

# We are ABLE!

Enhancing Possibilities, Celebrating Abilities



Singapore Night Sky By Annie Teo of Touch Community Services



Understanding the  
**United Nations Convention** on the  
**Rights of Persons with Disabilities**



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## Foreword

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Singapore signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) on 30 November 2012 and 18 July 2013 respectively. The signing of the Convention signals our continued commitment to do more for persons with disabilities in Singapore.

The signing of the UNCRPD was made possible with Singapore's Enabling Masterplan (EM). The EM, developed by the people, public and private sector has paved the way for Singapore to sign the Convention. The first EM covered the period 2007 – 2011. The second and current EM, released in 2012 covers the period 2012 – 2016. The EM sets out how we will progressively realise the vision of an inclusive society for persons with disabilities. Over the years, we have accomplished many positive changes to the different aspects of the lives of persons with disabilities – Early Intervention, Education, Employment, Adult Care, Accessibility and other areas. Moving forward, we still have much work that remains to be done in realising our collective goals progressively.

The “We Are **ABLE!**” campaign is part of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) publicity project to promote the vision of an inclusive society for persons with disabilities in the community. The aim is to increase awareness of the abilities and contributions of these remarkable **ABLE** individuals in the community. In this Guide, you will be able to learn more about the Convention and view the creative artwork by talented persons with disabilities.

This campaign is made possible through our partnership with Champions who work with persons with disabilities. NCSS believes that everyone can play a part in creating a society which includes persons with disabilities. It is not the disability we focus on but rather the myriad of abilities. NCSS will continue to collaborate with the social service organisations, persons with disabilities, caregivers, community partners and the government, to **enable** and ensure that every person with disability lives a dignified life. Together we are **ABLE** to make a difference!

### **Ms Tina Hung**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Group Director, Service Planning and Development Group  
National Council of Social Service

# Introduction

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On 30 November 2012, Singapore officially signed an international Agreement called the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The Agreement was then ratified on 18 July 2013 and came into effect for Singapore on 18 August 2013. This shows Singapore's commitment to achieve the vision of a society which includes and improves the lives of persons with disabilities.

The UNCRPD was adopted by the United Nations in 2006 and came into force in 2008.

This Agreement looks at what can be done to make sure that persons with disabilities can have access to rights as everybody else. It also identifies areas where the interests of persons with disabilities can be protected.

This easy read version of the UNCRPD aims to help everyone understand and know its articles.

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## Article 1: Purpose

This Agreement looks at what can be done to make sure that persons with disabilities have rights as everybody else. Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, sensory, intellectual or mental disabilities who are unable to participate equally in society.

### Did you know?

The Enabling Masterplan 2012 - 2016 is our five-year national disability roadmap to progressively realise the vision of a society which includes persons with disabilities. There was an earlier five-year Enabling Masterplan 2007- 2011 before this current Masterplan.



Heeren Karthikeyan Vijayan,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

### The vision of the Enabling Masterplan 2012 - 2016 is:

- To create an inclusive society together.
- That children with special needs and persons with disabilities will receive support in early intervention, education and at work in order to maximise their potential.
- That persons with disabilities will be appreciated, respected and will live with dignity in the community.
- That families will be supported so that they are able to take care of their family members with disabilities.
- That public places and transport are easily available to persons with disabilities.

For more information on the Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016, you can visit the Ministry of Family and Social Development (MSF) website (<http://app.msf.gov.sg/Policies/PersonswithDisabilities/EnablingMasterplan20122016.aspx>) or the NCSS website ([http://www.ncss.gov.sg/social\\_service/enabling\\_masterplan.asp](http://www.ncss.gov.sg/social_service/enabling_masterplan.asp)).

## Article 2:

# What the words mean

- **“Communication”** - the ways which help persons with disabilities communicate and understand information. For example with computers, Braille (which uses raised dots for letters and numbers), communication through touch, large print and other multimedia (such as websites or audio).
- **“Discrimination”** - being treated unfairly or left out because of a person’s disability.
- **“Language”** - the way people speak to each other, including sign language.
- **“Reasonable accommodation”** - necessary and suitable changes that do not cause unnecessary inconvenience, to help persons with disabilities live life like everybody else.
- **“Universal design”** - the design of things around us, environments, programmes and services that can be used by everyone, as far as possible, without the need for changes or specialised design.

