

**HELLENIC REPUBLIC**

**GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

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***ICC: First Meeting between the CRPD Committee and NHRIs***

**Greek National Commission for Human Rights**

***Oral statement***

The Greek National Commission for Human Rights warmly thanks the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Committee) and the ICC for inviting it to participate, as a NHRI, in this important forum.

However, we deplore the fact that no independent monitoring mechanism has been set up in Greece in compliance with Article 33(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Convention). This is an infringement to the Convention and to EU law of which the Convention has become an integral part.

The violations of the rights of persons with disabilities are not scarce in Greece. For example, many public buildings are not accessible to persons with mobility problems. The right of access to education is often violated.

More generally, we strongly support the strengthening of the interaction between the Committee, NHRIs and other NMMs.

The Committee should require that a channel of information exchange and cooperation between NHRIs and NMMs be established in each country, which will be continuously open and will yield material for the Committee. It should be also ensured that sufficient time is given to consideration by the Committee of the cooperation between NHRIs/NMMs and with the Committee and due account should be taken of the costs involved in securing the effectiveness of this cooperation.

Apart from simplifying the reporting procedure itself, it is important for the NHRIs to be able to present a report/communication at any moment at which they deem this necessary. In this way the *décalage* between the report cycles can be avoided. The designation of focal points within both the Committee and NHRIs/NMMs should be encouraged so that the interaction among them can be fostered.

The Draft Programme of work suggests that the Committee Concluding Observations should support the establishment and development of NHRIs/NMMs. It should be added, that these Observations should also invite the States to support, strengthen and ensure the effective and independent operation of the already existing NHRIs/NMMs. Finally, a practical data-base providing all kinds of information and material necessary for the effective cooperation of NHRIs/NMMs with the Committee should be created.

Athens, 23 September 2014