



WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

WFD NEWSLETTER

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The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) was established in 1951 in Rome, Italy during the first Deaf World Congress. As an international non-governmental central organisation of national associations of Deaf people. It has B-category status in the United Nations (UN) system, where it is represented at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); the Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the International Labour Organization (ILO); and World Health Organization (WHO). It is also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE). WFD currently has 130 Ordinary Members (national associations of the Deaf). WFD provides a platform for cooperation and information exchange among its members and partnerships. As an international organisation and through national organisations, WFD is emphasizing on improving the human rights for Deaf persons, the status of national sign languages, to have better education for Deaf people, and improved access to information technology and services.

WFD GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Welcome to the autumn issue of the new look of the WFD Newsletter. To ensure that we have captured the most important issues from across the world, please feel free to submit us newsworthy articles for future editions. You can forward articles at anytime to us at info@wfdeaf.org, and we will do our best to include them in the next issue. Also, any feedback and comments on the new look of the newsletter would be most welcome!

The WFD General Secretariat and the Board warmly welcomes Ms. Laura Pajunen back to WFD after her maternity leave since April 2007. Her job duty as a Development Officer is to do fundraising, which is a priority and also other duties, such as being in contact with the UN and its agencies and also helping out with Ms. Meri Hyske-Fischer on the Global Education Pre-planning Project on the Human Rights of Deaf People. Welcome back, Laura!

President Emerita Liisa Kauppinen will participate in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in New York, 10.-16 November 2008, as a member of the Finnish UN delegation

In case you have something you would like to inform about the international deaf community, please be in contact with Ms Phillipa Sandholm who compiles the WFD Newsletter.

WFD BOARD INFORMATION

The 91st Board meeting took place at Santiago, Chile, from 29th of September to 2nd of October 2008, hosted by the National Association of the Deaf of Chile (Asociación de Sordos de Chile, ASOCH) and the Regional Secretariat for South America secretary was also involved in assisting the Board meeting. After the Board meeting, six of the Board members had lectured on specific topics at the 3rd Approach of Culture, Education and Rights of the Deaf, also hosted by ASOCH in the University of Diego Portales in Santiago.

The WFD General Secretariat and the Board would like to say thank you to the host organiser for organising the meeting successfully.

The next Board meeting will take place in Monterrey, Mexico hosted by the Mexican Federation of the Deaf (Federación Mexicana de Sordos, FEMESOR) in May 2009.



Board members and representatives of WFDYS, EUD, ASOCH & WFD Staff volunteers at the 91st Board meeting at Santiago, Chile



91st WFD Board meeting



Participants and WFD Board members at the 3rd Approach of Culture, Education and Rights of the Deaf seminar, Santiago, Chile

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF YOUTH SECTION (WFDYS)

See more news of the WFDYS in the attachment to this newsletter. If you would like to know more information of the WFDYS, do visit their website: www.wfdys.org

PROJECT

The WFD is a partner organisation in a project called Global Education Pre-planning on the Human Rights of Deaf People. WFD Board member Mr. Colin Allen, Project Co-ordinator, with Ms. Meri Hyske-Fischer as the project's desk officer at the WFD General Secretariat organised a seminar along with Ms. Phillipa Sandholm which took place in Helsinki, Finland from 20 – 22 August 2008. Seven Regional coordinators attended the seminar – Asia and the Pacific, South America, Eastern and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and Middle Asia, Arab Region, Western and Central Africa, and Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. The seminar was a great success with interesting topics on Deaf bilingualism and education, interpreting, legislation and policies, access to government services, status of sign languages and sign language work. The final report of this project will be available later on. Thanks go to Mr. Colin Allen for his tremendous effort to have the seminar organised and for the regional coordinators to have the chance to meet and to share information and their ideas. Do read the Press Release (News section) and have a look at the photos (gallery section) in the website about this seminar. **Note:** See more information about this project in the last newsletter of September 2007.

WFD ORDINARY MEMBERS

Costa Rica

The Costa Rican Sign Language (LESCO) is going to be taught at university level and also in other public and private educational institutions, which is part of the National

Commission on Sign Language (CONALESCO) and the National Association of the Deaf of Costa Rica. The funds for this kind of course came from the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, which was endorsed by CONALESCO. Congratulations to go to ANASCOR for their hard work in lobbying for having courses in sign language!!!

