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Subseries:	Conferences

OA/ID Number:	52081
Folder ID Number:	52081-014

Folder Title:
[United Nations Panel] [2003]

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**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY**

An independent federal agency working with the President and Congress to increase the inclusion, independence, and empowerment of all Americans with disabilities.

NEWS ADVISORY

NCD #04-441

December 1, 2003

Contact: Mark S. Quigley

202-272-2004

202-272-2074 TTY

Lex Frieden to Moderate United Nations Panel

WASHINGTON—Lex Frieden, chairperson of the National Council on Disability and president of Rehabilitation International, will moderate a panel discussion on the importance of a United Nations (UN) convention on the human rights of people with disabilities during the 2003 observance of International Day of Disabled Persons on December 3 at UN headquarters in New York City. The entire program (<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disid2003.htm>) will be held in Conference Room 4 from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Panelists include: Michael Brennen, World Federation of the Deaf-Blind, Steven Estey, Disabled Peoples International, Tina Minkowitz, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, and Eva Sandborg, World Health Organization.

For more information on the convention, please see NCD's *UN Disability Convention—Topics at a Glance: History of the Process*

(http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/history_process.html).

International Day of Disabled Persons promotes an understanding of disability issues and mobilizes support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of people with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

NCD is an independent federal agency making recommendations to the President and Congress on disability policy. In 1995, the United States Mission to the United Nations "advised that the contact point within the U.S. government for disabilities issues is the...National Council on Disability."

For more information contact Mark Quigley at 202-272-2004.

#

Lex Frieden

From: Funchess, Roxy [FunchR@TIRR.TMC.EDU]
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2003 4:44 PM
To: lfrieden@bcm.tmc.edu
Subject: Golden Touch-call!

Lex: Call Lisa and ask for confirmation numbers for your NYC trips.

Golden Touch Transportation: 1-800-253-1443 #2 or (718) 886-5204 and ask for Lisa.

Roxy Funchess
TIRR
1333 Moursund, Room A-222
Houston, TX 77030
Telephone: (713) 797-5284
FAX: (713) 799-7095
E-mail: funchr@tirr.tmc.edu

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE
This document is intended to provide information regarding the use of the equipment described herein. It is not intended to be a substitute for the manufacturer's instructions.

Page 1 of 1

2. DESCRIPTION OF EQUIPMENT

The equipment is a portable, self-contained unit designed for use in the field.

3. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

3.1. Before use, check the battery level and ensure that the unit is properly calibrated.

4. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

4.1. Regular maintenance is required to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the equipment. This includes cleaning the unit and checking the calibration.

4.2. If the equipment is found to be defective, it should be repaired by a qualified technician. Do not attempt to repair the unit yourself.

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After installing Voice Command on your Pocket PC or Pocket PC Phone Edition running Microsoft® Windows Mobile™ 2003 software, this section helps get you started and gives you instructions on using features, personalizing your application, and navigating help resources.

Be sure to register your product so you can get the most from the application, future releases, and exciting offers for upgrades and accessories.

Getting Started

Follow these three easy steps:

[Adjust the Microphone](#)[Set the Voice Command Button](#)[Try out Voice Command](#)**Features**[Hands-free Phone](#)[Contact Lookup](#)[Calendar Lookup](#)[Media Player](#)[Program Launcher/Start Menu](#)**In-depth**[Using the Voice Command Button](#)

The Voice Command Button is used to activate voice recognition:

Press and release to talk or interrupt.

Press and hold to cancel.

Notes:

When Voice Command asks you a question, it will listen automatically when it is done speaking.

While Voice Command is listening, it displays a microphone icon at the top of the screen.

You may press the Voice Command button anytime during a question to interrupt.

To change the button:

Tap **Start > Settings > Buttons**

In **Button**, tap the button you want to assign

Select Voice Command in **Button assignment**.

What Can I Say - Variations:

- [Call < Contact >](#)

- [Dial < Number >](#)

- [What are my appointments today?](#)

- [What are my appointments tomorrow?](#)

- [What's my next appointment?](#)

- [Play < Selection >](#)
- [Start < Program >](#)
- [Help](#)

Personalize Voice Command

Tap **Start > Settings > Voice Command** for personalization options:

Voice Command enabled

When selected, the corresponding feature is enabled and its commands are available.

