

Ratification of the UN Convention on the rights of PWDs

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities received its 20th ratification on 3 April 2008, triggering the entry into force of the Convention and its Optional Protocol 30 days later. After the ratification of Ecuador, Jordan and Tunisia on 3 April 2008, 20 countries have ratified, and the Convention will therefore come into force on 03 May 2008. To commemorate this groundbreaking accomplishment, the United Nations will be having an entrée into force celebration on 12th May 2008, in New York.

This marks a major milestone in the effort to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

According to United Nations officials, the rapid coming into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, which was opened for signature on 30 March 2007, is due to the strong commitment of United Nations member countries as well as advocacy by organizations of persons with disabilities, who were instrumental in drafting the Convention. Adopted by the General Assembly in December 2006, the Convention was one of the fastest treaties ever negotiated at the United Nations.

Although Uganda was not among the 20 countries to ratify the convention, we are hopeful that Uganda will join the rest of the countries to do so before the end of this year. However, in the meantime we should celebrate the key milestone achieved in the straggles to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

Below are the countries which have so far ratified the convention.

- **Bangladesh** - 30 November 2007
- **Croatia** - 15 August 2007
- **Cuba** - 6 September 2007
- **Ecuador** - 3 April 2008
- **Egypt** - 14 April 2008
- **El Salvador** - 14 December 2007
- **Gabon** - 1 October 2007
- **Guinea** - 8 February 2008
- **Honduras** - 14 April 2008
- **Hungary** - 20 July 2007
- **India** - 1 October 2007
- **Jamaica** - 30 March 2007
- **Jordan** - 31 March 2008
- **Mali** - 7 April 2008
- **Mexico** - 17 December 2007
- **Namibia** - 4 December 2007
- **Nicaragua** - 7 December 2007
- **Panama** - 7 August 2007
- **Peru** - 30 January 2008
- **Philippines** - 15 April 2008
- **San Marino** - 22 February 2008
- **South Africa** - 30 November 2007
- **Spain** - 3 December 2007
- **Tunisia** - 2 April 2008