For RI EC, RIF AND RI Members

Topics

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**Dates & venues for the upcoming RI meetings**

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<td>2013 RI GA</td>
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For more information please see our website [www.riglobal.org](http://www.riglobal.org)

**RI News**

**RI PRESIDENT’S VISIT TO ASIA - JUNE/JULY 2013**

**Mr. Jan Monsbakken**, RI President, visited China, Hong Kong, Thailand and Japan in June and July 2013. He attended a Conference, met with important RI members and other important stakeholders on rehabilitation and disability in the region. The Asia Pacific Region has a growing influence in the world and two-thirds of Persons with Disabilities live in this region.

**China**

In China, the RI President participated in the World Congress of the International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM) held in Beijing. This Congress had approximately 4000 participants. During the Congress, he signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ISPRM President **Ms. Marta Imamura** (see picture right). This MoU is of great importance for both organizations as it outlines ways for RI and ISPRM to collaborate in the coming years. In addition, at this Congress, Mr. Monsbakken chaired one of the sessions, and made a presentation on “Cooperation and Participation: a key factor for good outcome in rehabilitation.”

During his stay in Beijing, Mr. Monsbakken also met with **China Disabled Persons’ Federation (CDPF)** officials for one day and discussed several issues,
including the next RI world congress in 2016. They agreed to meet again in New York in September during HLMDD.

Hong Kong

After the visit to Beijing, Mr. Monsbakken went to Hong Kong to meet with RI members there. First, he had a meeting with ICTA Chair Joseph Kwan. The day after he was invited by Mr. MB Lee, a prominent RI member for many years, for a working lunch with other important RI representatives in Hong Kong, including Joseph Kwok, Chair of RI’s Social Commission. During this meeting, the RI President gave an update on different RI issues including RI’s financial status.

Thailand

After the mission to Hong Kong, the RI President went to Bangkok, Thailand where he met with Dr Asish Mukherjee, RI Vice President for Asia Pacific. Together, they had a meeting with Mr. Akie Ninomya, Director of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) followed by another meeting with the President and the Vice President of Goodwill Industries.

The main purpose of Jan’s and Asish’s visit to Bangkok was to meet with UN ESCAP officials. They met a team in ESCAP headed by Ms Nanda Krairiksh, Director of ESCAP’s Social Development Division where they discussed how RI could cooperate in the implementation of the Incheon Strategy adopted in 2012, particularly on the following three issues: mainstreaming disability in disaster management and armed conflicts, women with disabilities and assistive technologies. Ms Nanda responded that these are important issues for ESCAP and that she and her team look forward to closer cooperation with RI on these areas in the future.

Mr. Monsbakken also visited the national Rehabilitation Center in Thailand and met with Director Dr Daranee. She made a presentation of the work her center carries out in Thailand and their work on international cooperation. Mr. Monsbakken made a presentation of RI’s work and strategies. These presentations were followed by his visits to different departments in the Center. He was impressed with the quality of the work done in the center.
Japan

From July 9 to 12 the RI President met with key stakeholders in his visit to Japan. The program for these meetings was coordinated by Mr. Ryo Matsui (left), RI Japan National Secretary. Mr. Monsbakken also met with members of the Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disability (JSRPD) and Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities and Job Seekers (JEED) (below picture shows Ms. Chikako Kohyama from JEED and her colleagues). At the joint meeting, the RI President gave a presentation on the current situation of RI and how the RI Executive Committee is dealing with the challenges faced by the organization. The presentation was well received by RI members in Japan, followed by questions and comments. The RI President also used the opportunity to thank RI members in Japan for all their support for RI Global and their active involvement in RI Global affairs for many years. The meeting was followed by a dinner hosted by the two presidents of RI-member organizations in Japan.

The following day, Mr. Monsbakken and Mr. Matsui met with Ms Emi Aizawa, Director of the Social Security Division and members of her team at the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) where they discussed possible areas of cooperation between JICA and RI in the future. The meeting concluded that they would continue the discussion on a possible project on assistive technologies in developing countries in the coming years.

