



WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

WFD NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2008

WFD GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Two members from Frontrunners 3, a leadership training program, which takes place in Denmark, came to Finland on the last week of May to do translation work in International Sign on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Dr. Liisa Kauppinen supervised and helped them to complete the work successfully. Before this, Liisa also went to Denmark to assist the Frontrunners to help with the translation work on the first week of May. WFD Board member Mr. Colin Allen was also involved in assisting and supporting the team. After editing this International Sign version of the CRPD will be put into the WFD homepage. The WFD General Secretariat and the Board would like to thank Frontrunners 3 for their translation work and their wonderful cooperation.

WFD supports the initiative by Frontrunners to create a website dedicated to Deaf people in Developing Countries. This website will be a valuable way to increase knowledge on how to approach relevant organisations to obtain the funding and to improve the lives of Deaf people. Do click this link: <http://www.dpdc.frontrunners.dk/index.htm>

The WFD General Secretariat cooperated with the Finnish Association of the Deaf to have WFD display during the World Village Festival, a multicultural event (held every year in the city of Helsinki) during the weekend of 24 and 25 May. The festival was a success as many people came to ask questions on sign language and the Deaf, and the interpreter students taught them how to sign the alphabet of their names. A sign language café was also set up by the interpreter students and Deaf people from the metropolitan area Deaf clubs. A Deaf Namibian cultural group had their show at this festival too.

In the WFD website, there is an article called “The right of the deaf child to grow up bilingual” by Dr. François Grosjean, translated into 30 different languages. Do click on the website and go to the ‘About’ section, click on to the ‘Documents’, you would find it under ‘Other interesting information’.

The WFD General Secretariat is open through the summer, while one of each of the staff members will have their summer holiday between June and July. If you would like to visit the WFD General Secretariat during the summer, please do contact us by email.

WFD BOARD INFORMATION

The one-day only 90th Board meeting was held in the Netherlands on 28 April 2008. Prior to the Board meeting, there were three days of workshops from 25 – 27 April where Board members discussed their tasks in 7 different working groups on finances, WFD experts, membership, fundraising, Organisational Review Group, World Congress and Ordinary Member Survey Group. This worked out well and really saved a lot of time during the Board meeting, since the items had already been discussed during the working group meetings. The Board meeting and the workshop was hosted by the Deaf Association of the Netherlands. The WFD General Secretariat and the Board would like to say thank you to the host organiser for organising the meeting at a short notice successfully. The 91st Board meeting will take place in Santiago, Chile, from the end of September to the first week of October 2008.

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF YOUTH SECTION (WFDYS)

The Frontrunners 3 have set up an exciting project, where they have created a website for WFDYS to raise funds to support Deaf Youth from Developing Countries to attend the next WFD Youth Camp. Please do click on this website address:

<http://www.supportwfdys.org/>

WFD ORDINARY MEMBERS

Austria

The Servicecenter ÖGS.barrierefrei, which is run by the Austrian National Association of the Deaf, is now online with their website: www.gebaerdenwelt.at. This is the very first news platform for the Austrian Deaf and Sign Language community that offers news in Austrian Sign Language. This webpage provides signed news from the national and international world of the Deaf from Monday to Friday. Congratulations go to the Austrian National Association of the Deaf for their efforts from the WFD!!

Hungary

The Hungarian disability CAUCUS was launched on 5th May, in which the Hungarian National Association of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing hosted and led the first CAUCUS meeting, in which the leading disability rights advocates unanimously decided in favour of setting up a non-hierarchical network of civil society based on solidarity to help the effective implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The long-term goals of the CAUCUS include the drafting of an independent shadow report, the necessary preparations for that task and a mutual learning. As a first concrete activity, the CAUCUS will adopt a joint position in regard to the national level monitoring. The need to develop a shared and effective media strategy was also emphasised in order to communicate the Objectives and Purpose of the Convention towards society at large.

Ireland

The Irish Deaf Society (IDS) supports a Deaf woman, who is seeking judicial review proceedings in order to quash the decision of the Galway County Register and Courts Services for excluding her from her duty to sit on the Jury. Currently, Juries Act 1976

bans Deaf people from Jury services. The IDS is outraged at the flagrant exclusion of Deaf people from sitting on a Jury.

It is blatant discrimination and a violation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and European Union Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The IDS has been in contact with the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, to extend the High Court Judicial review action, which will abolish the upper age limit for Jury service, to include lifting the ban on Deaf Jurors. This is not the first time that the Government has been asked to lift the ban on Deaf Jurors. The commission for the Status of People with Disabilities recommended the amendment of Juries Act in 1996 to allow Deaf to sit on Jury services. Evidently, the Government chose to ignore this recommendation and not only discriminate but also marginalise Deaf citizens in Irish society.