Feature check boxes

When selected, Voice Command is running.

Options button

When pressed, opens the personalization options for the currently selected feature.

[Calendar Lookup Options](#)

[Media Player Options](#)

[Hands-free Phone Options](#)

[Program Launcher/Start Menu](#)

Note:

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Confirmation for trip in June, 2003: 913-237

For Lisa at Golden Touch Transportation

Lex Frieden

New York City, New York

November 30 – December 4, 2003

Sunday, November 30

- 11:00 – Leaving DC; arrive NY at 1:50 p.m. AMTRAK: 1-800-872-7245; Excella Express; Train #2252; Reservation #07F88A
- 2:15 - Pick up at NY Penn Station by Golden Touch Transportation and go to the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY.

Monday, December 1

- Time: _____ Transportation from the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel; [Telephone: (212) 758-1234] East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. to Karen Kaplan's meeting at _____.
- Time: _____ - Return from _____ and go to Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY.

Tuesday, December 2

- 12:00 – Pick up at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. and go to the Milbank Foundation for Rehabilitation at 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 1651, New York, NY 10165
- 1:15 – Pick up at the Milbank Foundation for Rehabilitation at 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 1651, New York, NY 10165 and return to the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY.

Wednesday, December 3

No Transportation Needed

Thursday, December 4

- 12:30 – Pick up at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY, and go to the Newark Airport
- 3:05 p.m. - Leave Newark Airport on CO Flight #63 at 3:05 p.m.; arrive Houston Bush IAH at 5:51 p.m.

Golden Touch 1-800-253-1443

718-886-5204 Lisa #7

Itinerary for Lex Frieden
Washington, DC & New York City, NY
November 21 – December 4, 2003

Friday, November 21 – Lex in Washington, DC

- *Roxy Taking Vacation*
- 8:30 a.m. – MetroLift to pick up Lex to be at the airport at 9:30 a.m.
- 10:40 a.m. - Lex leaving on CO Flight #358; arriving Washington National at 2:30 p.m.; Confirmation #VM56NL; Booking Locator from Adventure Travel is 4DVMZF.
- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- 6:00 - Dinner with the ADA Anniversary Committee at Chevy's in Pentagon City

Saturday, November 22 – Lex in Washington, DC

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- NCD's Fall Quarterly meeting at the Ritz-Carlton, Salon I Meeting Room

Sunday, November 23 – Lex in Washington, DC

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- NCD's Fall Quarterly meeting in DC
- Lunch with Chris Kuczynski, (202) 456-5228;

WEEK OF November 24, 2003 – November 30, 2003 -----

Monday, November 24 – Lex in Washington, DC

- *Roxy Taking Vacation*
- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- 9:15 – Diamond Transportation to pick up Lex from Ritz Carlton Hotel, 1250 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA. Take to 1331 F Street, N.W., Wash., DC.
- 10:00 – 11:30 - Meeting with OMB Resource Management Officer, Ms. Lin Liu, to meet with NCD folks, Lex, Allan Holland, David Wenzel, Jeff Rosen, Ethel Briggs to discuss NCD's FY 2003 budget activities; FY 2004 proposed budget activities; FY 2005 requested budget activities; PART - Program Assessment Rating Tool; and NCD participation in the A-19 Process - Legislative Coordination and Clearance at NCD.
- 2:00 – Diamond Transportation to pick up Lex from 1331 F Street, NW, Wash., DC and take Lex to the Ritz Carlton at 1250 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA
- Mary Giliberti, Disability Counsel to Senator Tom Harkin; Telephone: (202) 224-6201; will be in the office Mon-Wed and would like to meet you.

