

The New UN Disability Rights Convention: Building Support in the United States for Ratification and Implementation

April 9, 2007

American University Washington College of Law
4801 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20016



On March 30, 2007, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will open for signature and ratification. Historically, the United States has been a world leader in the recognition of disability rights. On April 9, 2007, the disability, human rights, and international development communities will come together to examine the Convention, its guarantees, and its implications for US law and foreign policy. We will consider strategies for encouraging US government and public support for the Convention and examine how we can ensure continued US leadership in the international protection of disability rights.

8:00 – 9:00 Registration and Breakfast

9:00 – 10:00 Welcome and Introduction

Welcome: Erin Scheick, *Human Rights Brief*
Dean Claudio Grossman, American University
Washington College of Law

Introduction: John Lancaster, President, US International Council on
Disabilities & National Council on Independent Living

Keynote: Gov. Dick Thornburgh - *Hope and Promise of the Convention*
World Committee on Disability
Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Preston Gates Ellis LLP

10:00 – 11:15 The New Convention: Process, Principles & Prospects

- Maria Veronica Reina, Burton Blatt Institute, Syracuse University & International Disability Caucus
- Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, The World Bank
- Tracy Justesen, White House Domestic Policy Council
- Tara J. Melish, Mental Disability Rights International

Moderator: Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo

11:15 - 11:45 Coffee Break

11:45 – 1:00 Implementation through Domestic Law, Policy & Practice

- Prof. Arlene Kanter, Disability Law and Policy Program, Syracuse University College of Law
- Kathy Martinez, World Institute on Disability
- Prof. Robert Dinerstein, Disability Rights Law Clinic, American University Washington College of Law
- Hadar Harris, Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, American University Washington College of Law

Moderator: Prof. Robert Dinerstein

1:00 – 2:30 Lunch and Keynote: *The Disability Convention and the International Human Rights Movement*

- Aryeh Neier, Open Society Institute

Introduction: Prof. Herman Schwartz, American University Washington College of Law

2:30 – 3:00 Video & Presentation: *Overcoming Abuses in Orphanages and Institutions*

- Laurie Ahern & Eric Rosenthal, Mental Disability Rights International

3:00 – 4:15 Implementation through International Development Policy

- Judy Heumann, Global Partnership for Disability and Development
- Sam Worthington, InterAction
- John Kemp, State Department Advisory Board on Disability

Moderator: Eric Rosenthal

4:15 – 4:30 Coffee Break

4:30 – 6:00 Strategy Session: Seeking US Government & Public Support

Resource People:

- Hans Hogrefe, Congressional Human Rights Caucus
- Holly Burkhalter, International Justice Mission
- Tom Malinowski, Human Rights Watch
- Penny Wakefield, CEDAW Working Group
- Jerry White, Landmine Survivors Network

Open Discussion - Moderator: John Lancaster, USICD & NCIL

6:00 Reception: From the ADA to the UN Disability Rights Convention

- *Remarks:* Yoshiko Dart, Disability Rights Leader

Conference Organizers:

The *Human Rights Brief* and the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law,
American University Washington College of Law
Syracuse University College of Law Disability and Policy Program of the Center
on Human Policy, Law, and Disability Studies and the *Syracuse Journal of
International Law and Commerce*
Mental Disability Rights International
U.S. International Council on Disability

Co-sponsors:

American Association of People with Disabilities
World Institute on Disability
World Committee on Disability of the
National Organization on Disability

The conference is free and open to the public but registration is required as space is limited.

ASL translation and CART will be provided.

To register, visit: <http://www.wcl.american.edu/secl> or call 202-274-4075.

*For more information, contact the WCL Center for Human Rights
and Humanitarian Law at 202-274-4180, or humlaw@wcl.american.edu*