## Article 3:

# The basic ideas

The basic ideas are:

- a) Persons with disabilities are free to make their own choices. Their independence should be respected.
- b) Persons with disabilities are to be treated fairly.
- c) Persons with disabilities have rights to take part and be included in the community as everybody else.
- d) Persons with disabilities are to be respected and accepted for who they are.
- e) Persons with disabilities, regardless of gender, should have opportunities as everybody else.
- f) Persons with disabilities should have access, for example, to transportation, public facilities and information.
- g) Children with disabilities should be respected for who they are and their abilities.



Mohamad Nasir,  
Red Cross Home for the Disabled





Say Kim Han,  
Touch Community Services

## Article 4: General obligations

All countries should make sure that persons with disabilities are treated fairly. They agree to do this by:

- a) Making new rules and laws to give persons with disabilities their rights and changing bad ones.
- b) Making sure the rights of persons with disabilities to be treated equally, are included in the law.
- c) Considering disability issues in all policies.
- d) Not doing things that go against this Agreement.
- e) Doing as much as they can to make sure no one discriminates against persons with disabilities.
- f) Designing things for everyone to use or that can be easily changed.
- g) Using new technology to help persons with disabilities.

- h) Giving accessible information to persons with disabilities about the things that will help them.
- i) Making sure that people know about and understand this Agreement.
- j) Involving persons with disabilities when new laws and policies are being made.
- k) Making sure that all countries progressively do as much as they can afford to make sure persons with disabilities are not discriminated against.



Heeren Karthikeyan Vijayan,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

## Article 5:

# Equality and non-discrimination

Countries that have signed this Agreement agree that the laws of a country apply to everyone who lives there and that discrimination against persons with disabilities will not be allowed.

### Did you know?

The Constitution of Singapore is the supreme law of Singapore and that Article 12 of the Constitution talks about all persons being equal before the law.

For information on the Constitution of Singapore, you can visit the Attorney-General's Chambers' website (<http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/aol/home.w3p>).



Ong Lian Chai,  
Red Cross Home for the Disabled



Juni Syafiq Bte Jumat,  
Spastic Children's Association of Singapore

## Article 6:

# Women with disabilities

Countries that have signed the Agreement recognise that women and girls with disabilities face many different types of discrimination. Countries are to make sure that women and girls with disabilities are treated equally as others.

### Did you know?

Singapore acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and that CEDAW also includes taking care of women with disabilities<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Treaty Collection, accessed on 14 February 2013 - [http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en)

## Article 7:

# Children with disabilities

Countries that have signed the Agreement agree to take every possible action to make sure that children with disabilities have rights and are treated in the same way as other children.

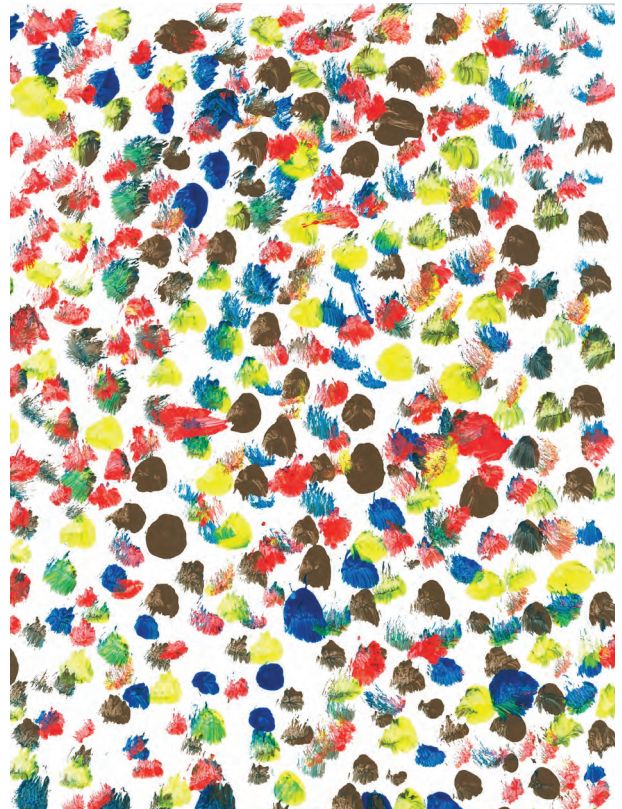
Countries also agree that children with disabilities can express their views and be heard in all things that can affect their lives. Support will be given to children to help make this happen and the best interests of the child should be considered first.

### Did you know?

Singapore acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1995<sup>2</sup> and that the UNCRC also includes taking care of children with disabilities.