Georgia

The WFD General Secretariat received email message in August from one of their contacts in Russian Federation to tell us that the Deaf situation in Georgia is not too bad; only one deaf child got wounded during the war breakout. The contact person is regularly keeping in touch with the President of the Union of the Deaf of Georgia.

Germany

The German Deaf Association hosted the 4th Cultural Day of Deaf People in August with over 3, 000 participants. WFD President, Markku Jokinen was presented in this event to give his presentation on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). During this event, there was a large demonstration to campaign for having 100% subtitles on Germany's national TV stations. 7, 000 people joined the parade, calling for more subtitles. The parade was about 1 km long. The German Deaf community hopes that the government listens to their demands.

Somalia

Somali National Association of the Deaf (SONAD) has announced the establishment of schools for the Deaf in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. It is the first time in history for Somalia to have concrete educational opportunities for the Deaf children in Southern Somalia. The road to the establishment of educational institutions for the Deaf in Somalia has been long and painful. From the time of Somalia's independence from Italy and the United Kingdom, and even after the fall of the late dictator Siad Barre, Southern Somalia has had little or no educational opportunities for the Deaf. The war only made the situation worse.

Some parents would hide their deaf children believing that they were cursed. Many deaf children were abused physically and called terrible names. Even the Somali word for Deaf is the derogatory term 'dhagool', which can be translated as someone with bad and rotten ears.

Even the non-Governmental organisations that run the education system in Somalia ignored the needs of the deaf children. Currently, however things seem to be improving in Somalia.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

It would be much appreciated if Ordinary, Associate and Individual Members paid their 2008 fee before the end of December 2008. WFD Secretariat depends on membership fees to cover part of the expenses of running the office - without your support we cannot continue to function.

ORDINARY MEMBERS - It would be much appreciated if you pay the fees from 2004 to 2007. WFD General Secretariat had sent a letter recently to those who have not paid the fees for these years.

If Ordinary Members need a reduction or postponement in paying their fee this must be communicated to us in writing so this can be added to the agenda for Board action.

If you have not received your membership fee invoice, please contact WFD Secretariat immediately and we will re-issue you another invoice.

ORDINARY MEMBERS' CONTACTS

Please let WFD office know if your contact details have been changed. Sometimes members miss out WFD information due to old contact information. Also, please make sure we know of any changes in your administration or activities. For example, if you have a new President, please let us know! We need your correct contact person, information and addresses.

If you happen to have an up-to-date address for these above, please notify the WFD General Secretariat. Thank you.

INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF THE DEAF / INT. DAY OF THE DEAF

WFD General Secretariat received news and photos from the WFD Ordinary members in how they celebrated International Week of the Deaf/ Day of the Deaf. Some of the countries such as Argentina (<http://es.youtube.com/watch?v=IiuzNCmAP9Q>), Guatemala, Mexico and Paraguay organised marches.

Lesotho

The celebration of the International Week of the Deaf event from 22 – 28 September 2008 in Lesotho, Quthing district was broadly publicised in media (Lesotho Television, local radio stations and local newspapers). The National Association of the Deaf-Lesotho (NADL) was raising awareness on the importance of this theme; “*Human Rights Through Sign Languages*” **See more information of the attachment to this newsletter after WFDYS.**

Mexico

The Deaf Community in Mexico celebrated the International Day of the Deaf on 28 September 2008. The Deaf people wore black t-shirts and carried the candles, as a symbol of mourning – a sign of discrimination, and then after at 13.00 (1.00pm) they used the white t-shirts meaning the symbol of freedom by fighting for their rights.

South Africa

Deaf Federation of South Africa (DEAFSA) celebrated International Week of the Deaf from 1 – 7 September 2008 and also celebrated Human Rights through South African Sign Language. DEAFSA uses the WFD's vision and mission, in obtaining to follow through South African Sign Language by 2012, as stated in the DEAFSA's vision.

Ukraine

Ukraine Society of the Deaf organised the special Deaf festival, Saliva (5th European Deaf Arts & Culture Festival following the International Week of the Deaf from 6 – 12 October 2008, in which they organised in the centre of the city, Kiev. The deaf people formed a line from the Central Universal Mall to the Main Post Office in the middle of the street by signing to each other to give awareness to the general public. It was a good chance for the media/journalists to interview some of the deaf people.

