



Región Latinoamericana de la Organización Mundial
de Personas con Discapacidad – RLOMPD
Disabled Peoples' International Latin America Region DPI LAR



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To Disabled Peoples' International, its 135 National Assemblies, to all people with disabilities of the Americas and their groups; and especially, to all members of the Latin American Region of Disabled Peoples' International, we communicate the following:

The last June 6th of the current year, in the Dominican Republic, and during the Thirty-Sixth Regular Session of the OAS (Organization of American States)-Fourth Plenary Session, the **"Decade of the Americas for Persons with Disabilities: For the Rights and Dignity of People with Disabilities"** was adopted for the period 2006-2016, with the theme: "Equality, Dignity and Participation". Without a doubt, this action is a great achievement for the disability movement of the Americas, fundamentally, since it places the disability issue in the political and governmental agendas of the Member States. We take into consideration the dramatic situation that, in this portion of the planet, 90 million of people with disabilities live in extreme social exclusion and inequity, with no access to fundamental rights. This is especially due to the irresponsibility of governments that do not assign fairly portions of their budgets for the disabled population. It is opportune to present a short explanation of the DPI Latin-American Region advocacy initiative, which generated this Declaration:

In 2003, the National Confederation of Disabled People of Perú (*Confederación Nacional de Discapacitados del Perú - CONFENADIP*) and the DPI-Latin-American Region (*Región Latinoamericana de la Organización Mundial de Personas con Discapacidad - RLOMPD*) jointly

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presented an application to the Peruvian Government, aiming to attain a Decade of the Americas for People with Disabilities. Afterwards, there were other initiatives in Peru. However, after following this initiative with no success, RLOMPD sent letters to twenty Heads of State of the Latin-American Region in mid 2005, having received supporting answers from His Excellency, President Vicente Fox of Mexico, and at the time, His Excellency, President Ricardo Lagos of Chile. In addition, there were steps taken before the General Secretary of the OAS, the distinguished Mr. José Miguel Insulza.

We must mention that this is a regular procedure, which pertains to the member governments of the OAS; however, we understood that the organized civil society could not miss this opportunity. Consequently, from September 5 to 9, 2005, twenty nations of the Americas (through their national assemblies) met in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. There, we developed a proposal entitled "Disability in the Summit of the Americas: A Crucial Strategy to Fight Poverty." In its context, more than 70 leaders with disabilities from the participating countries reaffirmed the request to be presented at the Fourth Summit of the Americas - which was to be held November 4 to 5, in Mar del Plata, Argentina- for a Decade of the Americas for People with Disabilities (2006-2016).

A significant event was the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina in our meeting in Tegucigalpa. Thanks to his actions, the RLOMPD President, Mr. Julio Wilfredo Guzmán Jara, had the opportunity to present the proposal before the 34 Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Continent and the General Secretary of



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the OAS, during the meeting these authorities were having with civil society organizations in Mar del Plata. There, we had the support of several countries, especially from the Republics of Panama and Jamaica. Another event to highlight was that we had to pressure the authorities from the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the relevant participation of the Minister and Advisor Vicente Rojas Escalante, who allowed that RLOMPD and its experts to talk about the Tegucigalpa meeting proposal before several organizations of people with disabilities from Peru and the Ministry itself. These events are totally backed by documents in our institutional archives, and in some cases, can be consulted in the WebPages of the OAS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina and RLOMPD.

OAS

<http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=S&sLink=http://www.civil-society.oas.org/indexESP.htm>

Document: <http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/seree/3.pdf>

<http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/seree/sintesishonduras.swf>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina:

<http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/seree/index.htm>

Document <http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/seree/3.pdf>

www.mrecic.gov.ar/seree/sintesishonduras.swf

RLOMPD: <http://latinamerica.dpi.org/DiscapacidadyCumbre.htm>

As we can see, teamwork results in opportunities to achieve proposed goals. We can say that this success really belongs to all people with disabilities of the American Continent; and, that the real work is just beginning. This task will have to be in the framework of starting disability action programs in our continent through realistic public policies in health, rehabilitation, inclusive education, creation of employment, accessibility and others.

In a clearly defined context:

1. An economy to build capacities



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2. A society with dignity and equity
3. A democracy without excluded people

This is also the time to reflect about millions of brothers and sisters with disabilities of the continent. They suffer hunger and misery, and have no access to dignifying employment, which would allow them to obtain proper health, clothing and housing. Therefore, we conclude affirming that this is the time to build on the human asset of people with disabilities, transferring knowledge and information to them so they can be more competitive in a globalized world. This result should strengthen organizations of people with disabilities, which will turn into a great social capital with this exchange. It is essential that the governments of the Americas include an important social investment into public expense, one that will be dedicated to people with disabilities to promote their social, political and social integration.

Sincerely Yours,

J W G J

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