Tuesday, November 25 – Lex in Washington, DC

Tuesday, November 25 – Lex in Washington, DC

Roxy Taking Vacation

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- 8:00 a. m. – Diamond Transportation to Pick up Lex from Ritz Carlton, 1250 Hayes Street, Arlington, VA and take to George Washington University- 2121 I Street, NW, Wash., DC.
- 8:30 – Continental Breakfast
- Lex to be a presenter at George Washington University event; Randy Desnonia said that Sara Rosenbaum, will be presenting on Olmstead. Randy Desonia rdesonia@gwu.edu (202) 872-0051 Randy's initial thoughts are that the meeting starts with the genesis of the ADA (e.g., why the Rehab Act was inadequate), then go over the basics of the ADA (our audience tends to know the health programs and statutes, not the ADA), then the basic decision, and finally what the decision means to people with disabilities. It seems to me Lex would be great for this part.
- 9:00 – 11:00 – Presentations; Lex to do Overview of ADA and how it served as the foundation; then Sara Rosenbaum re the Legal Issues in the Olmstead Case; third person (Greg Ganson or Susan Reinhart)
- Lunch with Randy Desonia and others; Possibly at the Washington Court Hotel, 4-5 blocks from Union Station.
- 1:00 p.m. – Diamond Transp. to pick up Lex from George Washington University - 2121 I Street, NW, Wash., DC & take to Ritz Carlton, 1250 South Hayes St.
- 2:30 – Meeting with Steven Tingus, Bob Davila, Jeff Rosen, and Martin Gould and whomever else he wants there from NIDRR; Jeff asked Steven to provide us w/info on NIDRR's 5 year strategic plan and on any other priority NIDRR projects.
- 4:30 – Meet with John Hager at the hotel.

Wednesday, November 26 – Lex in Washington, DC

Roxy Taking Vacation

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- 9:15 – Diamond Transp. to pick up Lex from Ritz Carlton, 1250 South Hayes St., Arlington, & take to Georgetown University, 37th & O Street, NW, Wash., DC
- 10:00 – Meet with Judy Feder (202) 687-8397 in Judy's office; 3600 and N Street, NW, Suite 200 in Georgetown; Blue Building on the corner (this is the address Judy's office gave Roxy)
- 12:00 – Lunch with Chris Kuczynski, (202) 456-5228 at Snack bar in his building
- 1:00 p.m. – Diamond Transportation to pick up Lex from Georgetown Univ., 37th & O, take to Ritz Carlton, 1250 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA
- 1:00 – Meet with Laura Keener (took Kirstie Tucker's place)

Thursday, November 27 – Lex in Washington, DC

Thanksgiving!!

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.

Friday, November 28 – Lex in Washington, DC

BCM Thanksgiving Holiday

- *NCD Timesheets due!*
- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- 9:15 a.m. Diamond Transp. to pick up Lex from Ritz Carlton, 1250 South Hayes St., Arlington, and take to White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Wash., DC
- 1:00 p.m. – Diamond Transportation to pick up Lex from White House and take to Ritz Carlton, 1250 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA.

Saturday, November 29 – Lex in Washington, DC and in NYC!

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- DO YOU NEED TO CANCEL THIS RESERVATION??: Reservations at the Grand Hyatt New York, 109 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017; Telephone: (212) 883-1234 Confirmation Number: 33433311; Arrival: November 29, 2003; Departure: December 4, 2003; Rate: \$208.00 per night; Cancellation Policy: 3pm, 24 hours prior to arrival; Requests: Non-Smoking, Low Floor, Double-Double

Sunday, November 30 – Lex in NYC!

- Reservations at the Ritz-Carlton, Telephone: (703) 415-5000.
- Reservations at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel: (212) 758-1234; Fax: (212) 702-5051; East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. Confirmation #069-108-433; Gov. rate of \$208/night. Nov. 30 – Dec. 4, 2003.
- 11:00 – Leaving DC; arrive NY at 1:50 p.m. AMTRAK: 1-800-872-7245; Excella Express; Train #2252; Reservation #07F88A
- 2:15 - Pick up at NY Penn Station by Golden Touch Transp. & go to Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan

Monday, December 1 – Lex in NYC!

- *Roxy Taking Vacation*
- Reservations at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel: (212) 758-1234; Fax: (212) 702-5051; East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. Confirmation #069-108-433; Gov. rate of \$208/night. Nov. 30 – Dec. 4, 2003.
- Time: _____ Transportation from the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel; [Telephone: (212) 758-1234] East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. to Karen Kaplan's meeting at _____.
- 10:00 – 2:00 – Meeting with Karen Kaplan, Partnership for Caring; Location to be known on Wednesday, November 19. Karen's Office: (202) 296-8071 X-103; Cell: (202) 744-2309 Partnership for Caring (Heather Campbell, asst.)
- Time: _____ - Return from _____ and go to Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY.
- 10:00 – 11:00 (11:00 – 12:00 Eastern) -- Conf Call for Joint Management Team Meeting w/Susan Reinhard, Marlene Verniero, Bob Mollica, Richard, & Darrell; Dial: 1-866-394-4145; Code: 693-734.
- 3:30 - Agnes' Last Day at ILRU—she's Retiring! Party at Serranos Cafe & Cantina, 2815 S. Shepherd

Do stuff with Allen Holt in NYC??