USA

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) encouraged all local communities throughout the USA to part of its ASL is Awesome for All! Campaign, which promotes the long-standing position of the NAD that American Sign Language (ASL) is a basic human right and the natural language of the American deaf community.

The ASL is Awesome for All! campaign was commemorated during International Week of the Deaf.



Deaf Guatemalans showing their banner to have their sign language recognition
Photo: ASORGUA



Deaf Paraguayans in the parade
Photo: Centro de Sordos del Paraguay



Deaf Ukrainians Photo: Ukraine Society of the Deaf

JOIN WFD AS AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER AND SUPPORT WFD FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Do you want to be part of our international team? Become an individual member! Anyone can join us. You'll receive a member newsletter 6 times per year and the latest news from our e-mail service.

How can I join? Please go to our website for the application form at www.wfdeaf.org or be in contact with our office, and we'll send you the application form. Once you have filled the form, paid the membership fee and sent the application to our office, we'll then send you a membership certificate.

The WFD has currently less than 200 Individual members. Our target is to increase this number rapidly to thousands of people supporting the work of WFD. We have created a leaflet, which we would ask you to distribute to your networks, members, friends and colleagues. Anyone can join the WFD, and more information can be obtained from the WFD General Secretariat (contact details are at the last page of this newsletter).

Please spread out this information freely. We would like to see a great increase of members in your respective country!

If you are publishing a magazine or a website, please add IM campaign information to your news. Please note that this should not create any costs to the WFD, but instead be a gesture of goodwill and benevolence from our members.

UNITED NATIONS (UN) NEWS

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

It is wonderful news that the 41 countries have by now made their commitment to ratify the UN Convention. The countries that have ratified are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Croatia, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Gabon, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan and Uganda. There are already 136 signatories to the Convention (rights) and 78 signatories to the Optional Protocol (individual's right to file complaints). For more information about this convention, click on the website: www.un.org/disabilities

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

The WFD General Secretariat sent email to all members in the middle of September 2008 – Ordinary and Individual of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) CRPD Forum submission to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). WFD contributed especially to the part on sign languages.

If you would like the document about the Contribution to the OHCHR's thematic study to enhance awareness and understanding of the CRPD, focusing on legal measures key for the ratification and effective implementation of the Convention, do contact to the WFD General Secretariat.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

International Disability Alliance (IDA)

The IDA CRPD Forum has been set up by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) to continue the work of the International Disability Caucus. The IDA CRPD Forum upholds the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as the universal standard for the human rights of all persons with disabilities and insists that it should take precedence over previous instruments.

Recently IDA has updated information on the candidates for the CRPD Committee of Experts on their web site. The first election of the members of Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will take place in New York, USA, on 3 November 2008.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the body of 12 independent experts focusing on monitoring the work of State Parties.

The countries who have become party to the Convention (States parties) are obligated to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights of the Convention are implemented.

WFD President, Markku Jokinen might participate in the Conference of State parties to follow the process of the CRPD in November 2008.

Do visit their website for more information:

<http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/forum.html>

France

There is a website on Parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in English.

The website address is:

http://www.unapeda.asso.fr//article.php3?id_article=645

Germany

Before the rise of the "Third Reich", Deaf Jews were an active part of the Deaf community in Germany. Many of them were of course members of the various organizations of the Deaf, and some even took part in the formation of the German Reich Association of the Deaf in 1927. When the National Socialists established their reign of terror in 1933, the Nazi Welfare Office ordered the expulsion of Jewish members from the Association. Deaf citizens were required to report on Deaf Jews and Deaf Christians were forbidden to associate with Deaf Jews.

The German Deaf Association formally expressed their deep regret for the suffering of the many Deaf Jews and they have forgiven the failures of the Association. They hope that in this manner a process of reconciliation begins, which will eventually bring benefit to all of Deaf Germans.

Haiti

The Haitian Deaf community celebrated "Deaf World Day" on 27th of September 2008. Their country has been ravaged by hurricanes: Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike between the end of August and early September 2008.

The crisis meeting of the cabinet (government) reported over 570 deaths throughout the country, over 380 000 were affected and also included the number of Deaf people (disabilities). The new Deaf school was set for 8 September 2008 but has to reschedule to 6 October 2008.

