

NEWS RELEASE

MindFreedom International

for immediate release



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contact: 541-345-9106

United Nations Treaty on Disability and Human Rights Now in Effect Globally.

Psychiatric Survivors Play Important Role in Creating the Legally Binding Treaty.

MindFreedom International (MFI) joins with the international disability rights community in celebrating the entry into force of the "United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities." The UN Convention -- a type of binding international treaty -- enters into force today, 3 May 2008, after 20 countries ratified it.

Celia Brown led the MFI UN team of psychiatric survivors inside the United Nations. "It's been great to be in the United Nations with survivors of psychiatric abuse and many international disability groups from around the world," said Celia. "We're all fighting together for human rights, self-determination and freedom."

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the first human rights treaty of the 21st century. It's also the first that protects the rights & dignity of persons with disabilities.

The treaty obligates participating governments to change laws and practices that are discriminatory. "Governments who are signators will no longer be able to decide that a person is incompetent on the basis of disability," said Myra Kovary, MFI UN Delegate. Myra will also play the harp at the United Nations celebration of the treaty.

MFI's team of UN delegates worked for years with dozens of other groups, including the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP) in meetings in the United Nations on the treaty.

(more)

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United Independent Human Rights Activism in Mental Health

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Some of the highlights of the new UN Convention:

The freedom to make one's own choices; non-discrimination; full participation and inclusion in society; the right to education and employment; the right to free and informed consent; freedom from torture, or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; respect for physical and mental integrity on an equal basis with others; the right to live independently and chose where and with whom to live.

MindFreedom International is part of the International Disability Caucus, a coalition of more than 70 national and regional disability organizations that helped negotiate the text of the convention. MindFreedom is also participating in the UN celebration of the Treaty.

Said Celia, "MindFreedom International believes that the Convention on the Rights with Disabilities will be a tool for MindFreedom Affiliates to work towards change in the lives of users/survivors of psychiatry. We continue to work closely with disability rights organizations to ensure the proper implementation of the human rights treaty."

MindFreedom International unites over 100 groups in the spirit of mutual cooperation for a non-violent revolution of mental health, human rights and choice. Celia said, "MFI recently launched a global campaign to start 20 new MindFreedom affiliates based on local geography. The MindFreedom affiliates provide peer support, trust and working together on human rights both nationally and internationally."

For further information, go to the web site www.MindFreedom.org or phone 541-345-9106 or e-mail news@mindfreedom.org.

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