

## SALUTE



Colombia this week joined the ranks of 99 other states which have pledged to take concrete steps to ensure equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities by adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. “These states have recognized and affirmed that a person with a disability is not the problem that needs treatment – they are ready to treat the discrimination in society that is the real problem,” the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said. “A person in a wheelchair is not prevented from accessing the voting booth by her wheelchair but by the stairs leading up to the booth. It is the stairs that are discriminatory and problematic. I congratulate 100 states for acknowledging this truth.”

One person in 10 has a disability, and yet, the needs of this large segment of the population are little addressed. Mortality for children with disabilities may be as high as 80 per cent in countries where under-five mortality as a whole has decreased below 20 per cent. People with disabilities are less likely to be educated and more likely to be unemployed. Only 45 countries have anti-discrimination and other laws to tackle the issues faced by individuals with a disability. People with disabilities are frequently disenfranchised by being barred from voting due to accessibility problems. Even more grave violations of their rights occur in many parts of the world, such as being forced to take medication against their will, being shut out of schools because of autism, or being locked up at home because of the shame and stigma attached to them by their communities. (...)

The article:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/Media.aspx?lsMediaPage=true>

The Convention:

[http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base\\_id=104&language\\_id=1&erc\\_doc\\_id=3833&p;category\\_id=32&category\\_type=3&group=](http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=104&language_id=1&erc_doc_id=3833&p;category_id=32&category_type=3&group=)