UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Representatives of dozens of countries have gathered today at United Nations Headquarters in New York for the start of a three-day meeting to map out practical ways to strengthen the rights of the world's estimated 650 million persons with disabilities.

The Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will focus on improving rights through national laws and other measures at the country level.

The Convention, which entered into force in May last year, asserts the rights to education, health, work, adequate living conditions, freedom of movement, freedom from exploitation and equal recognition before the law for persons with disabilities. So far 142 countries have signed the treaty and 66 have ratified it.

The pact's Optional Protocol allows individuals to petition an international expert body with grievances, and this has been signed by 88 nations and ratified by 44.

By signing, and then ratifying the treaty, States commit themselves to enact laws and other measures to improve disability rights, as well as abolish discriminatory legislation, customs and practices.

Participants in this week's meeting will take part in round-table discussions and informal discussions, and are also expected to devise the basis for a road map for further actions to implement the Convention.

Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro told the conference today that the Convention provides a solid basis for advancing the human rights of people with disabilities and for enabling their full participation

and inclusion in society.
Ms. Migiro said it was encouraging that so many countries had already adopted new laws and policies to comply with the Convention or modified existing laws and policies. This is essential to ensuring the effective implementation of the treaty, she added.

(UN News Centre)

The UN Convention:

http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=104&language_id=1&erc_doc_id=3833&category_id=32&category_type=3&group=

HREA's study guide on the rights of Persons with disabilities:

http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=152