Israel

The deaf community in Israel has sued the TV, Channel 2's Israeli News Company for violating their legal obligation to provide closed captions (subtitles) and translation into sign language in their broadcasts. The news company violated the law that was enacted in 2005, which means that the Channel 2 had not been following the law. The news company did not provide closed captions for even half of the news reports in its main edition and did not translate main news edition to sign language on a daily basis.

Nepal

It is with great news in Nepal that the Supreme Court has issued a written statement to the government of Nepal to observe the rights of deaf people on the deaf education at free of costs through sign language and using interpreter services on 16 April 2008.

The Nepal National Federation of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing were working with a group of lawyers of the Pro Public Law Firm, on the case of deaf education to establish rights of the deaf students /children at a separate, special institution for the Deaf, to be established and run by the government. Congratulations to the Deaf community of Nepal for their efforts!!!

The former President of NFDH Mr. Raghav Bir Joshi was elected to be a member of parliament for the Constitutional Assembly meeting for a two-year period, which is the first time in history in Nepal and also for the Asian region that a Deaf person is elected for the parliament. WFD wishes the best of luck for him in advocacy for the human rights of Deaf persons in Nepal.

Peru

The Association of the Deaf in Peru is cooperating with the college of psychologists on the social inclusion and the number of paradigms drafted by a Peruvian psychologist on the problems faced by Deaf adults everyday and the solutions to those problems, such as: lobby for their rights, quality education, promote their physical, emotional and mental health, improve their knowledge. The main idea is to make society aware of this situation and to focus on the person, not on the disability.

ORDINARY MEMBERS' CONTACTS

Please let WFD office know if your contact details have been changed. Sometimes members miss out WFD information due to old contact information. Also, please make sure we know of any changes in your administration or activities. For example, if you have a new President, please let us know! We need your correct contact person, information and addresses.

We need updated addresses for the following members because our mail to them was returned:

Association des Sourds du Togo – AST Siege Social

If you happen to have an up-to-date address for these above, please notify the WFD General Secretariat. Thank you.

JOIN WFD AS AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER AND SUPPORT WFD FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Do you want to be part of our international team? Become an individual member! Anyone can join us. You'll receive a member newsletter 6 times per year and the latest news from our e-mail service.

How can I join? Please go to our website for the application form at www.wfdeaf.org or be in contact with our office, and we'll send you the application form. Once you have filled the form, paid the membership fee and sent the application to our office, we'll then send you a membership certificate.

The WFD has currently less than 200 Individual members. Our target is to increase this number rapidly to thousands of people supporting the work of WFD. We have created a leaflet, which we would ask you to distribute to your networks, members, friends and colleagues. Anyone can join the WFD, and more information can be obtained from the WFD General Secretariat (contact details are at the last page of this newsletter).

Please spread out this information freely. We would like to see a great increase of members in your respective country!

If you are publishing a magazine or a website, please add IM campaign information to your news. Please note that this should not create any costs to the WFD, but instead be a gesture of goodwill and benevolence from our members.

UNITED NATIONS (UN) NEWS

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

WFD is very pleased that 27 countries have by now made their commitment to ratify the UN Convention. The countries that have ratified are Bangladesh, Croatia, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Gabon, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, Namibia, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, San Marino, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain and Tunisia. It is interesting that some of these countries are not Ordinary members of WFD. Hopefully some of them will affiliate with the WFD in the near future. There are already 129 signatories to the Convention (rights) and 71 signatories to the Optional Protocol (individual's right to file complaints). For more information about this convention, click on the website: www.un.org/disabilities

The celebration of the Entry into Force of the Convention and its Optional Protocol was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 12 May 2008, together with Member States, civil society and the UN. WFD President, Mr. Markku Jokinen and former WFD Board member, Ms. Martha Lucia Osorno Posada attended the event, which went successfully. Please do click on for more information about this event in the WFD website.

