



# *Peace Movement Aotearoa*

PO Box 9314, Wellington 6141, Aotearoa New Zealand. Tel + 64 (0)4 382 8129  
email [pma@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pma@xtra.co.nz) web site [www.converge.org.nz/pma](http://www.converge.org.nz/pma)

---

## **Rights of persons with disabilities: UN Committee releases Concluding Observations on New Zealand**

5 October 2014

The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which monitors state party compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, examined the NZ government's performance under the Convention for the first time during its 12th session (15 September to 3 October 2014), and the Committee's Concluding Observations were released yesterday - the document (CRPD/C/NZL/CO/1) is attached to this message, and is available online at <http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/CRPD-C-NZL-CO-1.doc>

This update has a brief overview of the Concluding Observations, and links to where you can find more information.

The Concluding Observations follow the standard reporting layout of UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies: a 3 paragraph introduction; followed by 1 paragraph outlining positive aspects of the government's performance in relation to the Convention; 62 paragraphs highlighting principal areas of concern and recommendations for improvement; 4 paragraphs relating to the government's obligations to collect data and statistics in relation to persons with disabilities; 2 paragraphs on New Zealand's international obligations with regard to persons with disabilities; and 4 paragraphs on follow up and dissemination of the Concluding Observations, including the deadline for New Zealand's next Periodic Report to the Committee, 25 October 2018.

The paragraphs highlighting principal areas of concern and recommendations for improvement cover a wide range of human rights specific to persons with disabilities, and are grouped into 14 sections (each referenced to the relevant Articles of the Convention):

- **General principles and obligations** - including the recommendation that New Zealand ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention as soon as is practicable;
- **Equality and non-discrimination** - which includes recommendations on payments for family carers to provide disability support services to adult disabled family members, and a definition of "reasonable accommodation" in conformity with the definition in the Convention;

- **Women with disabilities** - which includes recommendations on access to government services for women, as well as for children, with disabilities;
- **Accessibility** - including access to housing and employment, supported decision-making, access to compensation via the ACC, access to justice including specific training for the judiciary on the Convention and on the rights of persons with disabilities who come before New Zealand courts and tribunals, concerns about provisions of the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992, and the rights of disabled persons deprived of their liberty;
- **Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse** - including programs and initiatives to protect persons with disabilities, especially those living in institutions, from violence and harm, and on domestic violence;
- **Protecting the integrity of the person** - including sterilisation without an individual's consent;
- **Living independently and being included in the community** - including the lack of choice and range of supports to ensure that persons with disabilities freely and by themselves can choose to live included in the community;
- **Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information** - including sign language interpreters, and access to information in te reo;
- **Respect for home and the family** - including concerns about the provisions of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 and the Adoption Act 1955;
- **Education** - including access to education at all levels, and bullying in schools;
- **Health** - including full access to all health care services, and strengthened measures to enhance the health outcomes of Maori and Pacific persons with disabilities;
- **Work and employment** - including the necessity for steps be taken to increase the employment levels of persons with disabilities, and concerns around provisions of the Minimum Wage Act 1983;
- **Adequate standard of living** - including the lower socio-economic status of persons with disabilities, and the over-representation of children with disabilities in statistics regarding child poverty; and
- **Participation in political and public life** - including accessible electronic voting to enable persons with disabilities to cast their votes in a truly secret manner, and ratification of the World Intellectual Property Organization Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.

## Links to more information

**Documentation:** all documentation relating to the Committee's consideration of New Zealand's initial Periodic Report - including the government's report, NGO reports, the Committee's list of issues and the government's response, as well as the list of the government delegation that took part in the interactive dialogues with the Committee - is available at

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=935&Lang=en](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=935&Lang=en) (scroll down the page until you get to the New Zealand heading, then click on the relevant section)

**UNOG summaries:** of the interactive dialogues between Committee members and the government delegation is available at

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear\\_en\)/261541346D44C999C1257D55004E7579?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/261541346D44C999C1257D55004E7579?OpenDocument) The UNOG report at the conclusion of the 12th session - which outlines the work of the Committee during the session - is available at [http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear\\_en\)/9574296B85461276C1257D660053C8A5?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/9574296B85461276C1257D660053C8A5?OpenDocument)

**Webcast archive:** the archive of webcasts related to the 12th session - including side events, Committee briefings and the interactive dialogues with the state parties to the Convention that were examined during the session - is available at

<http://www.treatybodywebcast.org/category/webcast-archives/crpd/> The interactive dialogues with New Zealand government representatives are at <http://www.treatybodywebcast.org/category/webcast-archives/crpd/page/3/> All CRPD webcasts are available as video, audio, and in international sign language.

**Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:** information about the Committee and the Convention is available at

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/CRPDIndex.aspx>

**Facebook link:** this update is available on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/PeaceMovementAotearoa/notes>