Furthermore, Mr. Monsbakken met with Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura, a member of RI’s Task Force on Disability and Disaster Management and Armed Conflicts. He highlighted the importance of RI’s involvement in this area in view of the global conference on disaster reduction in Japan in 2015 and the relevant goal in the Incheon Strategy.

On 12 July, the RI President and Mr. Matsui had a meeting with Nippon Foundation (see picture extreme right). They met with Mr. Ishii,
Director of the Disability Program and his team. During this meeting, they concluded that disability mainstreaming in disaster management and armed conflict could be a possible area of cooperation between the Nippon Foundation and RI. A possible joint organization of a regional conference on this issue in Japan early 2014 was mentioned. The meeting agreed to work on this issue the coming weeks and also agreed to meet again in New York in relation to the HLMDD in September.

**RI participated actively in UN COSP6**

Rehabilitation International participated very actively in the just-concluded 6th Session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) held in New York City. The sixth session of the Conference of States Parties was opened by Ms. Daniela Bas, representing UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, followed by the election of the President and other officers of the Conference. Kenya was elected as President with Bulgaria, Bangladesh, El Salvador and Israel as Vice-Presidents, by acclamation. The Permanent Representative of the Mission of Kenya to the UN, H.E. Ambassador Macharia Kamau then took his place as Chair of the meeting. The provisional agenda was adopted. All NGO applications for accreditation were approved by consensus. The Chair made an opening statement in which he noted that there remained a need to build further partnerships among Governments, NGOs, international organizations, and persons with disabilities. Other speakers at the opening included Ms. Daniela Bas, representing the United Nations Secretariat-General and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and Mr. Ivan Simonovic, Assistant Secretary General of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Representatives of civil society organizations were also seated at the podium and included Mr. Javid Abidi, president of Disabled People’s International, Ms. Venus Ilagan, Secretary General of Rehabilitation International and Mr. Yannis Vardakastanis, chair of the International Disability Alliance who made a statement. The opening program was followed by a General Debate. Representatives of Civil Society, including RI, took the floor after all States delegates have spoken. Secretary General Venus Ilagan, made a statement on behalf of Rehabilitation International where she underscored the many contributions a multi-stakeholder global network like RI can make to assist in the realization of the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Three Round tables were held during COSP6 as follows: (1) Economic Empowerment through inclusive social protection and poverty reduction strategies (2) Disability-inclusive development in national, regional and international processes, and (3) Informal panel: Community-based rehabilitation and habilitation for an inclusive society. RI participated in the third Round table through Venus Ilagan, RI SG, who was among the panelists.

**RI Co-organized 2013 Civil Society Forum**

Rehabilitation International was among the seven co-organizers of the 2013 Civil Society Forum, an annual event that precedes the Conference of States Parties to the
Convenion on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP). **Anne Hawker** (in picture), Immediate Past President of RI, Co-Chaired with **Mr. Peter Vestegi** from the Mission of Australia to the UN, the 3rd session titled “Refreshing our key demands for post 2015 agenda”. Speakers were **Olga Montufar Contreras**, a social activist and indigenous person from Mexico; **Daniel Mont**, an economist who has worked and published extensively on issues of disability measurement and inclusive development, primarily with the World Bank and as member of the UN’s Washington Group on Disability Statistics; **Jagannath Lamichhane**, a human rights activist currently based in Kathmandu, Nepal who advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities with special focus on the issues of persons with psychosocial disabilities; and **Facundo Chavez Penillas**, an Argentinean lawyer with a disability who was recently appointed Human Rights and Disability Advisor to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Facundo also coordinated Rehabilitation International’s Global Advocacy Campaign (GAC) project in Argentina a few years ago. Anne Hawker also actively represented RI in the side event titled Economic empowerment of persons with disabilities: where we are and the way forward post-2015 organized by the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the UN. The side event was chaired by **H.E. Jim McLay**, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the UN.

– We’d love to hear from you…

Please share with us project summaries/reports, articles and announcements on events which your organization is planning to hold or has conducted, and other information which you may want to share with colleagues in the RI network, our partners and to the rest of the world. Send these to us at this email address: newsletter@riglobal.org and we will make sure that these get included in future issues of the RI Newsletter.

