

PRESS RELEASE
8 May 2008

**UN Convention Campaign Coalition (UNCCC) calls for
'Ratification without Reservation'**

**STOP PRESS – GOVERNMENT LATEST –
DISABLED PEOPLE ARE NOT REALLY HUMAN**

The Blair Government wanted to see the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) happen – now the Brown Government wants to reserve on some of the most important rights.

For five years the UK Government worked hard at the UN in New York and took a leading role within the European Delegation to ensure that the CRPD was written and approved. On March 30 2007 Anne McGuire, the Minister for Disabled People was among the first signatories. By the end of March 2008, twenty countries had ratified the Convention and on May 3 it became a live and functioning convention.

But not in the UK. Last December, McGuire made it plain that there would be reservations tabled before the UK could ratify. On Tuesday May 6, she issued a statement outlining those reservations. Outrageously, despite the DDA, the Life Chances Report and promises of full equality for disabled people by 2025, the Government has decided that disabled people are only fit to receive some rights – not the general inalienable, indivisible and comprehensive rights that are due to other people.

Despite the fact that the CRPD states clearly that implementation of rights contained within it are incremental, they could easily set a target for completion rather than reserve. But the UK Government is saying loud and clear that there are certain violations against disabled people that they should be allowed to perpetrate for ever:

- It should be allowed to bang disabled people up in residential accommodation, even though evidence has shown that they are often abused and have no real choice and control over their lives.
- It should continue to provide segregated education away from home and friends, despite the mounting evidence that fully supported inclusive education in their own communities is the only way that disabled children can attain some sort of equality.
- It is perpetuating the discrimination of the DDA and allowing the armed forces to discriminate in the employment of disabled people – despite the disabled veterans that are going back to the war zones complete with their prosthetics.

- **And they are reserving the right for disabled people to have liberty of movement, nationality and immigration.**

A meeting of the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum at the Commonwealth Foundation in London, on hearing of the UK's intentions to ratify only with reservations, issued a public statement in which they expressed their shock and said:

“We wish to express our deep concerns that any Commonwealth country should not be whole hearted in their support of human rights for disabled people. We are united in our hope that the UK will take the leadership in ratifying and implementing the CRPD without reservations and that their leadership will be followed throughout the Commonwealth.”

Rachel Kachaje, a disabled leader said:

“Disabled people see that hope springs out of the Convention - hope for a new, inclusive world where disabled people can be seen as fully human.”

“Apparently the present UK Government does not share that view of the full humanity of disabled people”.

Notes to Editor:

The UNCCC is a coalition of 22 disabled peoples organisations and disability organisations campaigning to ensure that the UK Government ratifies the CRPD without reservations.

For further information contact:

Richard Rieser – r.rieser@diseed.org.uk 020 7359 2855

Rachel Hurst – Rachel.daa@btinternet.com 01666 837 671