Ryan Yap,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association



Mohd Nasir Bin Md Akhlar,  
Red Cross Home for the Disabled

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Treaty Collection, accessed on 14 February 2013 - [http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg\\_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en)

## Article 8:

# Giving people information about disability

Countries that have signed the Agreement agree that society should know more about persons with disabilities so that they will learn to respect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. This can be done by:

- a) Having public awareness campaigns to change the way people think about persons with disabilities and to include persons with disabilities in society.
- b) Teaching all children to respect persons with disabilities.
- c) Getting the media to portray persons with disabilities accurately.
- d) Highlighting the abilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.

## Did you know?

NCSS is working with Champions from the various voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) to raise awareness of the abilities of persons with disabilities and the role that everyone can play in building a society which includes persons with disabilities.

The Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016<sup>3</sup> has recommended to enhance public education initiatives to promote an inclusive society, where persons with disabilities are able to participate in work, family and community life to the best of their abilities.



Low Xiang Xiang Michelle,  
Spastic Children's Association of Singapore

<sup>3</sup> Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016, accessed on 8 March 2013, <http://app.msf.gov.sg/Policies/DisabilitiesPeoplewithDisabilities/EnablingMasterplan20122016.aspx>

## Article 9:

# Accessibility

Countries agree to make it possible for persons with disabilities to live independently and participate in their communities. This can be done by:

- a) Making sure that places open to the public, including buildings, roads, transportation, schools and hospitals, are easy to get to and can be used by persons with disabilities.
- b) Providing appropriate forms of assistance and support such as easy-to-read signage, signage in Braille and having sign language interpreters in public places.
- c) Having guidelines to make access to public places and services better.
- d) Providing and enabling persons with disabilities to have access to accessibility training, new technology and information.



Tan See Mui,  
Singapore Association for the Deaf

## Did you know?

By 2014, persons with disabilities and the elderly will be given more time to cross the road at 500 pedestrian crossings<sup>4</sup>.

All buses in Singapore will be wheelchair accessible by 2020<sup>5</sup>.

## Article 10:

# Right to life

Everyone has the right to life including persons with disabilities. Countries should ensure that persons with disabilities have the same chances as everybody else to live and enjoy their lives.



Syed Muhammad Mirza,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

4 Land Transport Authority News Release dated 2 Nov 2011, accessed on 14 February 2013 - <http://app.lta.gov.sg/apps/news/page.aspx?c=2&id=2b6udphm30y4o8qv137h1308m98tlv98xuxesj0z137lj1bnuv>

5 Land Transport Authority media reply dated 1 Nov 2012, accessed on 14 February 2013 - <http://app.lta.gov.sg/apps/news/page.aspx?c=3&id=20fe737e-0fd4-485a-b4d9-cabd4f9d739b>

## Article 11:

# Emergencies

Persons with disabilities should be properly protected and kept safe during dangerous situations such as a war, an emergency or a natural disaster.

### Did you know?

With effect from 25 July 2013, all new non-residential buildings will have to install visual alarm in the form of a strobe or flashing light device at designated locations. This will help to alert the persons with hearing impairment during emergencies.

Non-residential buildings are also required to have two designated holding points for the safety of persons with disabilities during emergencies. Distress buttons or voice communication devices are to be made available to allow persons with disabilities to call for assistance during a fire emergency. For more information on the Fire Safety Requirement for persons with disabilities, please visit [www.scdf.gov.sg](http://www.scdf.gov.sg)



Angeline Chen,  
Singapore Association for the Deaf

## Article 12:

# Being treated equally by the law

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Persons with disabilities are to be respected as people like everybody else.

Persons with disabilities should be able to make their own decisions about important things as everybody else.

Persons with disabilities should have the proper support they need when making decisions.

If a person with disability needs someone else to speak on his/her behalf, there should be rules to make sure that it is properly done.

Persons with disabilities have equal rights to own or be given property, control their own money, borrow money and not have their homes or money taken away from them.

## Did you know?

The Mental Capacity Act in Singapore guides people on how to appoint trusted people to help them make decisions. The Act also explains the duties of an appointed guardian. For more information on the Mental Capacity Act, you can visit the Office of the Public Guardian for more information ([www.publicguardian.gov.sg](http://www.publicguardian.gov.sg)).

## Article 13:

# Getting justice

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Persons with disabilities should be able to go to court, take other people to court or take part in what happens in court as everybody else. Persons with disabilities should get support to make sure that they are able to do so.

Countries should provide special training for courts, police and prison staff.



Jason Chan,  
Singapore Cheshire Home

## Article 14:

# Being free and safe

Persons with disabilities should be free and safe, the same as everybody else.

