



# WASLI Newsletter

WASLI is committed to the advancement of sign language interpreting world wide

## WASLI 2007 - UPDATE

### “DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD WIDE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING PROFESSION”

Date: 13-15 July 2007

Venue: Hotel Husa Puerta de Segovia, Spain

Registration details are being finalised now.

For information on the CALL FOR PAPERS, please visit the WASLI website [www.wasli.org](http://www.wasli.org) and click on WASLI 2007

The WASLI GENERAL MEMBERSHIP meeting is due to take place on 13 July 2007 and a formal announcement is to follow.

## INFORMATION

Segovia – Web: <http://www.segoviamint.org/english/segovia.htm>

Conference – Web: [www.wasli.org](http://www.wasli.org) (WASLI2007)

Email: [wasliconference@filse.org](mailto:wasliconference@filse.org)

WASLI – Web: [www.wasli.org](http://www.wasli.org) Email: [secretary@wasli.org](mailto:secretary@wasli.org)

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### MEXICO – NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS OF MEXICO (ANILS)

At present, ANILS has 36 members "in training" in 9 states of the Republic and 16 in the Federal District. Unfortunately few interpreters are linguistically competent in sign language. In the whole of Mexico there are only 5 skilled and trained interpreters they collaborate with ANILS.

ANILS is not as big and strong as the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf (RID) When I go to the RID annual meetings I dream about the future and I hope that in Mexico soon will be like that.

ANILS is working and is reorganising because it has been through difficult situations in the past and now we have and good relations with:

- Mexican Federation of the Deaf
- Mexican Sports Federation for the Deaf
- 16 Deaf Associations of different states.
- National Front to Defend the Linguistic and Cultural Rights of the Deaf
- 10 public and private institutions that occasionally offer interpretation services (IMESEX, San Ildefonso School, Local Deaf Associations).

I am currently teaching in a Diploma course about interpretation professional services, but we need support and help to train future interpreters in Mexico.

In Mexico we have the Disability General Law. The Deaf Community do not like to be known as 'disabled', but the government thought that was the way to give more help to the Deaf. In that Law sign language is recognised as a national language and the training of sign language interpreters is encouraged. The National Institute of Native Languages is the organisation in charge of creating links and participating in interpreter training. Many things are happening in Mexico but I prefer if you ask me what you want and I answer. (Daniel Maya ORTEGA)

## CANADA

### EQUAL RIGHTS FOR THE DEAF

A Federal Court justice ruled this month that the federal government must provide sign language services for the Deaf in all government services

<http://lfpres.ca/newsstand/Opinion/Editorials/2006/08/27/1778913.html>

## TAIWAN

### DEAFLYMPICS HELPERS GEAR UP

Over 1,000 volunteers for the 2009 Taipei Deaflympics vowed at a ceremony to join forces with the government

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2006/09/11/2003327109>

## EUROPE

### EUROPEAN FORUM OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS CONFERENCE 2006

The EFSLI Annual General Meeting and Conference took place in Prague, Czech Republic 15-17 September 2006.

Marco Nardi (Italy) stepped down as EFSLI President with over 10 years service to the Forum. Maya de Wit (Netherlands) is the new President and the other Board members are: Vice President Zane Hema (England), Secretary Kit Horlacher (Denmark), Nigel Cleaver (England), Karin Arquisch (Switzerland), Linda Thomson (Scotland).

A full report on this event is to follow.

## NEW ZEALAND – TRILINGUAL INTERPRETERS

Dear Interpreter colleagues,

I am thinking of editing a book of articles that focus on experiences/perspectives/issues relating to trilingual interpreters and indigenous or ethnic minority Deaf people with whom they work. Melanie Metzger, series editor of the GUP Interpreting books, has encouraged me to develop a book proposal on this topic.

In New Zealand, we have a few trilingual interpreters who work between New Zealand Sign Language, Maori (indigenous language) and English. They are playing an important role in the empowerment of Maori Deaf by facilitating a connection with their Maori heritage, within Maori-speaking domains. I am not a Maori interpreter myself, but I have worked closely with them and want to support wider discussion of the specialised skills and cultural/contextual challenges that might be shared among trilingual and indigenous language interpreters.

So at this stage, I need to get a sense of whether there are potential contributors out there who may have ideas or research studies to submit to such a collection of articles.

If you have anything to offer in this area, or you know of other people who might be interested, I would love to hear from you, or your contacts. Please forward this on to other relevant people you know of.

Thank you.

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## **NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM NEW HISTORICAL UNITED TREATY TO PROTECT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE**

The UN Convention adopted on 25th August 2006, the eighth international human rights Treaty in history, will prohibit discrimination against 650 million disabled people in the world.

Five years of intensive negotiations at UN level have been necessary for the adoption of the international text, the first human rights text adopted in the past 16 years.