Tuesday, December 2 – Lex in NYC!

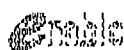
- *Roxy Taking Vacation*
- Reservations at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel: (212) 758-1234; Fax: (212) 702-5051; East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. Confirmation #069-108-433; Gov. rate of \$208/night. Nov. 30 – Dec. 4, 2003.
- 12:00 – Golden Touch to pick up Lex at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel East 44th St. between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. and go to the Milbank Foundation for Rehabilitation, 60 East 42nd St., Suite 1651, New York, NY 10165
- Presentation to Mr. Milbank
- 1:15 – Golden Touch to pick up Lex at the Milbank Foundation for Rehabilitation at 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 1651, New York, NY 10165 and return to the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY.

Wednesday, December 3 – Lex in NYC!

- Reservations at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel: (212) 758-1234; Fax: (212) 702-5051; East 44th Street between First and Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY. Confirmation #069-108-433; Gov. rate of \$208/night. Nov. 30 – Dec. 4, 2003.
- International Day of Disabled Persons – New York - RI has reserved space for an exhibition at the UN; Ms. Nane Annan has agreed to open the exhibition provided that she does not have to travel with her husband the Secretary General on any official mission. No such mission is planned at this moment; We are working on the exhibition with VSA; We also have reservations for a mtg room for at least 200 people at the UN the same day. RI would like to be part of organizing a similar activity at the UN in New York this year: an arts exhibition will be organized together with VSA; a seminar celebrating the 10 years since the Standard Rules were adopted and that the process towards a UN convention has started. The present and previous Standard Rules Rapporteurs are suggested speakers.
- 2:00 (3:00 Eastern) – NCD's Monthly Executive Committee meeting

Thursday, December 4 Lex departing NYC!

- Reservations at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel: (212) 758-1234; Fax: (212) 702-5051; Confirmation #069-108-433; Government rate of \$208/night. November 30 – December 4, 2003.
- 12:30 – Golden Touch to pick up Lex at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, East 44th Street between First & Second Avenues, Manhattan, NY, & go to Newark Airport
- 2:00 – Weekly Staff Meeting with Ethel and Jeff
- 3:05 p.m. - Leave Newark Airport on CO Flight #63 at 3:05 p.m.; arrive Houston Bush IAH at 5:51 p.m.; Confirmation #VM56NL
- 6:20 – MetroLift to pick up Lex at IAH and take him home.



UN System | Norms & Standards | Themes | Outreach |
Observances

United Nations : DESA : Gateway to Social Policy and Development : UN Enable



Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc
Committee on an International
Convention, UN New York, 16-27
June 2003



International Day of Disabled Persons
3 December 2003

International Day of Disabled Persons 2003

A Voice of our Own

The International Day of Disabled Persons aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of disabled persons in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

- Observance at United Nations Headquarters
- How the Day may be observed
- Themes and Observances of previous years

The observance of the Day in 2003 will focus on giving a voice to the human experiences of disabled persons. The voice of persons with disabilities is seldom heard in the mainstream media. When persons with disabilities are portrayed, they are either stereotyped or presented as an inspiration for "overcoming" a disability. Observance of the Day should therefore be used to offer an opportunity for persons with disabilities to speak for themselves.

The theme of the Day is based on the goal of full participation and equality of persons with disabilities in social life and development, established by the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in 1982. During the almost twenty years since the adoption of the World Programme of Action, initiatives have been taken to realize its goals worldwide.

Completing ten years, the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities represent a strong moral and political commitment of Governments to take action to attain equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities. Standard Rule 1 calls for States to act to raise awareness in society about persons with disabilities, their rights, their needs, their potential and their contribution.

Awareness and information about the situation of persons with disabilities is critical if full participation and equality are to be achieved.

