

Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

For details of this recent announcement from UN-DESA, please see <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=17>

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol are serviced by a joint Secretariat, consisting of staff of both the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs ([DESA](#)), based in New York, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) in Geneva.

Once the Convention enters into force, DESA will service the Conference of States Parties to be convened in New York. In Geneva, OHCHR will service the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In New York, the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is housed in DESA's [Division for Social Policy and Development](#), which is responsible for activities related to poverty eradication and employment, generational issues and integration, inclusive development, non-governmental organizations, and indigenous issues.

The objectives of the Secretariat at DESA are: (i) to support the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in social life and development; (ii) to advance the rights and protect the dignity of persons with disabilities and; (iii) to promote equal access to employment, education, information, goods and services. The mandate of the Secretariat at DESA also includes the review and implementation of the [Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities](#) adopted in 1994, and the [World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons](#) adopted in 1982. In addition, the Secretariat prepares publications and acts as a clearinghouse for information on disability issues; promotes national, regional and international programmes and activities; provides support to governments and civil society; and gives substantial support to technical co-operation projects and activities.

In Geneva, the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities currently comprises the Advisor on Human Rights and Disabilities, housed in the Operations, Programmes and Research Division. With the establishment of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities upon entry into force of the Convention, the Secretariat will also comprise the Secretary and staff supporting the Committee.

The objectives of the Secretariat at OHCHR, drawn from the High Commissioner's Plan of Action, are: (i) country engagement - to support UN

human rights field presences increase their work at the country level on the Convention, with a particular focus on awareness-raising and promoting ratification; (ii) support for human rights bodies - to mainstream disability within the UN human rights programme, specifically in the work of the Human Rights Council and the existing treaty monitoring bodies; (iii) leadership – to encourage the High Commissioner to raise awareness of disability as a human rights issue and to provide tools and publications to assist States, civil society organizations and national human rights institutions to implement the Convention; and, (iv) partnership – to work closely with other intergovernmental and civil society organizations to strengthen work on the Convention through cooperation.