**Upcoming Meetings and Events**

📅 **2013, September 11 – 14** 12th Congress of European Forum for Research in Rehabilitation in Istanbul, Turkey. The human health and science-technology are continuous and dynamic due to the developments in socio-economic changes of societies. Professionals working in the field of rehabilitation will provide shared knowledge to be used in human health, new scientific research, and for the improvement of educational efforts in rehabilitation. **Dr. Friedrich Mehrhoff from the German Social Accident Insurance and Vice Chair of the RI Work and Employment Commission will be one of the speakers at the congress.** For further information please see: [http://www.efrr2013.org](http://www.efrr2013.org)

📅 **2013, September 23** High-level meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development at the UN in New York,
USA. Theme: “The way forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond”.

2013, October 29 – 31 25th Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France. The theme of this year’s two sessions is: Europe in crisis – challenges to local and regional democracy, and highlights in October will include debates on multi-level governance in the context of territorial cohesion, the impact of the economic crisis on local and regional authorities, promoting local entrepreneurship of migrants and regions with special status. There will also be reports examining local and regional democracy in Albania, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland and Ukraine and reports on the observation of elections in “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and election of the members of the Avagani (Assembly) of the City of Yerevan, Armenia. For further information please visit: www.coe.int/congress-session

2013, October 31 – November 2 Disability Studies International Conference “The art of belonging” in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The art of belonging is a focus that traverses the tensions between disability experience, the art of living and belonging. Belonging is a state of mind, achieved through ongoing activity where shared spaces of interest and excitement are not only accessed, but also negotiated and ultimately occupied. A topic that is open to individual perspectives as well as to the exchange between personal and public perspectives. For further information please go to: www.disabilitystudies.nl

2013, November 27 – 29 2013 World Forum for Democracy "Rewiring democracy - reconnecting citizens and democratic institutions in the information age" in Strasbourg, France. The forum will be organized by the Council of Europe in partnership with the City of Strasbourg and a range of international organizations, think tanks, foundations, and other partners from the public and private sectors. It will provide a platform for emerging leaders and grassroots initiatives that foster participation and re-connect citizens and democratic institutions. Participants from the world of politics, academia, civil society, business, media and social networks will critically review these innovative initiatives, assess their mainstreaming potential, inject new ideas into them, and identify the most promising ones for further promotion and dissemination. Participants, as well as the "global community" (via social networks and internet voting) will select the most promising initiatives that will receive the Council of Europe recognition for democratic innovation. For further information please see: http://www.coe.int/en/web/world-forum-democracy/home
CRPD Ratification Update

Latest Developments

- Singapore ratified the Convention on 18-7-2013
- DPR of Korea signed the Convention on 3-7-2013
- Palau ratified the Convention and the Optional Protocol on 11-6-2013
- Norway ratified the Convention on 3-6-2013

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- 156 signatories
- 133 ratifications

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- 91 signatories
- 77 ratifications

For more Information please visit following website: http://www.un.org/disabilities/

ساهم 6th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD

The sixth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COP) was held from
17 to 19 July 2013 under the theme “Ensuring adequate standards of living: empowerment and participation of persons with disabilities within the framework of the CRPD.” The Conference is a unique global mechanism that allows for exchange of experience, ideas and best practices for implementation of the Convention, as well as for the building of multi-stakeholder partnerships for practical action. The Conference serves as a catalyst to realize the human rights and development of persons with disabilities, as well as to advance a disability-inclusive society for all. While the number of States Parties to the Convention continues to grow, other stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities, are increasingly becoming important partners in the implementation of the Convention, particularly in the common endeavor toward an international disability-inclusive development framework.

More than 650 participants attended this session with almost 300 representatives from civil society organizations. A record number of 75 statements were delivered during the general debate, including 12 statements at the Ministerial level. A total of 26 side-events were organized, including the multi-stakeholder Civil Society CRPD Forum, coordinated by the International Disability Alliance with the support of Disabled People’s International (DPI), Disability Rights Fund (DRF), the Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD), Human Rights Watch (HRW), the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and Rehabilitation International (RI), co-sponsored by the Governments of Australia, Bulgaria, Mexico and New Zealand, and DESA.