Persons with disabilities should not be locked up just because they have disabilities but only if they break a law. If persons with disabilities are locked up, they should be treated with respect and according to the law.

### Did you know?

Article 9 of the Singapore Constitution<sup>6</sup> states that “No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty save in accordance with law.”



Lim Zi Qiang,  
Red Cross Home for the Disabled



Ethan Wong,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

## Article 15:

# Not being tortured or treated cruelly

Persons with disabilities must not be tortured or humiliated. They must not be experimented upon unless they freely agree to it. Countries must do everything possible to ensure that any form of torture or cruel treatment does not happen.

<sup>6</sup> The Singapore Constitution - Retrieved from: [statutes.agc.gov.sg](http://statutes.agc.gov.sg), accessed on 16 February 2013.



## Article 16:

# Not being made used of or abused

Countries must make laws and rules to make sure persons with disabilities are protected within and outside of the home from violence, being used or abused. This is done by:

- a) Preventing violence and abuse and making sure that there is proper support, information and training on how to identify and report abuse.
- b) Ensuring that the services which support persons with disabilities are properly checked to make sure that abuse does not happen.
- c) Ensuring that persons with disabilities who have been abused are given the help and support that they need to keep them safe and to help them recover from abuse.
- d) Having laws to protect those who have been taken advantage of or who are victims of violence and abuse.



Tay Bee Lian,  
Handicaps Welfare Association

## Did you know?

Article 10 of the Singapore Constitution<sup>7</sup> states that:

- No person shall be held in slavery.
- All forms of forced labour are prohibited but Parliament may by law provide for compulsory service for national purposes.
- Work incidental to the serving of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court of law shall not be taken to be forced labour within the meaning of this Article.

The Women's Charter, Children and Young Persons Act and Penal Code protect individuals, including persons with disabilities against being taken advantage of, abuse and violence. Cases of abuse or suspected abuse can be reported by the public to the MSF and the Police.

To report suspected cases of child abuse, call 1800-777 0000 or inform the police. For more information, you can also refer to the MSF's website (<http://app.msf.gov.sg/Policies/StrongandStableFamilies/SupportingFamilies/FamilyViolence/ChildAbuse.aspx>).

<sup>7</sup> The Singapore Constitution - Retrieved from: [statutes.agc.gov.sg](http://statutes.agc.gov.sg), accessed on 16 February 2013.

## Article 17:

# Treating persons with disabilities with respect

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Persons with disabilities should be respected and treated in the same way as others.

## Article 18:

# Moving around

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Persons with disabilities have the right to decide where they live and to move about the same as everybody else. Persons with disabilities have the right to a legally registered name, a nationality and the right to obtain documentation of their citizenship and identification. Children with disabilities have the right to know and be cared for by their parents as far as possible. People cannot be stopped from entering or leaving a country because of their disabilities.

## Did you know?

Article 13 of the Singapore Constitution<sup>8</sup> states that:

- No citizen of Singapore shall be banished or excluded from Singapore.
- Subject to any law relating to the security of Singapore or any part thereof, public order, public health or the punishment of offenders, every citizen of Singapore has the right to move freely throughout Singapore and to reside in any part thereof.



Goh Quan Yao,  
Red Cross Home for the Disabled

<sup>8</sup> The Singapore Constitution - Retrieved from: [statutes.agc.gov.sg](http://statutes.agc.gov.sg), accessed on 16 February 2013.

## Article 19:

# Independent living and being a part of the community

Countries should make sure persons with disabilities have freedom of choice, live independently and are a part of their communities. Persons with disabilities can choose:

- Where they live, the same as everybody else.
- Who they live with, the same as everybody else.
- Not to live in a particular place, like a hostel if they do not want to.
- From a range of different support services, including personal assistance.
- From the same range of services that other people can choose from and get good service.

## Did you know?

The Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016<sup>9</sup> has recommendations to widen the range of care options, enhance accessibility and improve the quality and delivery of services in the adult care sector.

To widen the range of residential care options, NCSS and MSF have worked with the Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS) to introduce a Community Group Home project for intellectually disabled clients<sup>10</sup>.



Tharuna d/o Sundrammurthy,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

<sup>9</sup> Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016, accessed on 8 March 2013, <http://app.msf.gov.sg/Policies/DisabilitiesPeoplewithDisabilities/EnablingMasterplan20122016.aspx>

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Social and Family Development Press Release dated 20 September 2011, accessed on 8 March 2013: [http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media\\_releases/agencies/mcys/press\\_release/P-20110920-1.html?](http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media_releases/agencies/mcys/press_release/P-20110920-1.html?)