UN Stamp

In the wake of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) has issued six postage stamps on 6 June 2008. Each of these stamps is devoted to a specific theme in relation to the rights of persons with disabilities. Sign language is one of them, others being respect for integrity; disability and education; accessibility; Braille. For stamp collectors: if you are interested to order for these stamps, do contact:

United Nations Postal Administration
P.O. Box 5900 Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163-5900
USA
Fax: +1 212 963 9854
Email: unpanyinquiries@un.org
Website: www.unstamps.un.org

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Disability Rights Fund

The Disability Rights Fund, a groundbreaking collaborative supporting the human rights of people with disabilities, has launched its website at www.disabilityrightsfund.org

The broad objective of the Disability Rights Fund is to empower disabled persons organisations around the world to effectively implement and monitor the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Fund's structure reflects the international disability community's slogan, "Nothing About Us Without Us." A global advisory panel, made up of 12 individuals, most of whom are persons with disabilities, provides recommendations on grant making strategies for the Fund; four of the Panel members also serve on the Fund's grant making decision body—the Steering Committee. The members of the panel come from five continents and reflect a broad cross-section of the disability community. The majority were nominated by international and regional disabled persons' organizations. Detailed biographies of advisors are available on the website. One Deaf person is represented in the Panel, Ms. Martha Lucia Osorno Posada from Colombia, former WFD Board member.

In 2008, the Disability Rights Fund will be seeking grant proposals from disabled persons' organizations in seven countries. Grants will support the human rights work of disabled persons' organizations in Bangladesh, Ecuador, Ghana, Namibia, Nicaragua, Peru, and Uganda. WFD urges the National Associations of Deaf in these countries to follow the Disability Rights Fund web site for more information and consider applying for a grant.

Arab Region

The Arab Federation of the Organisations for the Deaf (AFOOD) held a successful conference, 8th Arab Symposium of the AFOOD at the end of April. The President of AFOOD met with Ms. Hend Al-Showaier, a sign language researcher from Saudi Arabia at the conference and told her that the Deaf should not be forced to use the unified Arab Sign Language and that the Deaf people in each Arab country should have their own indigenous sign language. Thus, the unified Arab Sign language would only be in use for the Arab conferences and events.

Australia

One of the cheap new airlines, Tiger Airways in Australia discriminated two Deaf couples on their return trip home from Tasmania to Melbourne. The air hostess told them after their return trip that they would have to bring a qualified carer next time, if they plan to make another trip. So the Deaf man and his friends were really very humiliated and launched a discrimination case against the company for not allowing them to travel without a carer. Luckily the company apologised to them and admitted their discrimination. Unfortunately discriminating Deaf people in similar situations is not rare.

Myanmar

The WFD Regional Secretariat for the Asia and the Pacific (WFD RSA/P) has been receiving emails from Yangon in Myanmar requesting assistance. Since a few years ago, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) has been actively supporting the development of the Deaf in Myanmar.

At present, a Japanese lady who can sign well is stationed in Myanmar as a JICA expert on Deaf issues. She is keeping in close contact with the Deaf in both Yangon and Mandalay. She was in Yangon at the time when the cyclone hit the country. She met the President of the Yangon Deaf Association who said that all 88 members of the Association seem to be safe and alive but he has not actually met them all himself. Sadly, one of the students (aged 7, a girl) of the Mary Chapman Deaf School died in the cyclone. She was found dead, cuddled by her parents.

There is a project supported by JICA to help the Deaf to record the Myanmar Sign Language. JICA experts on sign linguistics have been sent from Japan twice to instruct the Deaf in Myanmar on how to identify and record their sign language. As the next phase of this project, JICA will invite the representatives from Yangon, together with two Deaf representatives from Mandalay to Japan in June for a follow up of training on sign linguistics. In the past the Japanese Federation of the Deaf (JFD) has tried to support the Deaf in Myanmar, but it is very difficult to send money or commodities because of the restrictions imposed by the military government. The President of the JFD once went to Yangon and Mandalay himself to give sewing machines, TV sets, and money to the Deaf.

The WFD RSA/P will take that opportunity to discuss what support is needed and how we can support them. Myanmar is geographically and culturally very close to Thailand. The National Association of the Deaf in Thailand (NADT) also supports Myanmar in many ways.

COMING EVENTS

International Symposium – Instructional Technology and Education of the Deaf

(Rochester Institute of Technology – National Institute for the Deaf)

The symposium is to provide a forum for educators throughout the world who support Deaf and Hard of hearing learners to share information about current and future developments in educational technology for the teaching/learning process. It will be held in Rochester, New York, USA from 23 – 26 June 2008. For more information about this symposium, go to <http://www.rit.edu/~techsym>

International Gathering of Catholic Deaf People

The International Gathering of Catholic Deaf People is organised by the International Catholic Foundation for the Service of Deaf Persons and takes place in Rome, Italy from 23 – 30 June 2008. Do click on the website for more information:

www.icfdeafservice.org

4th Deaf Academics International Conference (Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity College, University of Dublin)

This will take place in Dublin, Ireland from 25 – 27 June 2008. The theme of the conference is ‘The Role of Deaf Academics in the Pursuit of Social Justice’. For more information, please do contact to the coordinator, Mr. John Bosco Conama by email: info@da08.ie and do also click on the website: www.da08.ie. It is not open to all, as it is for Deaf people who work at universities as lecturers and researchers.