With a view to enabling the broadest possible participation, the live webcast from the Conference, for the first time, included sign language interpretation and closed-captioning. During the course of the two formal and one informal roundtable discussions, participants set out concrete ideas to improve and implement policies and programs concerning social protection and poverty reduction; disability-inclusive development in national, regional and international processes; as well as community-based rehabilitation.

The last segment on the implementation of the Convention by the UN system included presentations by OHCHR, UNISDR, UNICEF, UNDP, UNWTO, World Bank and DESA. DESA also reported on the progress of the Inter-Departmental Task Force on Accessibility of the United Nations Secretariat and made an announcement concerning on-going work to establish an Accessibility Centre at UN Headquarters. The Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development also reported on their respective mandates. In his closing statement, the President of the Conference H.E. Ambassador Macharia Kamau, stated that the Conference was best positioned to spearhead the mainstreaming of disability in all aspects of the work of the United Nations. He also proposed that the Conference consider strengthening its financial and institutional foundation to carry out its important work. The outcome of the Conference will be documented in a post-sessional report, which will be issued shortly at: www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1606
**Update on the High-level Meeting on Disability and Development**

The High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development (HLMDD) will take place at UN Headquarters on 23 September, the day before the opening of the General Debate of the 68th session of the General Assembly. The meeting is expected to adopt an action-oriented outcome document in support of the aims of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities. Currently, the draft outcome document is in its final phase of the negotiation process. The document is a result of an extensive preparatory process that began in 2012 and consisted of informal consultations, online and regional consultations to ensure that concerns of all stakeholders were taken into account. The co-facilitators of the meeting, Philippines and Spain, will be taking necessary steps for the final phase of the negotiation of the outcome document. Text of the draft outcome document is available in a letter from the President of the General Assembly to Member States and posted on his website at: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/67/letters/pdf/High-level%20meeting%20on%20Disabilities%20-%20July%202013.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/67/letters/pdf/High-level%20meeting%20on%20Disabilities%20-%20July%202013.pdf)

The final program for the HLMDD, consisting of an opening plenary, two round table discussions, and a closing plenary, is still being developed by the Office of the President of the General Assembly. Round Table One, “International and regional cooperation and partnerships for disability-inclusive development.” will be co-chaired by Philippines and Spain. Round Table 2, “Post-2015 development agenda and inclusive development for persons with disabilities”, will be co-chaired by Finland and Tunisia. For further information please see: [www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1590](http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1590)

The UN Department of Public Information in collaboration with DESA has produced a short promotional video featuring Stevie Wonder, a UN Messenger of Peace and world renowned celebrity and performer. In the short video, Stevie Wonder calls on support for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to be "signed, sealed and delivered by all countries, for everyone's sake". To watch the video please visit: [http://webtv.un.org/watch/stevie-wonder-supports-the-un-convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/2553535888001/](http://webtv.un.org/watch/stevie-wonder-supports-the-un-convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/2553535888001/)

**Resource Update**

The **International Diploma on Mental Health Law and Human Rights** is currently accepting applications for the academic year 2013-14. The Diploma, now in its fourth year of existence, is a collaborative initiative between WHO and the ILS Law College in Pune, India. The course builds the
capacity of students to advocate for human rights and to influence national legislative and policy and service reform in line with the CRPD and other key international human rights standards. For further information please see: http://cmhlp.org/diploma.

