



23 February 2015

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 Mongolia

Dear Committee Members,

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) would like to raise some issues for your information upon review on Mongolia. The WFD has human rights project that includes providing training for 12 Mongolian 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 Mongolian disability movement to submit a parallel report. This submission is based on WFD Human Rights Officer's (HRO) visits in Mongolia in September and November 2014 when she trained the deaf leaders at the Mongolian Association of the Deaf that is Ordinary Member of the WFD and the Mongolian National Federation of the Deaf.

The WFD and the WASLI are worried about the possibility for deaf leaders to represent their organisations. According to the [the joint statement of the WFD and the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters \(WASLI\)](#) and [the WASLI Statement on the Role of Sign Language Interpreters](#) deaf people should lead their own lives and be consulted in issues concerning sign language and deaf people. However, the Mongolian Association of Sign Language Interpreters is in a stronger position than the Mongolian Association of the Deaf. The interpreter association has been treated as experts in sign language issues (state report paragraphs 44(i), 69(j), 69(k) and 103) whereas the Mongolian Association of the Deaf was not in leadership positions in these activities. [The WFD Statement on Sign Language Work](#) stresses the importance of deaf people leading sign language work such as teaching sign language and making sign language dictionary. In Mongolia, these developments have been in hands of the interpreter association. The WFD the WASLI do not support the position of the sign language interpreter association being treated as one of organisations of persons with disabilities representing the deaf community.

Initiatives of the Mongolian government to standardize Mongolian Sign Language (state report paragraph 44(i)) do not respect linguistic diversity and linguistic human rights of deaf people. This action is in contrast with [the WFD Statement on Standardized Sign Language](#).

Access to justice is a problem for deaf people in Mongolia (paragraph 17 of the list of issues on Mongolia). Even though the government of Mongolia guarantees the right to use sign language interpretation in courts (paragraph 24 of the state report), no stakeholder has been addressed the responsibility of funding. There are deaf people who have been in prison having to pay sign language interpretation themselves. Once they ran out of money, they had no access to communication in sign language with prison staff and other stakeholders.

Sign language interpreter service is not funded by the government of Mongolia. Therefore e.g. deaf university students do not have access to the service. Deaf people who manage to complete university education in spite of the lack of interpreter service face barriers in the labour market. Regardless qualifications of deaf professionals they are not employed due to attitudinal barriers of the society that does not want to hire deaf people.

The WFD is concerned about the miserable condition of deaf women and children in Mongolia. Deaf women have not been educated on their human rights in sign language. Therefore they are frequently victims to violence including domestic violence. They do not know how to report and there is no way to communicate in sign language with police officials. Many deaf children do not have the opportunity to go to school because the

only deaf school (School number 29) is located in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. The deaf school uses oral approach and there is no education in sign language. There are a couple of experimental deaf classes adjourned to regular schools in the rural areas but these do not have sufficient funding. The idea of inclusive education has not realised in Mongolia particularly from deaf view.

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

Kind regards,

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