

Posted – *April 5, 2007*

On March 30, 2007, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol were formally opened for signature in the General Assembly hall at UN Headquarters in New York. This marked the first opportunity for States to become signatories or States Parties to these two instruments.

Although it was hoped that as many countries as possible would participate in the opening for signature, all participants were astonished that by the end of the day 82 States had signed the Convention, and 44 States had signed the Optional Protocol. This number broke all records, marking the highest number of signatories ever to a UN convention on its opening day! Jamaica also deposited its instrument of ratification, making it the first and only States Party to the CRPD at this time! Additionally, the European Community also signed the CRPD, making it the first 'regional integration organization' to sign a human rights convention. (The CRPD is the only international human rights convention to expressly be open for signature by regional integration organizations.)

To read the DPI Disability Convention Daily Update for March 30, please click [here](#).

Within several days of the opening for signature, Egypt and Uruguay had also signed the Convention (though not its Optional Protocol), bringing the total of CRPD signatories to 84. It is hoped that all of the signatories will follow Jamaica's lead and ratify both the CRPD and its Optional Protocol as soon as possible, in order for them to become States Parties. The Convention requires that 20 States become States Parties before the Convention can "enter into force" – this means that we still need at least 19 more States to become States Parties! For more information on the meaning of ratification, its importance and how you can encourage your government to sign and ratify, please continue on to read the further sections of this Toolkit!

We will continue to bring you news of further signatures and ratifications as we can. In the meantime, you can also find information on the status of signatures from the UN [here](#).

Posted – *December 15, 2006*

On December 13, 2006, the UN General Assembly formally adopted by consensus the Convention and its Optional Protocol, making the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) one of the core international human rights conventions!! The ceremony took place at UN Headquarters in New York, and was well attended by both government and non-governmental delegations.

In Secretary General Kofi Annan's speech (delivered on his behalf by Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Deputy Secretary-General), he noted that the Convention has "became a

landmark several times over: it is the first human rights treaty to be adopted in the twenty-first century; the most rapidly negotiated human rights treaty in the history of international law; and the first to emerge from lobbying conducted extensively through the internet.”

Now that the Convention and its Optional Protocol have been formally adopted, their texts will no longer be subject to negotiation and will no longer change. The final text of the Convention and its Optional Protocol are available online here:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/conventioninfo.htm>

The Convention and its Optional Protocol will be opened for signature at UN Headquarters in New York on March 30, 2007. This will mark the first opportunity for States to become signatories or States Parties to the Convention and/or its Optional Protocol.

To read the DPI Disability Convention Daily Update for December 13, please click here.