## Article 20:

# Getting about

Persons with disabilities can move about independently at an affordable cost. Persons with disabilities should have access to mobility skills training, devices and technologies to help them to move around. Training on mobility skills must be provided to staff who support persons with disabilities. Companies that make assistive devices must consider the different needs of persons with disabilities.



Tan Hui Min,  
Touch Community Services

## Did you know?

The Assistive Technology Fund<sup>11</sup> provides financial assistance to persons with disabilities to buy assistive technology devices that help them in school or open employment. From June 2012, the Assistive Technology Fund provides means-tested subsidies of up to 90% of the cost of the device or up to \$20,000, in a person's lifetime, whichever is lower.

For enquiries on the Assistive Technology Fund, you may contact SG Enable at 1800-8585 885 or [schemes@sgenable.sg](mailto:schemes@sgenable.sg)

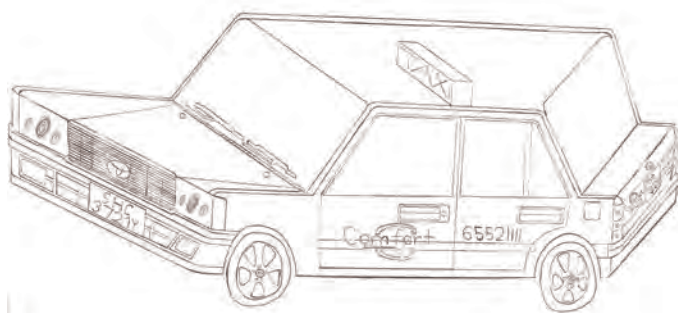
<sup>11</sup> [http://www.cel.sg/Schemes\\_\\_Assistive-Technology-Fund.aspx](http://www.cel.sg/Schemes__Assistive-Technology-Fund.aspx), accessed on 18 February 2013.

## Article 21:

# Saying what you want and access to information

Persons with disabilities should have the opportunity to express their opinions, to find out, receive and share information. This is done by:

- Providing public information to persons with disabilities in a timely manner and at no extra cost.
- Facilitating and supporting the use of Braille, sign language and other forms of communication (where needed).
- Encouraging others such as the private companies and the mass media to provide information and services that can be accessed by persons with disabilities.



Wong Qiyong,  
Rainbow Centre

## Did you know?

Live signing for persons with hearing impairment was introduced during the 2012 National Day Rally speech. This enabled them to access the speech live together with other Singaporeans<sup>12</sup>.

The government has adopted the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG<sup>13</sup>) as a best practice. This is to make government electronic services available to all, including people with disabilities.



Huang Guang Zheng,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

<sup>12</sup> The Channel NewsAsia (Online), ND Rally features the first-ever live signing for the deaf community, dated 26 August 2012, <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1222247/1/html>, accessed on 8 March 2013.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.egov.gov.sg/egov-programmes/programmes-by-citizens/web-content-accessibility-guidelines>, accessed on 18 February 13.

## Article 22:

# Respect for privacy

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The privacy of persons with disabilities should be respected and safeguarded. Countries should make sure that personal information about persons with disabilities is kept private like everybody else.

## Article 23:

# Respect for home and family

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Persons with disabilities should have equal rights to marriage, family and personal relationships according to their free will. Persons with disabilities have a right to decide responsibly how many children they want to have and when to have them. They cannot be sterilised against their own will.

A child should not be separated from his/her parents against his/her will because of a disability. For children with disabilities, countries should provide services to support them and their families. Where required, countries should also provide alternative care arrangements for children whose families are unable to care for them.



Narisha Kaur Chahal,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

## Article 24: Education

Persons with disabilities have rights to an inclusive education and lifelong learning. This is done by:

- a) Making sure that every child receives support where required so that they can meet their fullest potential.
- b) Making sure that persons with disabilities are not denied education because of their disability.
- c) Making sure that persons with disabilities are able to get quality and free education as everybody else.
- d) Making it possible to learn Braille, sign language and other forms of communication (where needed) and having peer support and mentoring.
- e) Teaching the use of sign language and seeing it as a language of the deaf community.
- f) Ensuring that teachers are employed and trained with the right skills to support persons with disabilities.
- g) Providing opportunities to persons with disabilities to access tertiary education, lifelong learning and vocational training.

## Did you know?

The Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016<sup>14</sup> has recommended improvements to the curriculum and governance of special education schools.

