**COMMONWEALTH DISABLED PEOPLE’S FORUM**

**PROTECT AND DEFEND DISABLED PEOPLE RIGHTS**

**Recent cutbacks in international aid from USAID, following the election of President Trump, led to widespread cutbacks to vital disability programmes in 134 countries. Overseas aid cutbacks are also happening in Germany, France, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium and among other doner countries.** Trump’s approach is based on breaking with more than 70 years of a **rules based and equity approach and is inimical to a disability rights approach. It is against the spirit and the letter of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. CDPF calls upon delegates at COSP18 to make clear that they continue to support the UNCRPD and its Implementation.**

**POOL AND COLLABORATE RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THE UNCRPD**

**The recent financial realignments may have their political backers, but countries that support disabled people’s rights and implementing the Convention need to find ways of pooling aid, assistance and should raise their tax base.**

**CHALLENGE THE IDEOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE ATTACK ON DIVERSITY, EQUALITY, INCLIUSION & ACCESS. REMEMBER THE HISTORY OF OUR OPPRESSION**

**However, it is the ideological attacks on Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Access that are the greater danger to disabled people’s[[1]](#footnote-1) rights and must be strongly opposed. Think of the past:**

* **Where the false science of eugenics in many countries was used to justify forced sterilisation, segregation in special schools and institutions**
* **The mass murder of the ‘useless eaters’ disabled people under the Nazi T4 programme**
* **Cruel and largely useless medical interventions were used to make disabled people with physical and mental impairments ‘normal’**
* **Where large numbers of disabled children were labelled as ineducable. Using different approaches we have shown they can make progress**
* **Widespread bullying and harassment based on untrue disablist stereotypes and stigma that dominated our entertainment and media**
* **The idea that Equality is based on treating everyone the same and the rejection of ideas and benefits that are designed to make up for the extra costs of disability. Equality is giving everyone what they need to thrive**
* **Survival of the fittest, competition rather than collaboration**
* **The myth that we live on a planet of infinite resources. They are limited and need planning, rather than the damage to the majority of people unregulated capitalism can produce**
* **The Human Rights and Social Model of Disability, where barriers of attitude, organisation and environment are the main factor in disabling people with impairments, are being replaced by a resurgence of medical individual model of disability where Access and inequality are seen as the responsibility of the disabled individual.**

The Commonwealth promotes democracy and equality across its member countries with over 2.7 billion citizens. The [Commonwealth Charter](https://www.cpahq.org/media/emgay1ok/the-commonwealth-charter.pdf), in these times of growing autocracy, insecurity and inequality, though far from perfect, provides an alternative way of maintaining parliamentary democracy. independent judiciary and a free media. Over 430 million are persons with disabilities, mainly young people. The self-organisation of Commonwealth Disabled People’s Organisations and their collaboration, capacity building with each other and advocacy play a crucial role in implementing the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals. CDPF has more than 100 member DPOs/OPDs across the 56 countries of the Commonwealth including 50 DPO national umbrella organisations. The CDPF has found that although 55 of our member countries have ratified the UNCRPD, implementation of the rights, protections and freedom from discrimination for disabled people is not happening or is very patchy.

**DIAP** Last year the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum (CDPF), put forward a draft Commonwealth Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The Heads of Government in Samoa, October 2024, while not adopting it, agreed to set up a High-Level Persons with Disabilities and their representative organisations Advisory Group to an Expert Working Group of representatives of State Parties to achieve an agreed draft. This process is now underway. The agreed draft it is hoped will go to Commonwealth Law Ministers’ Meeting in Fiji, then to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua 2026 for agreement. If adopted the DIAP will kick start a wide range of measures and renewed interest in the rights of persons with disabilities, including sharing expertise and experience across countries and implementation of key areas of the UNCRPD. Come to our **Side Meeting on this Thursday 12th at 4.45 Rm.11.** <https://commonwealthdpf.org/disability-inclusion-action-plan/>

The reversal of the Global consensus on man made climate change and the need to control carbon emissions is being challenged by Trump and other leaders who see accumulation of personal wealth as more important than the millions of people being put at risk of growing heat waves, wild fires, hurricanes, cyclones, floods, mud slides, drought, air pollution and rising sea levels. In these events, Disabled people are up to 10x more at risk. To fulfil Article 11 disability disaster preparation must be practiced to avert preventable casualties. **Come to our joint side meeting on building resilience with the Commonwealth Secretariat at 10am in Room 4 Tuesday 10th June.**

**Disabled girls and women face the extra barriers of Sexism and Harassment**. Two thirds of CDPF Executive are women and form our **Women’s Forum**. They have carried out online research, surveys and meetings to put forward strong policy positions at UN Committee on Status of Women and Commonwealth Women Affairs Ministers’ Meeting. The Women’s Movement in general does not include disabled women. <https://commonwealthdpf.org/equality-areas/> and states ignore the additional barriers women and girls face. We need State Parties to provide concrete support to disabled women who are 4x more at risk than non-disabled women from Gender Based Violence.

**In the current Geo-Political Situation doing nothing is not enough. Disability Rights only exist because the Disability Movement fought for them. Support Us in Defending our Rights!If you are a DPO/OPD in a Commonwealth country join us** [**https://commonwealthdpf.org/members/join-cdpf**](https://commonwealthdpf.org/members/join-cdpf)

**Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum** [**https://commonwealthdpf.org**](https://commonwealthdpf.org)

1. CDPF use the Social Model of Disability. Here as people with impairments we are largely disabled by barriers beyond us. We use identity first language. It makes no sense to say we are the people with the barriers. We accept the UNCRPD uses people first language, but prefer the more accurate disabled people, regardless of our type of impairment, united in the struggle against disablism. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)