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COMMITTEE ON JURIDICAL AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS

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PROGRAM OF ACTION
DECADE OF THE AMERICAS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (2006-2016)

(Document presented by the Permanent Mission of Peru for consideration by the CAJP
at the beginning of its 2006-2007 term)

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On the basis of the considerations contained in the Declaration on the Decade of the Americas for Persons with Disabilities, the states resolve to execute the following Program of Action:

- I. VISION STATEMENT: By 2016, the member states shall have made substantial progress in building an inclusive society based on solidarity and rights, in which persons with disabilities are valued for their potential contributions to the community. Furthermore, in view of their exclusion and vulnerability, which render them the poorest of the poor, they shall be given priority in national and regional development and anti-poverty programs.

- II. MISSION STATEMENT: The member states undertake to adopt the necessary legislative, administrative, social, judicial, and governmental measures for the effective application of the Program of Action at the domestic level.

- III. OBJECTIVES
 1. Society:

To promote recognition of the value of persons with disabilities and the eradication of attitudinal barriers to their development and inclusion.
 2. Health:

To improve access to equal health care services for persons with disabilities.
 3. Education:

To guarantee for persons with disabilities an inclusive education of quality, as well as the technical and professional training to allow their incorporation into productive activity.
 4. Employment:

To promote the incorporation of persons with disabilities into the labor force, whether they work with assistance or independently, in both public and private sectors.
 5. Accessibility:

To promote the use of universal design for all new infrastructure, eliminating existing physical and communications barriers.

6. Political participation:

To ensure the recognition and exercise of the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities in all matters of interest to the community.

IV. SPECIFIC MEASURES:

1. Society:

- a. To form volunteer groups to support persons with disabilities.
- b. To develop inclusive plans and programs, beginning with the school years, creating a positive concept and perception of persons with disabilities as active members of their communities.
- c. To develop ongoing training plans for civil servants and officials in all branches of government.
- d. To develop policies for mass media information campaigns on the contributions persons with disabilities can make.
- e. To promote legal provisions guaranteeing the full and equal exercise of rights by persons with disabilities.
- f. To establish the position of defender of persons with disabilities in countries where it does not yet exist.
- g. To promote the adaptation and accessibility of virtual portals in the public and private sectors for use by persons with disabilities.
- h. To promote incorporation of the concept of social responsibility in all arenas.

2. Health:

- a. Prevention and promotion:
 - i. To design and implement decentralized public information strategies promoting a culture of health, using the mass media.
 - ii. To adopt prevention measures, including early detection and intervention measures.
 - iii. To promote and publicize scientific research aimed at preventing disabling illnesses and improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities.
 - iv. To promote comprehensive health and nutrition services for expectant mothers and children under three, given the disabilities that can result from insufficient development in early childhood.

- b. Rehabilitation:
 - i. To promote community-based rehabilitation strategies emphasizing primary health care services, according to the situation in each country.
 - ii. To develop specific instruction and training programs on the domestic manufacturing of technical and biomechanical aids, with the participation of persons with disabilities.
 - iii. To arrange for specific budget items to facilitate the provision of technical and biomechanical aids and their appropriate maintenance.
 - iv. To promote research programs with a view to the domestic manufacture of medications.
 - v. To facilitate the provision of medications of quality at an affordable price, or without cost, to persons with disabilities who live in extreme poverty.
 - vi. To strengthen existing rehabilitation services and promote their enlargement.

 - c. Health education:
 - i. To design and implement educational strategies that promote healthy lifestyles for the various stages of life.
 - ii. To develop strategies for the prevention of all factors leading to disability.
 - iii. To promote health education opportunities in the mass media.
3. Education:
- a. To incorporate children and young people with special educational needs into the mainstream educational system.
 - b. To provide inclusive educational institutions with the necessary resources to meet the special educational needs of their students.
 - c. To bring about the eradication of physical barriers that hinder access to all levels of education for students with special needs associated with their disabilities, as a requirement for conducting inclusive educational activities.
 - d. To promote ongoing, specialized training, both on-site and through distance learning arrangements, of teachers at all educational levels to encourage the development of inclusion policies.
 - e. To develop specific curricular adaptations, by type of disability, for an effective response to the special educational needs of students with disabilities.
 - f. To design and execute educational programs using new information and communications technologies to meet the special educational needs associated with disability.
 - g. To ensure the inclusion of curriculum content on disability issues that promotes respect for diversity, equality, and nondiscrimination.
 - h. To ensure and attach priority to the allocation of sufficient financial resources to ensure compliance with inclusive educational policies.