Observance at United Nations Headquarters

Seminar on Disability

Conference Room 4
1:00-4:00 PM

Opening and welcome
Ambassador Luis Gallegos
Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations

Ten Years with the Standard Rules – What has been achieved?
Kalle Konkola
Disabled Peoples' International

UN Support to Disabled People's Rights

Sheikha Hessa al-Thani

UN Special Rapporteur for Disability

The Road Towards a Convention

Gerard Quinn

Irish Professor specializing in Disability Law

Questions & Answers**Cultural Activity**

Raul Midon, singer

CONVENTION

Why it's necessary? What do we want to achieve?

Panelists

Michael Brennen (World Federation of the Deaf-Blind)

Steven Estey (Disabled Peoples International)

Tina Minkowitz (World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry)

Eva Sandborg (World Health Organization)

Moderator

Lex Frieden

President of Rehabilitation International

Closing remarks

Jose Antonio Ocampo

Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

Very Special Arts Exhibit

(Exhibit opening follows end of seminar)

The exhibit will be open to the public from 3 December 2003 to 15 January 2004.

Contributors:

Kong Ho (Pennsylvania, USA)

Yashpal Chankrakar (India)

Lanham Bundy (Rhode Island, USA)

Sergio Giraldo Giraldo (Colombia)

d'Elaine Johnson (Washington, DC)

Maria Jankovics (Canada)

Mark Parsons (New York, USA)

Jean-Michel Terencio-Arrouet (France)

Marcee Blackerby (Utah, USA)

Marquette Bell Johnson (Georgia, USA)

Linda Carmello Sibio (California, USA)

Dayanara Fuentes (Panama)

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Updated: 17 November 2003. Comments and suggestions: [Contact Us](#)

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DRAFT PROGRAM
A CELEBRATION OF THE UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABLED PERSONS
December 3, 2003
Conference Room 4
1:00-4:00 PM

Seminar

OPENING AND WELCOME	15 MINUTES
Ambassador Luis Gallegos Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations	
Message from UN Secretary General	
<i>Ten Years with the Standard Rules – What has been achieved?</i>	15 MINUTES
Akiko Ito UN DESA	
<i>UN Support to Disabled People's Rights</i>	15 MINUTES
Sheikha Hessa al-Thani UN Special Rapporteur for Disability	
<i>The Road Towards a Convention</i>	25 MINUTES
Gerard Quinn Irish Professor specializing in Disability Law	
Questions & Answers	15 MINUTES
Cultural Activity – Raul Midon, singer	10 MINUTES
CONVENTION	60 MINUTES
<i>Why it's necessary? What do we want to achieve?</i>	
PANELISTS	
Michael Brennen (WFDB)	
Steven Estey (DPI)	
Tina Minkowitz (WNUSP)	
Eva Sandborg (WHO)	
Fredric Schroder (WBU)	
MODERATOR	
Lex Frieden President of RI	
CLOSING REMARKS	10 MINUTES
Johan Scholvinck Representing UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs	

Exhibit Opening follows end of seminar program

Lef

**Professor Quinn video presentation at RI Governing Assembly, Durban,
South Africa, September 30, 2003**

Dear Delegates,

My name is Gerard Quinn. I am professor of law here at the National University of Ireland in Galway. I have the great honour and privilege to be the RI nominee to the new UN Working Group on the proposed treaty on the rights of persons with disabilities. I had hoped to be with you in South Africa but I am unable to travel due to other commitments in the UK and France.

I want to spend a few minutes sharing the following with you.

First of all, I want to tell you something about myself and my involvement and commitment in the disability field.

Secondly, I want to pose a few questions for you concerning both the content and shape of the proposed treaty. We are at a crucial juncture in the debate and I would very much welcome your sense of what direction it should take.

Thirdly, I want to share with you my sense as to the significance of the proposed treaty and the uses to which it might be put in the future.

Well, first of all who am I?

I am basically a civil rights lawyer. Most of my published research is in the field of international and comparative disability law reform. I recently co-authored a major Study of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Current use and Future Potential of the existing UN human rights treaties in the context of disability.

I am a former Director of Research at the Irish Government's Law Reform Commission. I was a member of our Government's Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. I am the academic Director of a European Commission Network on Disability Law Specialists. I am a member of the European Social Rights Committee of the Council of Europe with special responsibility for Article 15 on disability. I am a member of the Human Rights Commission of Ireland with special responsibility in the field of disability rights.