The **International Master in Mental Health Policy and Services**, an international course promoted by the NOVA University of Lisbon in collaboration with WHO, is now currently accepting applications for the academic year 2013-2014. The main scope of the Master Degree in International Mental Health Policy and Services (MHPS) is to build capacity of mental health professionals to lead and contribute to conceiving, formulating, implementing and evaluating national mental health policy, legislation, health services and care delivery. For further information please go to: www.fcm.unl.pt

Nominations are now open for the "**ESCAP-Sasakawa Award for Disability-Inclusive Business in Asia and the Pacific**". This award seeks to recognize the leadership of companies that provide enabling working environments for persons with disabilities, deliver inclusive products and services, and are innovative in their disability-inclusive approach. Awards are available within three categories: Disability-inclusive multinational enterprise, Disability-inclusive national enterprise, Disability-inclusive entrepreneurial business. All winners will receive ongoing public recognition for their excellence and innovation in the field of disability-inclusive business, with the winner of the entrepreneurial category to additionally receive a cash prize from US$ 50,000 to 100,000. Nominations will be accepted until **19 August 2013**. For further information please visit: www.di-business-award.com

**Resource Material**

*Full of Heart: My Story of Survival, Strength, and Spirit by J.R. Martinez* - An inspirational journey from tragedy to triumph. Full of Heart is an unforgettable story of a man who never gave up on his dreams. In 2003, nineteen-year-old Private J.R. Martinez was on a routine patrol when the Humvee he was driving hit an antitank mine in Iraq, resulting in severe injuries and burns on his face and more than one-third of his body. Out of that tragedy came an improbable journey of inspiration, motivation, and dreams come true. In Full of Heart, Martinez shares his story in intimate detail, from his upbringing in the American South and his time in the Army to his recovery and the indomitable spirit that has made him an inspiration to countless fans. Full of Heart is an unforgettable story of a man who never gave up on his dreams. ISBN-13: 9781401324742; Publisher: Hyperion
**The Reason I Jump by Naoki Higashida.** Naoki Higashida is a young Japanese man who suffers from autism and cannot really speak. He wrote this book when he was 13 years old, by using a cardboard alphabet grid and pointing to each letter in turn. The book is a guide to what it feels like to be autistic. It is divided into short chapters mostly based on questions people ask. The author had to see himself from the outside looking in, which is particularly hard for autistic people to do. The book will be released on August 27, 2013.

**Inspiration**

**Malala Yousafzai,** the Pakistani teenager shot in the head by the Taliban for campaigning for girls' education, told an audience at the United Nations on Friday, July 12, 2013 that her brush with death had only made her more determined. “Dear friends, on the 9th of October, 2012, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They shot my friends too,” she said in her first major public appearance. “They thought that the bullets would silence us, but they failed.” Speaking on her 16th birthday, she said the “terrorists thought that they would change my aims and stop my ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this -- weakness, fear and hopelessness died, strength, power and courage was born.” Introducing Malala to a Youth Assembly of nearly 1,000 students from around the world, former U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown said that it was a “miracle” that she was able to be there. She was welcomed to the stage with a standing ovation as her mother, father and other family members watched. Friday was declared Malala Day by the U.N. However, Malala said it was “not my day,” but a day for every woman, boy and girl struggling for their rights. Her message to world leaders was that they should introduce “free, compulsory education” for all children across the globe. She said she even wanted education for the “sons and daughters of the Taliban.” Malala – dubbed “a symbol of hope, a daughter of the United Nations” by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon – spoke to a Youth Assembly of children and young people, aged 12 to 25, from 85 countries around the world. She also presented a
petition signed by nearly 4 million people in support of 57 million children who are not able to go to school and demanding that world leaders fund new teachers, schools and books and end child labor, marriage and trafficking. Malala, who had been writing a blog for BBC News in which she supported education for girls, was shot along with two friends shortly after they left her school in Mingora, Swat, Pakistan. The Taliban later claimed responsibility for the attack. The memoir of 15-year-old Pakistani student titled "I Am Malala," will be published this fall. The U.N. said in a statement that the Youth Assembly was held “to accelerate the goal of getting all children, especially girls, in school and learning by 2015.”

We hope you enjoyed reading this issue of the RI Monthly Newsletter. Tell us about your activities and other stories so we can share it with RI members and the world.

Jan Arne Monsbakken, RI President

Venus Ilagan, Secretary General

Iris Reiss, Rehabilitation Expert
Thank you for supporting RI Global and let’s make change happen together

Picture by Franck Boston