



Women
With
Disabilities
Australia
(WWDA)



On the Occasion of the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

PANEL - RURAL WOMEN & GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**United Nations Headquarters - Conference Room 6 - North Lawn Building
Tuesday, February 28, 2012 1:15 - 2:30 p.m.**

The 56th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women provides a key opportunity to promote the economic empowerment of rural women and girls with disabilities and their increased participation in decision-making processes. This Side Event will bring voices from the ground and explore the often critical situation of rural women and girls with disabilities and the urgent need for their inclusion in development decisions at all levels. Discussion will provide an important input to the CSW deliberations and the development of Final Conclusions, which will contribute to the planned 2013 UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Disability and Development.

Welcoming Remarks

- Ms. Akiko Ito, Chief, UN Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Moderator

- Ms. Stephanie Ortoleva, Esq., Founder/President of Women Enabled - - International Human Rights Lawyer

Live Cultural Performance by Women and Girls with Disabilities from Bhutan

- Song and dance to be performed by 10 women and girls with disabilities from rural areas of Bhutan, who have travelled to Thimpu to participate in this event via video conference. Performers: Tashi, Ugyen Choten, Yeshi Choten, Tashi Lhamo, Tandin Wangmo, Temdri Zan, Nanga Jaimo, Keizang Lhadem, Tashi Yangzom, Karma

Opening Remarks

- Ms. Elizabeth Broderick, Sex Discrimination Commissioner of Australian Human Rights Commission, Government of Australia
- H.E. Mr. Mårten Grunditz, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

Panelists

- Associate Professor Helen Meekosha, Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) and School of Social Sciences, UNSW Australia
- Ms. Duptho Zam, Disability Rights Expert, English Teacher & Performing Artist, Bhutan Royal Academy of Performing Arts (via videoconference)
- Ms. Myra Kovary, E-List Moderator, International Network of Women with Disabilities (INWWD)
- Ms. Lois A. Herman, Coordinator, Women's UN Report Network (WUNRN)

Sponsors: Government of Australia, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, UN Department of Economic & Social Affairs, Women Enabled, Women with Disabilities Australia & Women's UN Report Network.