



RESOLUTION

of the 2nd International Conference "Linguistic Rights of the Deaf"

Moscow, Russian Federation, 20-22 May 2014

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We, the participants of the 2nd International Conference "Linguistic Rights of the Deaf" (Conference), organised by the All-Russian Public Organization of Persons with Disabilities "All-Russian Society of the Deaf" (VOG), with the support of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), the Russian Federation Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI), and in collaboration with Office of the Senior Adviser on Human Rights in the United Nations system in Russia, United Nations Information Centre in Moscow, Programme Office of the European Council in Russia,

being over 350 representatives of international and national organizations of deaf, public, academic and educational organisations, NGOs, experts in sign language studies, sign language interpreters and representatives of the governmental bodies of the Russian Federation;

believing that the aim of the Conference is achieving a deeper understanding of the role and significance of sign language for deaf people in our society and the necessity of its state support, the framing of recommendations connected with training and ongoing development of sign language interpreters, sign language studies and development (this aim can be achieved through sharing of the international experience of protection of the linguistic, social, cultural and educational rights of the deaf);

referring to the major international mechanisms:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- European Convention on Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- European Social Charter,

as well as referring to:

- Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (adopted by the resolution of the UN General Assembly, 48/96, 20 December 1993);
- Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights adopted by the participants of the World Conference on Linguistic Rights (6 June 1996, Barcelona, Spain).

considering that the aforesaid documents mention the rights of linguistic minorities as well as the role and significance of sign languages as independent, full linguistic systems, the necessity of their government support, protection and encouragement of linguistic rights of the deaf;

emphasising that all the human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal and interdependent and that all people with disabilities including the deaf should be provided with the opportunity of using them without any discrimination;

emphasising that deaf people consider themselves as a linguistic minority and sign language is their natural way of expressing themselves and an essential part of their life;

convinced that the approach based on human rights and integration of the deaf into society should be included in all legislative acts and agreements on international, national, regional and local levels;

acknowledging and supporting the policy of the World Federation of the Deaf on the right of deaf children to access quality education including in sign language;

welcoming the adoption of federal laws in Russia and in other countries which increase the status of sign languages and guarantee state support to their research and development as well as free access to interpretation services in sign language including in education;

having discussed the following Conference topics:

- “Sign Language in Education”
- “Linguistics of Sign Languages”
- “Issues of Sign Language Interpreting”

we are appealing to:

- the Member States of the United Nations to include in their policies, legislation and practice the principles stated in the international agreements listed above considering protection of rights of people with disabilities and their full participation in society, including deaf people;
- World Federation of the Deaf to present the materials of the Conference to the appropriate United Nations and the Council of Europe bodies, and delegates to the XVII World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf in July, 2015;

considering that each of the 147 countries which have ratified the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has a multitude of unsolved problems in the field of security and provision of linguistic rights of the deaf, we, the conference participants, appeal to the governments and executive authorities of those United Nations members to provide development and adoption of legislative acts to enhance sign language studies, training and ongoing development of sign language interpreters, sign language teachers, realisation of linguistic rights of the deaf through specially allocated state budgets that envisage

in the field of general education:

- to provide special education for deaf children in the early stages of development in the frame of early intervention programmes including access to sign language;
- to observe the rights of parents of deaf children to choose any forms of education including special schools for deaf children and to ensure that these educational institutions employ qualified educators with obligatory knowledge of sign language;
- to employ deaf educators to teach deaf children, and to ban discrimination against deaf educators;
- to provide the opportunity to include subjects “Sign Language” and “Deaf Studies” in curricula of state, municipal and other educational institutions for deaf children;
- to provide licensed pre-school and school educational video and multimedia materials with sign language interpreting and subtitles;
- to add to the qualifying standards which are to be followed by pedagogical and educational staff working with deaf children, the requirement to master sign language;

in vocational education:

- to organise training of teachers of sign language;
- to provide the rights of deaf citizens to choose and enter vocational and higher educational institutions with interpreting services for the full training period;
- to solve issues of working hours regulation and remuneration rules for sign language interpreters working in the system of vocational and higher education and participating in the educational process;

in research on sign language linguistics:

- to support organisations which are involved in linguistic, social and other research works into sign languages;
- to publish sign language dictionaries and teaching manuals as well as educational media packages on sign language studies, professional training of sign language interpreters and sign language teachers;

in providing services of sign language interpreting:

- to train sign language interpreters and interpreters for deaf-blind people at university and college level education
- to provide ongoing development for sign language interpreters and interpreters for sign language users who are deaf-blind people
- to develop and adopt legislative acts and work regulations for sign language interpreters’ payment, including interpreters for deaf-blind people and enhancement of their legal professional status

taking into account that

the Conference is being held in the Russian Federation, the Conference participants appeal to the Government of the Russian Federation, Russian Federation Federal Assembly, Public Chamber of the Russian Federation and Russian Federation academic community to support initiatives of the All-Russian Society of the Deaf in the study and promotion of the Russian Sign Language and its use in education; and for sign language teachers’ and sign language interpreters’ training;

considering the long-term experience of the All-Russian Society of the Deaf in protection of rights and interests of deaf people in the Russian Federation, its consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Conference participants recommend that the All-Russian Society of the Deaf continue activity in monitoring of the realisation of linguistic rights of the Deaf in the Russian Federation, and organise international conferences on the above mentioned topics on a regular basis.