From 1900-2004, Haiti was hit by 56 internationally recognized disasters, including 28 major floods, storms and 19 hurricanes and 7 periods of drought.

WFD hopes that in the future the association of the Deaf in Haiti would be able to affiliate within the WFD as an Ordinary Member.

Lebanon

Since 2003 the Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD) in Beirut has offered the only high school program for deaf students in Lebanon that is recognized by the Ministry of Education. The LCD is the only center that offers the Lebanese Baccalaureate to the deaf. The LCD was founded in 2001, based on a private run by Mr. Hussein Ismail and his wife Nadine. The right to education for the disabled became legalised in Lebanon in 2000. Mr. Ismail says he felt the need to give other deaf people the opportunities he had enjoyed that he is a doctorate in education - the chance to attend high school and university.

Mr. Ismail, who lost his hearing when he was just 18 months old, says he founded the center with USD \$15,000 that he received from organizations in the United States, Holland and Switzerland. A Dutch organization finally agreed to take over the fundraising campaign to buy a new building, and two years later, the LCD moved into freshly renovated facilities into other place, paid by the Japanese Embassy.

The LCD also has an integrated nursery, where deaf and children with normal hearing play and learn together.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

A new sign language dictionary website was set up a month ago: Wiksign. Wiksign is collaborative sign dictionary where people may create or complete pages describing signs (text, videos, images...). Do click on this website: <http://www.wiksign.org>

French Sign Language is available in the Wikipedia for you to learn or study, in which you can go to see: <http://lsf.wiksign.org/wiki/Wiksign:Accueil>

Also you can search on this website: www.ethnologue.com to search on the 121 different sign languages around the world. Do go to the search engine in this website to write Deaf sign languages and it will show all of the sign languages of the world.

There is a tour, catered to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Vietnam. Do visit their website for information: www.smiletoursvietnam.com and also do contact by email: deaftours@smiletoursvietnam.com

COMING EVENTS

2nd Convention of the Deaf in South America (National Federation of the Deaf of Ecuador)

From 26 October – 2 November the convention of the Deaf in South America will take place in Quito, Ecuador. For more information, do click on this site: <http://es.youtube.com/watch?v=1FqCNnBJnn0>

IV International Congress of the Deaf (Cuban National Association of the Deaf)

This Congress is organised for the fourth time in Cuba, which takes place at the capital of Cuba, Havana from 11 – 14 November 2008. For more information, do contact to the congress organiser by email: jpon@infomed.sld.cu or ansoc@infomed.sld.cu The information of the congress is only available in Spanish. The topics at the congress are to be discussed are medical, pedagogy, psychology, technology and sociology.

3rd International Conference on Rehabilitation and Disability (Prince Salman Center for Disability Research)

The conference's theme is Research and Disability, which will take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from 22 – 26 March 2009. For more information about this conference, do click on this website below: <http://www.pscdr.org.sa/en/news/Pages/ThirdInternationalConferenceonDisability.aspx>

7th Deaf History International Conference (Swedish Deaf History Society)

At the same time of this conference, in Sweden they will celebrate 200 years of Deaf education. The dates of the conference are from 4 – 8 August 2009 and the conference takes place in the capital of Sweden, Stockholm. Do click for more information on this conference for registration and Call for papers: www.schs.se/dhi2009

10th Asia Pacific Congress on Deafness (APCD 2009) (Otolological Center, WHO-HI-IFOS-ISA Collaborating Center for prevention of hearing impairment & Deafness, Dept. of ORL, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Bangkok)

The APCD 2009 will be held in connection with 10th Hearing International – HI Annual meeting and 2nd ASEAN Academy of Neuro-Oto-Audiology at Bangkok, Thailand from

4 – 7 August 2009. Information about this congress is available in the website:
www.apcd2009.org

21st Summer Deaflympics Games (Chinese Taipei Sports Association of the Deaf)
The Deaflympics Games will take place at Taipei, Taiwan from the 5 – 15 September 2009. More information about the Games is available in the website:
www.2009deaflympics.org

5th International Deaf Clownery Festival (Ukraine Society of the Deaf)
The festival will take place in Kiev, Ukraine from 23 – 25 September 2009. For more information, do contact the Ukraine Society of the Deaf by email: chepchina@bigmir.net

