

**UN NON-EU EASTERN EUROPE CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON A
DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS AND
DIGNITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

DECLARATION PROPOSED BY THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

In accordance with the spirit of partnership between civil society, government and the United Nations, the governmental and non-governmental participants at the at the United Nations Consultative Meeting of Non-EU Eastern European countries on a draft comprehensive integral international convention on the protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities adopted the following declaration on 23 March 2006:

1. There is a need for continued education on the draft convention for both governmental personnel and for non/governmental organizations. Inter-governmental organizations and the government have a role to play in this regard, in cooperation with national level civil society groups. Education should be directed to particular stakeholders including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Human Rights, National Councils on Disabilities, members of parliament, national human rights institutions, persons with disabilities, organizations working with persons with disabilities and other civil society groups.
2. Governments, inter-governmental organizations and civil society organizations should improve the flow of information in relation to the draft convention. Information should include information on the process of drafting the convention, its contents as well as follow-up on the convention once it has been adopted – for example, on implementation and monitoring.
3. Participants at this meeting call for the establishment of a co-ordinating body including expertise at the regional level to assist on action, co-ordination and sharing of experience on the convention at the regional level and between different national organizations. The co-ordinating body should work in relation to promote and facilitate ratification, implementation and monitoring.
4. Governments and international cooperation have a role in providing the human, institutional and financial resources necessary to enhance the ratification and monitoring of the convention, once adopted. Financial resources are needed in order to promote such things as the development of legal frameworks based on the convention, training, lobbying, awareness-raising and to exchange examples of good practices.
5. Intergovernmental organizations in consultation with organizations working with persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to develop and provide guidelines and other information in easy-to-access formats in local languages on the draft convention and its implications for the national level. There is also a need for clear guidelines on monitoring of the draft convention so that civil society groups can be prepared to monitor the convention from its inception.

6. Civil society groups, especially organizations working with persons with disabilities and organizations active in the field of human rights and development have a special responsibility and should endeavour to raise awareness and to encourage governments to ensure compliance with the convention once adopted.