But more significant than all of this, I am the father of a 14-year old daughter with a disability. Her name is Niamh which is the Irish for ray of sunshine. So my commitment to the field stems in part from my general commitment to civil rights – but it is driven by her experiences and by our experiences as parents. I suppose what we have experienced most is lack of respect for the difference of disability which is reflected in the absence of meaningful rights for persons with disabilities.

Secondly, what about this treaty?

What should it contain and how should it be structured? Your views on these issues are critically important to me as we gear up for the meeting of the Working Group in January.

You are no doubt aware that there are two general UN treaties in the field of human rights – one covering civil and political rights (ICCPR) and the other covering economic, social and cultural right (CESCR).

You are also no doubt aware that the UN did not rest content with these two general treaties. The situation of some groups was felt to be inadequately dealt with in general treaties. So more particular or thematic treaties were adopted to cover the peculiarities of the situation of women (CEDAW), children (CRC) and racial minorities (CERD).

The CRC treaty is basically a mini-general human rights treaty. It tailors all the general human rights to the circumstances of children. CEDAW and CERD are non-discrimination treaties – that is they take the general principle of non-discrimination and then crafts each of the substantive rights (e.g., education) in light of the non-discrimination principle.

Yet another thematic treaty was adopted which does not cover a group but instead covers a topic that was felt so important that it deserved extra attention – namely, torture (CAT).

So let me pose the questions you should address as directly as possible.

First, what kind of treaty should this be? Should it be a human rights treaty or should it be a social development treaty?

Let me anticipate what many of you may feel. Surely it must be social development since social development is crucial to the provision of appropriate services, etc. My own intuition tells me that it should be firmly recognisably as a human rights treaty and that it should be anchored in the human rights field. The social development aspect of disability can be catered for through the explicit provision of economic social and cultural rights component to the treaty.

Secondly, should it confine itself to general principles as some suggest? My own intuition tells me that this is not enough. None of the previous thematic treaties confine themselves to general principles. It would look odd if this one did and one could not count on any future monitoring committee developing these principles without some more detailed content. So I welcome your steer on this issue.

Thirdly, even if the treaty is to go into details, is it still nevertheless useful for it to contain some general principles and, if so, which ones. Recall that the CRC is

a mini-general treaty in the field of children's rights and that CEDAW and CERD are basically non-discrimination treaties. My intuition tells me that we need an expression of general principles if only to give a clear steer to any future Monitoring Body which will have to confront ambiguity and hopefully ratchet upwards the meaning of the treaty.

But which principles? I am a little bit wary of a bald principle of non-discrimination. Maybe it works well in race and women. But somewhat more positive action seems called for in the field of disability.

I would propose for your consideration that if there is to be a general principle it should be the goal of achieving the *equal effective enjoyment of all human rights for persons with disabilities*. I very much welcome your feedback.

While still on the matter of general principles, we will have to confront the notion of progressivity or 'progressive achievement' for the more programmatic rights of the treaty. There is no doubt that such a principle has to be embedded in the treaty. The trick is to do it in such a way as allows those States who genuinely need time and space and resources to achieve their goals to have that time but which denies to others the right to use 'progressivity' as an excuse for not achieving their goals as fast as they could have. I hope I am expressing this well and I very much welcome your views on how we can handle this principle of 'progressivity'.

Fourthly, which set of rights should a treaty contain, civil and political or economic, social and cultural. My intuition tells me that it must be both sets or at least key rights drawn from both sets. Civil and political rights have largely to do with protecting people against power. Economic, social and cultural rights are about giving power to people. I think we need both sets. But what is your view?

Fifthly, from among both sets, are there particular rights you would like to see special emphasis place on – e.g., education, freedom of expression (which should include reference to access to the means of communication), health (which would include services needed to ensure an independent life)...etc? I would gratefully welcome your views.

Sixth, how should the treaty handle new generation rights like the 'right to development'. Again, my own intuition tells me that if the demand for distributive justice as between States is presented in the form of a 'right to development' then many key States will walk from the process.

However, it may be possible to achieve as much – if not more – by tying existing development aid to a disability rights agenda. What do you think of creating an international legal obligation on States to proof their development aid programmes to the rights and obligations arising out of the treaty? Personally, I think this could bring about enormous benefits on the ground. I am just thinking

of the schools that my country and other donor countries build around the world and whether they are fully accessible. Please, I need your guidance on this.