International Film Festival (Senza Parole and Regional Italian Association of the Deaf in Milano)

This festival will take place in Milano, Italy from 27 – 28 June 2008. For more information about this festival, go to their website: www.teatrosenzaparole.it

3rd World Forum on Human Rights (International Permanent Secretariat Human Rights and Local Governments, France)

The 3rd World Forum on Human Rights will take place at Nantes, France in the International Convention Centre from 30 June to 3^{July} 2008. Do click on this website for more information: <http://www.spidh.org/?id=162&L=3>

8th International Federation of Hard of Hearing Congress (Canadian Hard of Hearing Association and IFHOH)

The theme of this congress is A Global Community of Communications that reflects the growing momentum to recognising the significance of hearing loss. The area of topics will be covered, such as early detection and intervention programs, educational, self-help support, education, awareness of hearing loss, technological supports and medical care.

This Congress will take place in Vancouver, Canada from 2 – 6 July 2008. For more information, click on www.chha-ifhohcongress2008.com or to email:

congress2008@chha.ca

11th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs (Institut Integriert Studieren, Austria)

This conference will take place at the University of Linz, Austria from 9 – 11 July 2008.

The topics covered are Usability, eInclusion, Accessibility, Design for All, Assistive Technology and Ambient Assisted Living. Do click on this website address:

www.icchp.org for more information.

International South Asian Deaf Mela 2008

On 16 – 19 July 2008, there will be an International South Asian Deaf Mela conference, which takes place in Seattle, Washington State, USA. This conference is organised by the Deaf community of Washington State. For more information, go to see their website: <http://deafmela2008.googlepages.com/>

World Library and Information Congress, 74th IFLA General Conference and Council

The theme of the congress is Libraries without borders: Navigating towards global understanding. It will take place in Québec City, Québec, Canada from 10 – 14 August 2008. Do click on their website for more information: www.ifla.org. Online registration is available through this website.

4th German Culture Days of the Deaf (German Cultural of the Deaf)

The festival is to take place again from 21 – 23 August 2008 at Cologne, Germany. There will be many visitors from all over Germany, as well as from Germany's European neighbours. It is good to meet new people and old friends and to experience interesting highlights such as art exhibitions, workshops, seminars, theatre, panel discussions, and a film festival. The WFD President is invited to hold a presentation about CRPD. You can register online at www.gehoerlosen-kulturtage.de

21st World Congress of Rehabilitation International

The Theme of this congress is “Disability Rights and Social Participation: Ensuring a Society for All” It will take place in Quebec City, Québec, Canada from 25 – 28 August 2008. For more information, do click on www. <http://www.riquebec2008.org/>

European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters Conference 2008, Voorschoten, The Netherlands (European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters and the Dutch Sign Language Interpreters' Association)

On the 12th of September, the Annual General Meeting will take place. Observers are welcome to register for the Annual General Meeting. On the 13th and 14th of September the conference takes place with a theme “Third Language Interpreting”. The website address for this conference is: www.nbtg.nl/efsl2008

International Conference & Festival – Invisible Culture – from a bird's eye view (Hungarian Association of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing – SINOSZ)

The goal for this international conference is to call on the Hungarian Government to oblige and recognize the Hungarian sign language as an official language, -which will guarantee the basic human rights of all Deaf in education, communication access, and employment -and grow recognition and awareness of the “invisible culture”. The conference takes place in Budapest, Hungary from 19 – 20th September 2008. For more information, do contact to Hungarian Association of the Deaf & HOH - foldes.dalma@sinosz.hu

5th European Deaf Arts & Culture Festival – SALVIA

This festival will be held at the capital city of Ukraine, Kiev, hosted by the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf from 6 – 12 October 2008. They welcome Deaf actors/actresses, theatre groups and filmmakers from Europe only. For more information, please do contact to the director of the festival, Ms. Iryna Chepchina: chepchina@bigmir.net or by fax: +380 44 287 1561

2nd International Forum of the Deaf (Association of the Deaf of Morocco)

This forum will be on again for the second time in Fez, Morocco from 9 – 11 October 2008, which is unique for the Deaf in the Arab world after the large successful first Forum that took place in 2006. The three major themes of Education, Mental Health and Deafness and Sign Language linguistics will be discussed.