Pre-vocational and vocational education in special education schools have been enhanced. Students with mild intellectual disabilities are able to obtain industry-recognised or nationally certified skills to enhance their employability<sup>15</sup>.



Cheng Chiang Yong,  
Touch Community Services

<sup>14</sup> Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016, accessed on 8 March 2013, <http://app.msf.gov.sg/Policies/DisabilitiesPeoplewithDisabilities/EnablingMasterplan20122016.aspx>

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Social and Family Development Press Release dated 20 September 2011, accessed on 8 March 2013: [http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media\\_releases/agencies/mcys/press\\_release/P-20110920-1.html?AuthKey=30576876-c327-ea4c-8c56-5f9fee331bee](http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media_releases/agencies/mcys/press_release/P-20110920-1.html?AuthKey=30576876-c327-ea4c-8c56-5f9fee331bee)

## Article 25:

# Health

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Persons with disabilities have the right to enjoy the same range, quality and standard of affordable healthcare as provided to everyone else. This is done by:

- a) Making sure that they can access general health services.
- b) Making sure that they can access health services, including early identification and intervention, due to their disability. They should also receive services to minimise and prevent further disabilities.
- c) Making sure that health services are near to where people live.
- d) Making sure that they are not discriminated against in health and life insurance.
- e) Making sure that healthcare professionals deliver the same quality of healthcare services as provided to others and according to ethical standards.
- f) Making sure that persons with disabilities are not denied healthcare because of their disability.

## Did you know?

From 1 March 2013, MediShield coverage will be extended to all Singaporean newborns with congenital and neonatal conditions to provide them with early insurance protection from birth<sup>16</sup>.

For enquires, you can contact the Ministry of Health at 1800-2254122.

For more information on healthcare schemes, you can visit the Ministry of Health's website ([www.moh.gov.sg](http://www.moh.gov.sg)).



Esther Lim,  
Touch Community Services

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<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Health Press Release, dated 22 January 2013, accessed on 18 February 2013, [www.moh.gov.sg/content/moh\\_web/home/pressRoom/pressRoomItemRelease/2013/moh\\_pumps\\_additional10millionoverfiveyearstohelpneedychildrenwith.html](http://www.moh.gov.sg/content/moh_web/home/pressRoom/pressRoomItemRelease/2013/moh_pumps_additional10millionoverfiveyearstohelpneedychildrenwith.html)



## Article 26:

# Habilitation and rehabilitation

Persons with disabilities should lead independent and healthy lives. Countries should provide support in health, work, education and social services to help make that happen. This is done by:

- a) Providing services and programmes that will cater to their individual needs and strengths.
- b) Making sure that persons with disabilities will have access to these services and programmes.
- c) Providing training for staff who provide services for persons with disabilities.
- d) Promoting the use of different equipment and technology designed for persons with disabilities.

## Did you know?

The Allied Health Professions Act was established in 2011 to protect public interest through regulating the allied health professions in Singapore<sup>17</sup>.



<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Health, accessed on 27 February 2013, <http://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg/content/hprof/ahpc/en.html>

## Article 27:

# Work and employment

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Persons with disabilities have the right to work. Countries can help create work opportunities for persons with disabilities by:

- a) Having laws that promote fair employment practices, which include equal job rights and opportunities for career development and advancement, rules, fair pay and avenues to report grievance.
- b) Making sure that persons with disabilities can go for work programmes, training and apprenticeships.
- c) Helping them find, keep or get better jobs.
- d) Helping them set up their own businesses.
- e) Employing persons with disabilities in the public sector.
- f) Helping companies in the private sector to employ them.
- g) Making sure that they have suitable places to work.
- h) Ensuring that they have a right to join a union as others.

## Did you know?

The Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016<sup>18</sup> recommended a continuum of training and employment options to cater to the needs of persons with disabilities.

The Open Door Fund (ODF) that was set up by MSF in 2007 and administered by the Singapore National Employers Federation, encourages employers to create job opportunities for persons with disabilities by supporting companies to redesign jobs, modify workplaces and offer internships. In 2009, the ODF was enhanced to include apprenticeship training scheme for persons with disabilities and enhanced job support from employers<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Enabling Masterplan 2012 – 2016, accessed on 8 March 2013, <http://app.msf.gov.sg/Policies/DisabilitiesPeoplewithDisabilities/EnablingMasterplan20122016.aspx>

