International Impact of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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MDRI’s Mission

Promote the rights and full integration into society of persons with disabilities.

- Investigating & documenting abuses
- Bringing attention to abuses
- Working with civil society, strengthening local DPOs
- International policy advocacy
Impacts of the CRPD

1. CRPD as tool to address abuses
2. International Disability Rights Movement
3. International Cooperation Agencies & UN Bodies
4. International Law
5. Role of US disability rights advocates
Why do we need a Convention in the first place?
1. CRPD as tool to address abuses: MDRI’s findings

A. Serbia
B. Paraguay
C. Argentina
1. CRPD as tool to address abuses

A. Serbia:

- Babies, children and adults with disabilities subject to life-long institutionalization
  - conditions that are dangerous and life-threatening &
  - inflict mental and physical suffering

- Restraints used for staff convenience & in place caring interventions for self abuse
1. CRPD as tool to address abuses

B. Paraguay:

- Unexplained deaths
- Years-long detention in tiny isolation cells
- Inhuman and degrading treatment
- Lack of alternatives in the community
1. CRPD as tool to address abuses

C. Argentina:

- 25,000 people segregated in psychiatric institutions
- 80% detained < 1 year
- Average length of detention 9 years
- 60-90% people detained for socio-economic reasons
1. CRPD as tool to address abuses

C. Argentina:

- Physical and sexual abuse
- People incinerated in isolation cells
- Forced sterilization
- Lack of medical care
2. International Disability Rights Movement

- Growth, expansion, strengthening of disability rights movement on a global scale
- Continued cooperation toward implementation of Convention
3. International Cooperation & UN Bodies

- Increased funding through international cooperation and foundations
- Transformative element of UN agency structures: must now incorporate disability (UNICEF, UNDP, etc.)
- USAID funding must include DPOs
- All actions and documentation must now comply with the CRPD
- Increased visibility of rights of PWD
4. International Law

- Specific instrument setting forth existing rights in the context of disability
- Allows for reinterpretation of other international human rights norms
- Supersedes previous standards
- Express recognition that rights guaranteed in other core human rights treaties apply to PWD
5. Role for US DPOs

- US seen as leader in disability rights
- US DPOs experience achieving disability rights legislation
- Strength of US cross-disability movement
- To maintain leadership on a global level, US must ratify the CRPD
Mental Disability Rights International

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