, especially the health and rehabilitation services necessary for maintaining functional capacity;
 - (e) promote the creation of community rehabilitation programs and strategies with the participation of the organizations for persons with disabilities linked with health care at different levels, and integrated into the health system;
 - (f) promote the development of health policies and programs that include the prevention and detection of disabilities, and early intervention to address them,

- counseling for families and persons with disabilities; and the consideration of persons with disabilities in all health initiatives;
- (g) promote the delivery of appropriate, timely, and effective medical care for persons with disabilities, including access to diagnostic and rehabilitation services, as well as services that provide assistive technologies that facilitate the functional independence of persons with disabilities to achieve their integration into society;
 - (h) consider guaranteeing to persons who cannot perform their activities of daily living on their own, and to their families and caretakers, access to the basic services that they require, based on their degree of functional need;
 - (i) safeguard the human rights of persons with disabilities, including equal access to health care, education, housing, and employment;
 - (j) foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities and combat stereotypes, prejudices, and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities;
 - (k) strengthen and develop rehabilitation services for all persons, regardless of their disability, so that they can achieve and maintain an optimal level of function, autonomy, and well-being;
 - (l) promote research on the causes of disabilities and effective measures to prevent them that includes the use of methodologies for recording and analyzing disability data;
 - (m) amend their disability laws as appropriate and adapt them to conform with the applicable international norms and standards, and
 - (n) participate in and collaborate as appropriate with the Committee of the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities.
2. To request the Director to:
- (a) consolidate and strengthen PAHO's commitment to cooperate with the Member States to promote and protect the quality of life of persons with disabilities and their enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and other rights, ensuring especially that all of their programs and initiatives make use of the necessary information and statistics in this area;

- (b) promote disability incidence, prevalence, and cause studies as the basis for risk factor reduction and prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation strategies;
- (c) facilitate Member States' collaboration with teaching institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations, especially organizations of persons with disabilities and those that promote the protection of and respect for persons with disabilities, in order to take steps to reduce the risk factors that lead to disabilities and protect enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and other rights of persons with disabilities; and
- (d) consolidate and strengthen the technical collaboration of PAHO with the committees, organs, and rapporteurships of the United Nations and inter-American systems devoted to protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, such as the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee of the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, among others.

(Second Meeting, 25 September 2006)