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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Government report on work to further the rights of disabled people released today**

The Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA) Chief Executive Rachel Noble notes the release today of a Government report outlining the work being done to further the interests of disabled people in the next three years

The report responds to the conclusions of the United Nations examining committee on New Zealand’s progress to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Disability Convention). New Zealand was examined by the committee in Geneva last year.

“The process to implement the Disability Convention in New Zealand is the closest the Government has come to being directly accountable to disabled people,” says Rachel Noble.

This is because the Disability Convention stipulates Governments must work in partnership with disabled people on issues that affect them. This is done in New Zealand through disabled people’s organisations (DPOs), such as DPA.

Rachel Noble says, “An active work plan for the next three years has begun to cover the pieces of work outlined in the Government report, however more activity will need to be included. Disabled people will watch closely and processes are in place to hold the Government to account.

“It’s good to see Government taking this work seriously and publically talking about the value of working with disabled people. Of course they do need to recognise that organisations, like DPA, need resources to build the right infrastructure and mechanisms to do this effectively.”

The Disability Convention outlines disabled people’s rights to full participation in New Zealand life and outlines the changes that are needed across areas such as education, access, employment, etc.

New Zealand signed the international Disability Convention in 2008. Every four years New Zealand will be examined by the United Nations to monitor our progress putting in place the required changes. Before the examination the Government presents a progress report to the examining committee and disabled people (through their DPOs) do the same. Both parties are represented at the examination in Geneva. One hundred days later the examining committee provide their conclusions and recommendations and our Government responds with a plan of the work they are going to do before the next examination. (this is the report released today).

The relationship between the United Nations, the New Zealand Government and disabled people continues between examinations. For example, last month DPA sent a report to the United Nations in response to a series of questions from them about the social protection of disabled people in New Zealand.

Rachel Noble says, “This report is powerful. It shows clearly how disabled people are living right now in New Zealand and illustrates how important it is for them to claim their rights as outlined in the disability Convention so they can become equal citizens in this country.”

**Find these reports:**

The Government report**:** [***Government Response to the UN Committee on the rights of Persons with Disabilities, Concluding Observations on New Zealand***](http://www.odi.govt.nz/what-we-do/un-convention/monitoring-implementation/2014-review.html#June2015GovernmentresponsetotheConcludingObservations2)

The DPA report is called: ***Report to the UN on Social Protection in NZ*** [***Report to the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations, Geneva***](http://www.dpa.org.nz/page/71/AllSubmissions.html)

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For comment please text Rachel. She is available for interview (she needs to arrange for a sign language interpreter).