



Legal Seat – Helsinki, Finland

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

An International Non-Governmental Organisation in official liaison with ECOSOC, UNESCO, ILO, WHO and the Council of Europe. WFD was established in Rome in 1951

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Members of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

Re: Upcoming review on Azerbaijan

Dear Committee Members,

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) would like to raise some issues for your information upon review on Azerbaijan. The WFD has human rights project that includes providing training for 12 Azerbaijani deaf leaders on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its monitoring mechanism. The aim of the training is to build deaf leaders' capacity to become involved in the Azerbaijani disability movement to submit a parallel report. This submission is based on WFD Human Rights Officer's (HRO) visit in Azerbaijan in June 2013 and February 2014 when she trained the deaf leaders at the Azerbaijan Public Union of the Deaf that is Ordinary Member of the WFD.

The WFD is concerned about the medical view on persons with disabilities maintained by the government of Azerbaijan. In the response to the list of issues, the government of Azerbaijan uses inappropriate terminology. Firstly, "language of gestures (pantomime)" is used instead of "sign language" that is not in accordance with the CRPD. Secondly, the deaf people are referred as "deaf and dumb" that is not acceptable word to use. The WFD views this phenomenon as the serious lack of awareness. Moreover, in the initial state report and response to the list of issues, the government of Azerbaijan has been focusing on the medical view on deaf people by mentioning hearing aids as the only method to enable deaf people's inclusion in the community. It is very worrying that deaf children's right to use sign language in education settings and professional sign language interpretation are issues that were not raised by the government of Azerbaijan. Moreover, the government of Azerbaijan would need to be questioned about the official status of Azerbaijani Sign Language because the official recognition has a significant impact in all areas of deaf people's lives.

Hopefully these information are useful for your work in revising Azerbaijan. Please do not hesitate contacting us if you have further questions.

Kind regards,

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