The new Convention is based on existing human rights Treaties and their application to people with disabilities. Its aim is to guarantee an effective protection of disabled people and ensure that they can benefit from the most basic human rights. The text prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in all areas of life and addresses access to the full range of human rights: civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including through positive actions.

For the European Disability Forum (EDF), the representative organisation of 50 million disabled people in Europe, the adoption of the Convention is a landmark step forward that will significantly reinforce the protection of millions disabled people against discrimination in the world. "This Convention will be vital in our long fight against daily discrimination of disabled people and sends a strong message to the world: disability is first and foremost, a Human rights issue", declared Yannis VARDAKASTANIS, EDF President.

EDF has actively been involved in the development of this process, since a proposal was put forward in 2001 by Mexico. In particular, the European Disability Forum was involved in drafting the first working text of the Convention and has regularly been part of the EU Member States delegations.

Moreover, it has played a major role in facilitating the work of the International Disability Caucus, an alliance of organisations of people with disabilities and other allies active in the negotiations. It must be noticed that, for the first time in the UN history, the role of NGOs has been vital in elaborating the new Treaty leading to its very positive outcome.

The new Convention pays particular attention to the situation of women with disabilities, as well as to the rights of children through both specific provisions, and a mainstreaming approach. It also includes a strong Treaty monitoring body, and an optional protocol on individual (or group) complaints and state enquiries, which will be open for signature and ratification by States concurrently.

EDF welcomes the fact that, for the first time, the European Communities will be party to a human rights Treaty, and therefore, will be scrutinised as the signatory States, as regards the implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities.

The European Disability Forum calls for a rapid adoption of the Convention by the UN General Assembly at its next session, opening in September. EDF also invites the EU member States, as well as candidate countries for accession, and the European Communities to agree on a rapid signature and ratification process. Finally, the European Disability Forum is confident that the European Union, which has played a proactive role to guarantee a high protection level of disabled people in the Convention, will continue to work towards an effective implementation of the Convention and will share a comprehensive approach in the future development of European non-discrimination legislation.

The text of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (non-edited version) is now available at:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahc8docs/ahc8draftconv.doc>

The adopted draft text for the Convention was also a historical moment for Deaf people and sign languages over the world as it will be the first human rights treaty of the 21 st century, and a first binding treaty specifically protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in all areas of life.

Above all, the Convention will acknowledge recognition and promotion of sign language, deaf culture and linguistic and cultural identity, quality education in sign language, professional sign language interpreting and acceptance and facilitation the use of sign language. The World Federation of the Deaf is very satisfied with the accomplishments concerning the protection of rights of Deaf people in the draft Convention.

However, some items in this draft need to be considered. WFD was very disappointed to notice that at the last minute a footnote was added to article 21 on legal capacity in Arabic, Chinese and Russian languages. This footnote may prevent also Deaf people to enjoy legal capacity in many parts of the world. WFD supports the initiative made by many countries and International Disability Caucus to reconsider the footnote before final Convention is adopted by the General Assembly.

WFD would like to thank to all the Deaf representatives who attended the Ad Hoc Committee meeting in August. We were pleased to see 14 Deaf representatives from 10 countries at this last meeting. Members of the WFD's delegation were WFD President Mr. Markku JOKINEN, WFD President Emerita Dr Liisa KAUPPINEN and Board Members Colin ALLEN and Martha Lucia OSORNO POSADA. Also Board Member Valery RUKHLEDEV attended the meeting as a member of Russian state delegation. Special thanks go to Dr. Liisa KAUPPINEN who has been following this process from the very beginning. Her support and endless work to cover Deaf people's rights in this Convention has been significant. Thank you Liisa for all your work!

More information on the Convention, please do go to check on [www.wfdeaf.org](http://www.wfdeaf.org)

## NEXT EDITION: More news and information from WASLI

If you have any news or information that you would like to include then please send your contribution to the WASLI Secretary at the email address below.

**The WASLI Executive Board & Co-optees (2005)**  
[secretary@wasli.org](mailto:secretary@wasli.org)

**Officers:** President: Liz Scott Gibson (Scotland) - Vice President - Philemon Akach (South Africa) - Secretary - Zane Hema (England) - Treasurer - Liz Scully (Canada)

**Regional Reps:** North America - Deb Russell (Canada) - Asia - Emiko Ichikawa (Japan) - Transcaucasia & Central Asia - Anna Komarova (Russia) - Europe - Marco Nardi (Italy) - Australasia/Oceania - Jemina Napier - South America - to be advised - Africa - to be advised

**Co-optees:** Dr D Burch (USA) Bill Moody (USA) Nigel Cleaver (England) Arun Rao (India) Francois Deysel (South Africa) Ito Tadashi (Japan) Knud Sondergaard (WFD) Carol-lee Aquiline (Former Working Group member)