- i. To guarantee access to technical and higher education for students with disabilities, as a central factor in their economic and social independence.
- j. To carry out policies promoting the development and funding of research on disability issues.

4. Employment:

- a. To conduct public awareness campaigns, also targeted at government agencies and private institutions, promoting recognition of the potential of persons with disabilities.
- b. To conduct studies of the occupational capabilities of persons with disabilities, so as to construct profiles according to type of disability.
- c. To promote occupational adaptation, instruction, and training programs in the technical and professional areas for persons with disabilities, according to labor market demand.
- d. To conduct programs and projects to incorporate persons with disabilities into the labor market.
- e. To guarantee the application of post set-aside mechanisms and labor quotas for persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors, with appropriate sanctions for noncompliance.
- f. To promote fiscal incentives and subsidies for the hiring of persons with disabilities in the private sector.
- g. To monitor compliance with the provisions and recommendations of Convention N° 159 and Recommendation N° 168 of the ILO, especially in terms of accommodation for disabilities.
- h. To promote the establishment of inclusive employment bureaus with an integrated approach that considers accessibility for different types of disability.
- i. To promote the establishment of microenterprises and small businesses and strengthen existing ones, with the aim that persons with disabilities may achieve independence both economically and in the workplace.
- j. To promote the products of microenterprises and small businesses run by persons with disabilities at the national and international levels, fostering the establishment of networks.

5. Accessibility:

- a. To ensure compliance with technical standards on accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- b. To develop public awareness and training programs on universal design, targeting the public and private sectors.
- c. To eliminate barriers posed by existing urban design and architecture at all public agencies and public facilities.
- d. To eliminate existing barriers on all modes of transport to facilitate access for persons with disabilities.
- e. To design and execute awareness programs for the transportation sector on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

- f. To eliminate communication and information barriers in all communications media and public services to improve access for persons with disabilities.
- g. To incorporate the topic of universal design into the curricula of public and private universities.

6. Political participation:

- a. Registration and identification: To facilitate and ensure the identification and registry of persons with disabilities so that they may exercise their rights and fulfill their duties as citizens.
- b. Voting rights: To guarantee full participation by persons with disabilities in the voting process, providing the necessary means of access.
- c. Political participation:
 - i. To establish and guarantee the assignment of quotas to promote participation by persons with disabilities at all levels.
 - ii. To promote participation by organizations of persons with disabilities, their families, and others working for their benefit by considering their views in the decision-making process at all political levels.
- d. Fostering alliances: To coordinate the various associations of persons with disabilities so as to harmonize concepts and proposals for presentation, discussion, and inclusion in government plans at every level.
- e. Leadership training: To develop training policies geared toward persons with disabilities to promote their personal development and their leadership skills.

V. STRATEGIES

- Legislation: The states undertake to review their law and improve it, seeking to harmonize it with a hemispheric perspective, taking into account the needs and priorities of each country. States will ensure the adoption of enforcement mechanisms and sanctions in case of noncompliance, as well as state and private liability, all from the perspective of rights. In this respect, measures should be taken to immediately set in motion the Committee for Follow-up on the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, in keeping with the commitments undertaken.
- Cooperation: States will strengthen internal and international cooperation on disability matters, beginning with the promotion of alliances among the private sector, civil society, and government institutions, and continuing with alliances at the subregional, regional, and interregional levels.
- Empowerment: States will guarantee that persons with disabilities are active participants in discussions and decision-making on issues of concern to them.

- Lobbying: States will foster the empowerment of persons with disabilities by building and strengthening skills, by strengthening their participation and monitoring mechanisms, and by receiving reports of violations of their rights and recording such violations, allowing them to exert effective political pressure.
- Resources and political will: States make the political commitment to implement this program of action, adapting it to the corresponding national plans, for which they will allocate the necessary resources and ensure their timely and proper execution, follow-up, and evaluation.
- Human resource training: States will train the necessary human resources for comprehensive attention to persons with disabilities.
- Statistics and assessment of disabilities: For policy planning purposes, states undertake to conduct:
 - a. Baseline studies;
 - b. Censuses and prevalence studies.