World Federation of the DeafBlind, (WFDB) 9th Helen Keller World Conference and WFDB 3rd General Assembly (The National Association of DeafBlind people Uganda)
The theme of the conference is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), changing the lives of persons with deafblindness. It will take place in the capital of Uganda, Kampala from 22 – 27 October 2009. Information on registration fees and abstracts are available in the website: www.wfdb.org

4th World Congress on Mental Health and Deafness (Deaf Services Queensland & Deaf Children Australia)
The theme for this Mental Health and Deafness congress is ‘A life to be lived’, focus on deaf children and adults’ well being. It will take place in Brisbane, Australia from 27 – 30 October 2009. For more information, please go to www.mhd2009.org

13th World Deaf Magicians Festival
This festival will take place in Cattolica, Italy from 23 – 30 May 2010. Do click on the website: www.2010wdmf.com. More information about this festival will be informed later.

21st International Congress on Education for the Deaf (ICED) - Partners in Education
The 21st ICED Congress will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada from 18 – 22 July 2010. More information about this congress, do check on their website:
www.iced2010.com

If you know about an upcoming conference of regional or international interest, be sure to send us information about it for our Calendar of Coming events in WFD NEWS or, in the WFD newsletter and also in the website.

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

DVD - Suggested International Signs for use at the World Federation of the Deaf General Assembly, Norwegian Association of the Deaf, Ål Experiential College and Conference Centre for Deaf People. It is produced by Døves Media.

This DVD is intended as a guide to signs commonly used at the quadrennial General Assembly of the WFD. The cost of the DVD is **30, 00 €**. It contains 11 sections of signs on the following topics:
WFD and United Nations
General Assembly

Board
Geographical Signs
Meeting Procedures
Meeting Communication
Projects and Fundraising
Finance
Numbers
Other Signs
WFD Youth Section

A Handbook on International Sign

This Handbook on International Sign, costs 25, 00 € is intended to be, above all, a tool for deaf people. It is a proposal that will contribute to ease the life of our collective group. It is also important to note that this book is a collective work which has been conceived, developed and produced by CNSE Foundation and FAXPG Foundation (with the support of the WFD) and in collaboration with FESORD CV Foundation.

It is available by ordering through this email: faxpg@hotmail.com

Signmark, (Nuppu Stenros, Otava Publishing Company, Finland 2008)

In this story of Signmark, the world's first deaf rap-artist, Marko Vuoriheimo shows us how to make the impossible become true: Signmark connects the world of the deaf and the hearing with a phenomenal energy. Information about this book is attached to this newsletter.

Hava against All Odds, (Eva Fielding-Jackson, United Kingdom)

This is an autobiography about Hava's life, who is the daughter of two profoundly Deaf Holocaust survivors. Her father miraculously survived seven different concentration camps. Growing up as Jewish people in post-War communist Hungary was not easy for her parents. After the 1956 Hungarian uprising, the family made their way to Israel, where a new culture and a new language added to Hava's difficulties. But, against all odds, she prevailed and through sheer strength of character and will power made a new life for herself. Her upbringing and the harrowing story of her parents' survival have made her deeply committed to Holocaust awareness teaching which she undertakes all over the world. This book is to be scheduled for publication in early 2009.

WFD MERCHANDISE

If any of you are interested in ordering items from WFD, such as **T-shirts (golf, woman and ordinary), WFD Pins, water bottles, watches, bracelets, pens and caps**, you can make an order through email, which is orders@wfdeaf.org

CONTACT INFORMATION OF WFD SECRETARIAT

Please do send all correspondence to:

WFD General Secretariat
PO Box 65
FIN- 00401 Helsinki
FINLAND
Fax: +358 9 5803 572
Email: info@wfdeaf.org

Also please check on WFD's website which is www.wfdeaf.org for more information, updates and contacts. (On WFD website, please do go to the Contacts section for specific direct contact on memberships and orders of WFD merchandise). If you would like to contact directly to WFD President, his email address is wfd@kl-deaf.fi.

If any of you is interested to contact to one of the WFD Ordinary Members' contact details (national associations of the Deaf), please do go to the WFD website to click on 'National Members'.

Please do feel free to submit us newsworthy articles for future editions. You can forward articles at anytime to us at info@wfdeaf.org, and we will do our best to include them in the next issue. Also, any feedback and comments on the newsletter would be most welcome!

For more information on what is happening within WFD, look at the WFD website: www.wfdeaf.org