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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**New Zealand Disabled Person’s Organisations report sent to the United Nations**

A report written by Disabled Person’s Organisations (DPOs) representing the voice of disabled New Zealanders has been released and sent to the United Nations today.

This report (link at the end of the release) will inform the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as it examines New Zealand’s progress in implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

New Zealand’s first examination by this Committee is happening on 15and 16September in Geneva, Switzerland.

The report looks at the human rights of disabled people in New Zealand. It shows these are not well reflected in New Zealand policy and practice. As a result disabled people experience discrimination in areas such as education, the law, employment and health services.

The report from the DPOs will sit alongside the Government’s report on its implementation of the Disability Convention. The Government’s report lists services, funding and programmes that support disabled people but omits information about how these services are working for disabled people.

The United Nations Committee have specifically asked to hear from disabled people. The DPO report will ensure the Committee have a more balanced picture of life in New Zealand for disabled people.

The 2013 Disability Survey found that 24% of New Zealanders have a disability, and that disability increases with age.

The DPO report was written by a collaboration of seven Disabled Person’s Organisations. All these organisations are national organisations, governed by a majority of disabled people and have a mandate to represent their members, most of whom are disabled.

The report also highlights legal inequalities, including the Health and Disability Amendment Act 2013 that removed the right to complain about government policy relating to family carers of adult disabled people.

The report lists 52 recommendations for the New Zealand Government to work on improving legislation, policy and practice to ensure disabled New Zealanders can access their human rights.

The seven DPOs include representation of Deaf people, blind and vision impaired people, people with experience of mental illness, deafblind people, Māori blind and vision impaired people and people with learning/intellectual disabilities.

The seven DPOs are:

* Disabled Persons Assembly NZ Inc.
* Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand
* Balance New Zealand
* Deaf Aotearoa NZ Inc.
* Deafblind NZ Inc.
* Ngāti Kāpo o Aotearoa Inc.
* People First NZ Inc., Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi

Read the report here

<http://www.dpa.org.nz/resources/sector-resources/the-united-nations-convention-on-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/dpo-shadow-report>

**ENDS**

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**Media Backgrounder**

**DPA Chief Executive Rachel Noble**



Rachel took up her position at DPA in 2012 after five years as Chief Executive of Deaf Aotearoa. Highlights of her time there included establishing and promoting NZ Sign Language Week and setting up the 111 text service for the Deaf.

In her career Rachel says she has been increasingly drawn to environments that work to facilitate equality for all. She says that interest was initially stirred by working in Deaf education. Trying to understand the nature of the dynamics present led to further study to understand what needs to change to facilitate equality for all.

**About the Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA)**

Our core function is to help engage the New Zealand disability community, listen to the views of disabled people and articulate these as we work with decision-makers.

Along with others, we work with Government, local authorities and through the media to make sure the views and requirements of disabled people are thought about in areas such as: education, economic development, housing, access to the political process (being able to vote) and access to information and buildings, etc.

Along with others we are helping to progressively implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which has been ratified by New Zealand (read more about the Convention at the end of this factsheet).

**How DPA works**

DPA has a system of membership and a local and national structure.

DPA members are scattered throughout the country. Most are affiliated to regional groups called regional assemblies, and include people with disabilities and others such as family, Disabled People's Organisations (DPO’s) and disability service providers.

A small group of members work as Kaituitui (weavers of knowledge) across the country They form the link between regional DPA members and the national governance and management arms of DPA. Kaituitui ensure there is a meaningful flow of communication, so policies can be formulated and initiatives launched.

Kaituitui also liaise with local authorities to represent the interests and aspirations of local DPA members.

**To find out more about DPA go to our website** [**www.dpa.org.nz**](http://www.dpa.org.nz)