

IFHOH Press Release  
International Day of Persons with Disabilities  
3 December 2014

One-third of the world's one billion people living with disabilities worldwide<sup>1</sup> have a hearing loss and a majority of them can benefit from devices such as hearing aids, assistive devices and cochlear implants, and from captioning and support, to achieve educationally, in employment and socially.

It is recognised by the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Persons and its member organisations in 33 countries that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities applies to all who have hearing loss globally as they seek to gain the required rehabilitation support to ensure their independence and social integration.

This is because the “purpose of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity”<sup>2</sup>

The CRPD's Article 9 on Accessibility enshrines access on an equal basis to others in a range of areas, including information and communications. To achieve access to information and communication it is essential that the hard of hearing sector has access to hearing aids, assistive devices and cochlear implants; captioning and support to achieve educationally, in employment and socially. Because the current production of hearing aids meets less than 10% of global need, it is evident that many people who are hard of hearing are unable to access what they need to effectively communicate.

IFHOH urges all governments to investigate what is happening in their country in regards to access for people who are hard of hearing.

IFHOH is an international, non-profit umbrella organization which provides a platform for co-operation and information exchange among its members and interested parties. IFHOH, and the European Federation of Hard of People (EFHOH) work to promote greater understanding of hearing loss issues and to improve access for hard of hearing people. IFHOH is registered at Vereinsregister Amtsgericht Hamburg, Germany (Nr. 69 VR 10 527) and has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

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<sup>1</sup> International Disability Alliance 2013

<sup>2</sup> UN: CRPD <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150>