

From: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Macedonia in Geneva

Geneva, July 28, 2011

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Via fax n°: 022 917 90 08

To: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Ref.: Information of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia
for Implementation of the Human Rights Council Resolution 16/15

Verbal Note enclosed.

OHCHR REGISTRY

28 JUL. 2011

Recipients :...*S. Walker*...
 ...*G. Harney*...



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS AT GENEVA**

N° 16-01-448/2

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and has the honor to transmit herewith the Information by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on Implementation of the Human Rights Council Resolution 16/15 concerning the Rights of persons with disabilities.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights its highest consideration.



Geneva, 27 July 2011

Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights
Geneva

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Information by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in regard to HRC resolution 16/15

Human Rights Council resolution 16/15: "Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities" is applied in the Republic of Macedonia by implementing the guidelines from the stated Resolution in the legislation of the Republic of Macedonia.

In part II of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, under "Fundamental Human Rights and Civil Liberties", Article 9 specifies that "Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia are equal in their liberties and rights, regardless of sex, race, colour of skin, national and social origin, political and religious beliefs, property and social status".

Furthermore, in part II "Fundamental Human Rights and Civil Liberties", Article 54, paragraph 3, specifies that "The freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen can be restricted only in cases determined by the Constitution. The freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen can be restricted during states of war or emergency, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. The restriction of freedoms and rights cannot discriminate on grounds of sex, race, colour of skin, language, religion, national or social origin, property or social status. The restriction of freedoms and rights cannot be applied to the right to life, the interdiction of torture, inhuman and humiliating conduct and punishment, the legal determination of punishable offences and sentences, as well as to the freedom of personal conviction, conscience, thought and religious confession".

In relation to the enclosed 6 questions for the preparation of the study, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia would like to inform of the following:

1. Every citizen when reaching 18 years of age acquires the right to vote. The right to vote is equal, universal and direct, and is exercised at free elections by secret ballot. Persons deprived of the right to practice their profession by a court verdict do not have the right to vote.

2. The Government of the Republic of Macedonia creates opportunities for active participation of all citizens in the political and public life, which is a prerequisite of democracy. In addition to the Law to prevent discrimination and protection from discrimination, which protects persons with disabilities, the Republic of Macedonia has adopted a national policy and program for persons with disabilities for 2011-2015, consisting of activities deriving from the guidelines of the Convention. The aim of the National Plan 2011-2015 is advancement of the situation of persons with disabilities to the position of equal citizens who enjoy all rights and follows the rule "Nothing for us, nothing without us".

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the political life is a sign that political equality exists for all citizens. Active participation is visible in achieving electoral rights to participate in political discussions, initiating and shaping of civic initiatives and to facilitate participation in the work of the representative bodies of the Republic of Macedonia. With the successful

establishment of the state partnership and NGOs, persons with disabilities have become more visible as people who fight for their rights and requirements for equal opportunities for their participation in decision-making on important matters of public policy at the local, national, regional and international level, by contributing through public campaigns, training and educational programs which are implemented at national and local level. The specific objective is achievement of full participation of persons with disabilities in all forms of public and political life by taking the following steps: raising awareness throughout society, including at the family level, fostering respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, combating stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life and promoting awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities. To this end, the Republic of Macedonia has adopted and implemented initiatives that continue to maintain effective public awareness campaigns designed to nurture receptiveness to the rights of persons with disabilities, promotion of positive perceptions and greater social awareness towards persons with disabilities and recognition of the skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities, and of their contributions to the workplace and the labor market. Furthermore, inclusion of awareness and education of all children from an early age, toward an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as encouraging all organs of the media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the present Convention and the promotion of awareness-training programs regarding persons with disabilities contribute to the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.

3. The following mechanisms exist: Strategic Plan prepared by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and Program for Work, through which policies are developed and implemented in the area of protection of the social system and social protection for protection of families, vulnerable groups, children and persons with high social risk, including persons with disabilities. In addition, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted a Strategy for deinstitutionalization within the area of social protection (2008-2018). In this regard, in cooperation with the NGO sector, during the process of deinstitutionalization, 10 housing units have been opened where 40 persons with disabilities have been housed. Also, in the Republic of Macedonia there are 23 daily centers for children with moderate or heavy disabilities throughout the country where there are 350 children under special program depending on their needs. Also, there are 4 centers for adults financed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy under supervision of the national organizations for disabled persons. Furthermore, with the adoption of the Law on Organizations for Disabled Persons, the status, area, financing and properties of the organization are regulated. Until now, there are 7 non governmental organizations that have the status of national organizations for persons with disabilities and 136 with the status of organizations for disabled persons with the aim to promote participation in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with involvement in public and political life.

4. In regard to monitoring the Convention (signed by Macedonia in March 2007), the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy established a Working Group to prepare and analyze the legal aspects and implications from ratifying and implementing the Convention on the national level, which consists of representatives from the National Council of organizations for persons with disabilities of the Republic of Macedonia and Polio Plus, as the largest organization for persons with disabilities in the Republic of Macedonia.

5. There is no official data or statistics collected in relation to the participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life. However, the Institute for Social Activities is preparing a project for data collection and establishing an informative system in the area of social services for all with the aim of more efficient following and assessment of the work carried out by social services.

6. In 2010, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the National strategy for making equal the rights of persons with disabilities 2010-2018, by which all measures and activities have been outlined for all competent ministries to be implemented in the given period and which will contribute to a more comprehensive protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, to support and make more accessible all the programs related to promoting rights of persons with disabilities, including political rights.