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Social and Family Development Press Release dated 20 September 2011, accessed on 8 March 2013: [http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media\\_releases/agencies/mcys/press\\_release/P-20110920-1.html?AuthKey=30576876-c327-ea4c-8c56-5f9fee331bee](http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media_releases/agencies/mcys/press_release/P-20110920-1.html?AuthKey=30576876-c327-ea4c-8c56-5f9fee331bee)

## Article 28:

# Standards of living

Countries must make sure that persons with disabilities have an adequate standard of living, which includes food, clothing, housing and clean water. There must be continuous improvement of standard of living for persons with disabilities. This can be done by:

- a) Ensuring that persons with disabilities living in poverty have access to public and financial assistance.
- b) Ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to social protection and poverty reduction programmes.
- c) Making sure that public housing and retirement benefits are made available to persons with disabilities like everybody else.

## Did you know?

Set up and jointly supported by MSF and NCSS, the Special Needs Trust Company (SNTC) is the only non-profit trust company in Singapore set up to provide trust services for the benefit of persons with disabilities. For more information on trust services, you can visit SNTC's website ([www.sntc.org.sg](http://www.sntc.org.sg)).

MSF, in partnership with the Central Provident Fund (CPF) Board, developed the Special Needs Saving Scheme allows parents to set aside a portion of their CPF savings for the long term care of their children with disabilities. For more information on the scheme, you can visit the SG Enable's website ([http://www.sgenable.sg/Schemes\\_\\_Special-Needs-Savings-Scheme.aspx](http://www.sgenable.sg/Schemes__Special-Needs-Savings-Scheme.aspx)).



## Article 29:

# Participation in political and public life

Persons with disabilities can take part in political and public life. This can be done by:

- a) Making sure that voting is easy to do and understand.
- b) Making sure that voting is secret.
- c) Allowing support to help persons with disabilities vote in the way they want, when needed.
- d) Making sure that persons with disabilities can be involved in non-government organisations and political parties, and to form and join organisations to represent persons with disabilities.

## Did you know?

The blind community was able to vote independently and with privacy for the first time during the 2011 Presidential Elections. The Election Department produced special stencils that enabled blind voters to mark the ballot papers on their own<sup>20</sup>.



Tham Meng Fai,  
Red Cross Home for the Disabled

<sup>20</sup> The Straits Times (online), Not being blind to different voting needs, dated 19 August 2011, <http://blogs.straitstimes.com/2011/08/19/not-being-blind-to-different-voting-needs/>, accessed on 8 March 2013.

## Article 30:

# Sports and leisure

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Persons with disabilities have the right to participate in and enjoy the arts, sports, games, films and leisure activities. This can be done by:

- a) Making sure that books, television, films and theatres, and places for cultural performances and services are accessible.
- b) Providing opportunities for persons with disabilities to develop and use their artistic and creative abilities.
- c) Making sure that laws do not discriminate against persons with disabilities in gaining access to cultural materials.
- d) Making sure that their language cultures (for example, sign language and deaf culture) are being respected.
- e) Making sure persons with disabilities take part in recreational, leisure and sports activities.

## Article 31:

# Information

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Countries should collect information and data to develop better programmes and services for persons with disabilities. Information should be kept private and confidential.

## Article 32:

# Countries working together

---

Countries should work together to meet the purposes of this Agreement.

Countries should:

- a) Make sure that international cooperation includes persons with disabilities.
- b) Make sure that countries share information, research, best practices and training so that more persons with disabilities can benefit.



Mary Kaw, Jason Chan and Ng Siew Lan,  
Singapore Cheshire Home

## Articles 33 to 50:

# Rules on international cooperation, monitoring and implementation of the Convention

There are 50 articles in this Agreement. Articles 33 to 50 relate to how countries should work together to address the needs of persons

### Article 33:

## Making this Agreement happen

Countries should have a section within the government looking into making this Agreement happen.



Nicholas Eaw,  
Singapore Association for the Deaf

### Article 34:

## Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities

---

A Committee will be formed to support the rights of persons with disabilities. This will be made up of 12 experts at first and then 18 people later on.



Tay Jun-Yi,  
Autism Resource Centre (Singapore)

### Article 35:

## Reports from countries involved

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Each country will write a report about their work for this Agreement and send it to the Committee within two years after they agree to join the Agreement.



Tay Bee Lian,  
Handicaps Welfare Association

### Article 36:

## What happens to the reports

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The Committee will look at the reports and give countries ideas and advice about what to do. They can also ask for more information.



Narisha Kaur Chalal,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

### Article 37:

## The Committee and countries working together

---

Each country will work together with the Committee and provide the Committee members with any information that they need.