2nd Convention of the Deaf in South America (National Federation of the Deaf of Ecuador)

From 26 October – 2 November the convention of the Deaf in South America will take place in Quito, Ecuador. For more information, do click on this site:

<http://es.youtube.com/watch?v=1FqCNnBJnn0>

7th Deaf History International Conference (Swedish Deaf History Society)

At the same time of this conference, in Sweden they will celebrate 200 years of Deaf education. The dates of the conference are from 4 – 8 August 2009 and the conference takes place in the capital of Sweden, Stockholm. Do click for more information on this conference for registration and Call for papers: www.schs.se/dhi2009

5th International Deaf Clownery Festival (Ukraine Society of the Deaf)

The festival will take place in Kiev, Ukraine from 23 – 25 September 2009. For more information, do contact the Ukraine Society of the Deaf by email: chepchina@bigmir.net

4th World Congress on Mental Health and Deafness (Deaf Services Queensland & Deaf Children Australia)

The theme for this Mental Health and Deafness congress is ‘A life to be lived’, focus on deaf children and adults’ well being. It will take place in Brisbane, Australia from 27 – 30 October 2009. For more information, please go to www.mhd2009.org

13th World Deaf Magicians Festival

This festival will take place in Cattolica, Italy from 23 – 30 May 2010. Do click on the website: www.2010wdmf.com. More information about this festival will be informed later.

21st International Congress on Education for the Deaf (ICED) - Partners in Education

The 21st ICED Congress will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada from 18 – 22 July 2010. More information about this congress, do check on their website:

www.iced2010.com

If you know about an upcoming conference of regional or international interest, be sure to send us information about it for our Calendar of Coming events in WFD NEWS or, in the WFD newsletter and also in the website.

DONORS

WFD wishes to thank to those WFD members who have made a contribution to support the WFD. Here are the names of the list of the contributors:

Khaled Al-Hothili

Yerker and Ann Marie Andersson
Yerker Andersson – donated the manuscript fee of the Japanese Federation of the Deaf,
MIMI magazine

John Bosco Conama
Marije Davidson
Robert R. Davila
Jui-Huang, Jao
Andrew Murray Holmes
Jerry Nelson and Nancy J. Bloch
Paal Richard Peterson
Maryjean Shahen
Danielle A. Thompson
Amy T. Wilson
Satu Worseck

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

DVD - Suggested International Signs for use at the World Federation of the Deaf General Assembly, Norwegian Association of the Deaf, Ål Experiential College and Conference Centre for Deaf People. It is produced by Døves Media.

This DVD is intended as a guide to signs commonly used at the quadrennial General Assembly of the WFD. The cost of the DVD is **30, 00 €**. It contains 11 sections of signs on the following topics:

WFD and United Nations
General Assembly
Board
Geographical Signs
Meeting Procedures
Meeting Communication
Projects and Fundraising
Finance
Numbers
Other Signs
WFD Youth Section

A Handbook on International Sign

This Handbook on International Sign, costs 25, 00 € is intended to be, above all, a tool for deaf people. It is a proposal that will contribute to ease the life of our collective group. It is also important to note that this book is a collective work which has been conceived, developed and produced by CNSE Foundation and FAXPG Foundation (with the support of the WFD) and in collaboration with FESORD CV Foundation.

It is available by ordering through the website: Fundacion CNSE website:

<http://www.fundacioncnse.org/distrimat.htm>.

WFD MERCHANDISE

If any of you are interested in ordering items from WFD, such as **T-shirts (golf, woman and ordinary), WFD Pins, water bottles, watches, bracelets, pens and caps**, the WFD Order form is available on the website: www.wfdeaf.org. or you can make an order through email, which is orders@wfdeaf.org

CONTACT INFORMATION OF WFD SECRETARIAT

Please do send all correspondence to:

WFD General Secretariat
PO Box 65
FIN- 00401 Helsinki
FINLAND
Fax: +358 9 5803 572
Email: info@wfdeaf.org

Also please check on WFD's website which is www.wfdeaf.org for more information, updates and contacts. (On WFD website, please do go to the Contacts section for specific direct contact on memberships and orders of WFD merchandise). If you would like to contact directly to WFD President, his email address is wfd@kl-deaf.fi.

If any of you is interested to contact to one of the WFD Ordinary Members' contact details (national associations of the Deaf), please do go to the WFD website to click on 'National Members'.

Please do feel free to submit us newsworthy articles for future editions. You can forward articles at anytime to us at info@wfdeaf.org, and we will do our best to include them in the next issue. Also, any feedback and comments on the newsletter would be most welcome!

For more information on what is happening within WFD, look at the WFD website: www.wfdeaf.org