

December 3 is the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons (09/12/03)

December 3, 2009

FREDERICTON - In 1992, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed that December 3 would be observed every year as the International Day of Disabled Persons. This date was initially proclaimed to commemorate the anniversary of the General Assembly's adoption of the World Program of Action Concerning Persons with Disabilities. The goal is to promote understanding about disability issues and to increase awareness of the benefits for society that are possible through the inclusion of persons with disabilities in every aspect of our political, social, economic, and cultural life.

The Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons in New Brunswick is pleased to support the recognition of this special day for citizens with disabilities around the world. The slogan chosen this year by the United Nations is "Making the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Inclusive: Empowerment of persons with disabilities and their communities around the world"

The Chairperson of the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons is Michelle Horncastle who stated today that "This year's slogan sends a powerful message to communities around the world, that it is imperative that people with disabilities are fully included within in all aspects of our society".

The United Nations and the global community continue to work for the mainstreaming of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development. Although many commitments have been made to include disability and persons with disabilities in development, the gap between policy and practice continues.

Ensuring that persons with disabilities are integrated into all development activities is essential in order to achieve internationally agreed development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs can only be achieved if persons with disabilities and their family members are included. This in turn will ensure that people with disabilities and their family members benefit from international development initiatives. Efforts to achieve the MDGs and implement the Convention are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

To mark the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons, the Premier's Council released their new *Disability Action Plan Strategy Status Report #2* during an event in Fredericton. The report contains a number of responses to date on the Recommendations from the *Disability Action Plan Strategy Report- The Path to Self-Sufficiency and Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick*.

Christyne Allain who is the executive director of the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons said that "The release of the second status report on the recommendations of the Disability Action Plan Strategy ensures that the provincial government departments are held accountable to implement the requested changes in hopes of closing the gaps to full citizenship and self-sufficiency for all persons with disabilities."

The full report is available online at www.gnb.ca/council. Details on the upcoming Disability Awareness Week 2010 were also unveiled during the same event.

09/12/03

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