### Article 38:

## How the Committee will work with other organisations

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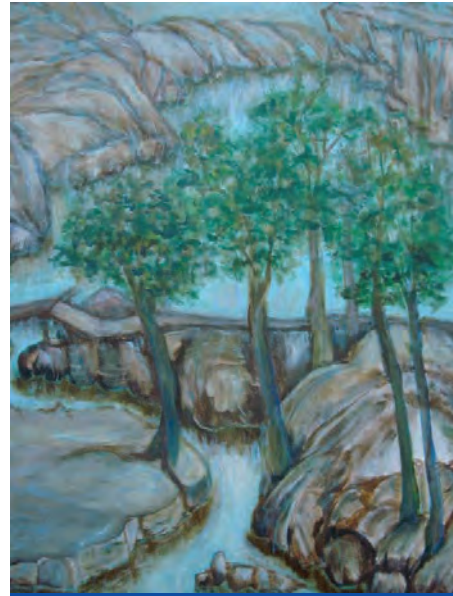
It is important that all countries and organisations collaborate to make this Agreement happen.

### Article 39:

## The Committee report

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The Committee will write a report every two years for the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It will include ideas from the different countries about what should be done.



Tay Bee Lian,  
Handicaps Welfare Association



Alena Chua,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association



## Article 40:

# Meetings for the countries involved

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Countries involved will meet often to discuss about the work of this Agreement.

## Article 41:

# Keeping hold of all the reports and information

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The Secretary General of the United Nations will hold all the information and reports for this work.

## Article 42:

# Signing the Agreement

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Countries will be able to sign this Agreement from 30 March 2007 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.



Eileen Tay,  
Singapore Cheshire Home



Tay Bee Lian,  
Handicaps Welfare Association

## Article 43:

# Consent and approval

The Agreement starts in countries that have signed it only when they properly agree to it later on.



Siti Raudhah Bte Jamaludin,  
Spastic Children's Association of Singapore

## Article 44:

# Groups of countries

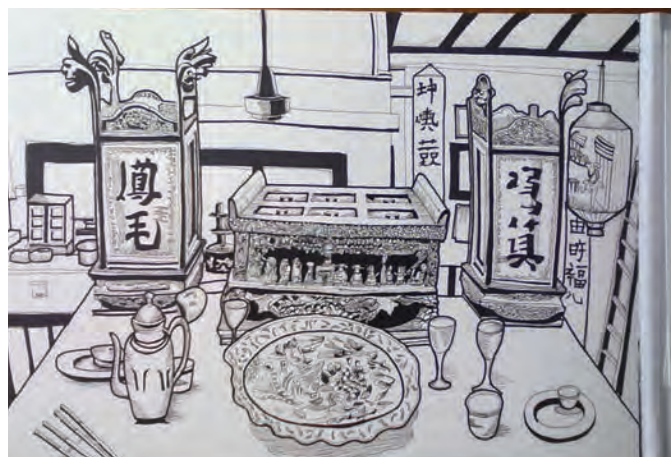
Some countries are joined together in organisations, like the European Union. These organisations can also join the Agreement and have a say when countries meet to talk about the Agreement.



See Wei Jie Cowen,  
Rainbow Centre



Narisha Kaur Chahal,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association



Isaac Liang,  
Singapore Association for the Deaf

### Article 45:

## When will the Agreement start

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The Agreement will start 30 days after 20 countries have approved it.

### Article 46:

## Keeping to the Agreement

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Countries can express their concerns if there are parts of the Agreement that they do not agree to, but it has to be in line with the purpose of the Agreement.

## Article 47:

# Amendments and changes to the Agreement

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Any country can ask for changes to the Agreement. They can do so by writing to the Secretary General who will notify the other countries involved. The countries will decide if they need a meeting to talk about the idea and if it should be accepted.



Cheng Hak Yang,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association



Andy Wong,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

## Article 48:

# If a country wants to get out of the Agreement

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A country can get out of this Agreement by writing to the Secretary General. They will stop being part of the Agreement one year after the letter is received.

**Article 49:**  
**Accessible  
information**

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This Agreement will be available in easy to understand formats.



Ho Wei Jun,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association



Quek Yan En,  
Asian Women's Welfare Association

**Article 50:**  
**This Agreement in  
other languages**

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The Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts of the Agreement will be equally recognised.

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## Everyone is a Champion!

Pledge your action today  
to create an inclusive Singapore  
for persons with disabilities at  
[www.WeAreAble.sg](http://www.WeAreAble.sg)



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