Seventh, what kind of monitoring mechanism would you favour. The traditional monitoring mechanism envisages an expert body reviewing periodic State reports on progress made and obstacles encountered, etc. I think this is useful. But I would probably lean in favour of allowing for some kind of complaints mechanism.

Usually such complaints mechanisms are optional – that is, if a State wants to opt in it is allowed to do so. My intuition tells me that we should have at least an optional complaints mechanism. It doesn't matter if the majority of States do not sign up to it. The reality is that the complaints will drive forward the understanding of the Monitoring Committee of the obligations which will in turn impact positively on how it reviews the periodic reports of all states.

A secondary issue arises – such the complaints mechanism be confined to groups (e.g., NGOs) or should it be thrown open to individuals. I would tend to favour both. Sometimes NGOs hesitate before tackling Governments. Even when they don't hesitate, it is always good to allow for the raw edges of human experience to be reflected in individual circumstances. I think a treaty would be fatally incomplete without a complaints mechanism – what do you think?

A related issue has to do with the composition of the Monitoring Body. If this is a human right treaty then the membership should at the very least possess skill and knowledge and experience in the human rights field. That should be a *sine qua non*. But should the treaty exhort States to nominate human rights experts who have particular knowledge or experience of disability? Should a certain number of slots be reserved for persons with disabilities who possess the requisite human right knowledge? Should States be required to nominate a panel of say three, at least one of whom must be a person with a disability? Should the chair always be a person with a disability? I rely on your guidance.

I am sure there are many more issues that but the above seem to me to be the important ones that require an answer.

Finally, what will this treaty lead to in the future?

I think such a treaty will not, of itself, lead to immediate change. Rather it should underpin the process of change where it is already happening and will give it some more coherence and direction.

It will also embolden those who are arguing for a process of change where none presently exists. In other words, its mere existence will validate the claims of persons with disabilities and place unresponsive systems on the clear defensive. It should have a clear democratic added value.

It should also enable abuses to be identified and labelled as such. The time for sweeping issues under the carpet is gone – and this treaty could help put an end to that.

It might stimulate the emergence of new kinds of disability NGOs dedicated to the rights of persons with disabilities. And it can have a positive transformative effect on existing NGOs and service providers who might begin to see themselves as allies in the common goal of independence.

I suppose one might call it a Declaration of Independence for persons with disabilities throughout the world. It will signal to the world at large that 600 million persons are subjects and not objects and deserve respect as persons as well as rights holders in common with everyone else on the planet.

Thank You.

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UN International Day of People with Disabilities Celebration

In honor of the United Nations (UN) International Day of People with Disabilities, December 3, 2003, Rehabilitation International (RI), VSA arts, Disabled Peoples' International (DPI), and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) are arranging a celebration at the UN, including an exhibit of artwork done by people with disabilities from all over the world and a seminar focusing on the rights of people with disabilities.

Following in the footsteps of such artists as Frida Kahlo and Edvard Munch, the VSA arts exhibit will provide a platform for artists with disabilities to share their work in a setting that offers international exposure. The exhibit will open on the International Day of People with Disabilities, December 3, 2003, and run through the end of December. The UN has agreed to provide a front exhibit space for the show and VSA arts, in collaboration with museum curators, has selected exceptional mixed-media art for the show.

In addition, RI is taking the lead on organizing a seminar on the opening day, December 3, 2003, that will highlight current issues facing the disability community from a human rights perspective, in particular the need for a UN disability convention. By December 2003, the UN General Assembly will discuss a resolution concerning the work towards a UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The seminar will focus on issues surrounding the UN disability convention process as well as address the achievements of the UN Standard Rules, which were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993 and are now celebrating their 10th anniversary. International disability leaders, including Bengt Linqvist, the former UN Standard Rules Rapporteur and Swedish Minister of Social Affairs, have been invited to participate as speakers.

In addition, we hope to invite the new Standard Rules Rapporteur, Sheika Hessa Al Thani, to participate in the seminar, along with Ambassador Gallegos, and other leaders of distinction in the disability community.

The World Bank had a successful and rich December 3 celebration last year. It is only fitting that the UN, along with RI, VSA arts and DPI, host a December 3 celebration this year as work gets under way for a disability convention.