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**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

**REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING  
ON THE MIDPOINT REVIEW OF THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC  
DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS, 2003-2012**

**Bangkok, 19-21 September 2007**



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## **I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING**

### **A. Background**

1. The High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, was convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in accordance with Commission resolution 61/8 of 18 May 2005 on the midpoint review of the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, and as called for in paragraph 63 of that Framework.
2. The objectives of the meeting were twofold: to review the progress and challenges in implementing the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and to consider and adopt Biwako Plus Five: Further Efforts towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, as a supplement to the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, which is given in annex II to the present report.

### **B. Attendance**

3. The meeting was attended by high-level representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP: Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; India; Indonesia; Islamic Republic of Iran; Japan; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Myanmar; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; the Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Thailand; United States of America; Vanuatu; Viet Nam; and Cook Islands; and Hong Kong, China.
4. Representatives of the following United Nations Secretariat offices, bodies and specialized agencies attended: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Population Fund, International Labour Organization, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and World Health Organization.
5. The Pacific Islands Forum, an intergovernmental organization, was also represented.
6. Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including those in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and those accredited by virtue of participation in the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, were represented at the meeting.

### **C. Opening of the meeting**

7. In his opening address, Mr. Shigeru Mochida, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP and Officer-in-Charge, a.i., of the secretariat, welcomed the delegations and outlined the tasks of the meeting. He thanked the Government of Japan for its financial support for the meeting, and

acknowledged the commitment of all the Governments to the primary goal of the Decade: an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The Deputy Executive Secretary also highlighted the crucial partnership of all stakeholders, which was essential for the promotion of the full participation and equality of persons with disabilities. He referred to the ESCAP reviews on progress towards the targets of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, which showed that, since the inception of the Decade, overall improvement in all the priority categories of the Framework had been evident.

8. A welcoming address was delivered by Mr. Jun Niimi, Minister and Permanent Representative of Japan to ESCAP. He welcomed the delegations to the meeting and extended his appreciation to the ESCAP secretariat for facilitating policy development in the region with regard to disability issues. Mr. Niimi recalled that the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action marked a shift from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach in the protection of the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights of persons with disabilities. Mr. Niimi recognized the important role played by the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability, under the auspices of the Government of Thailand, with the support of the Government of Japan, as a regional mechanism for advancing collaboration among countries in the region to empower persons with disabilities.

9. A welcoming statement was delivered by Ms. Yukiko Kada, Governor of Shiga Prefecture, Japan, via video transmission. As the then governor of the city where the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action was adopted in 2002, she expressed appreciation for all the successful achievements that have been made in implementing the Framework. She also recognized the efforts that all stakeholders in the region made towards contributing to the adoption in 2006 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

10. The inaugural address was delivered by H.E. Mr. Paiboon Wattanasiritham, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand and Minister for Social Development and Human Security. He welcomed the delegations to the meeting and expressed his deep appreciation for the efforts of Governments and NGOs, including disabled people's organizations, the international community and the United Nations, in the successful adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Deputy Prime Minister reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of Thailand to the common goal of the Convention and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. He also emphasized the importance of partnership among all stakeholders, especially in regional initiatives in the field of disability, for the empowerment of people with disabilities.

#### **D. Election of officers**

11. The meeting elected H.E. Mr. Joshua Tafura Kalsakau, Minister, Ministry of Justice and Social Welfare, Vanuatu, Chairperson and elected two heads of delegation Vice-Chairpersons: H.E. Mr. Sem Sokha, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth

Rehabilitation, Cambodia, and the Hon. Mr. Ngamau Mere Munokoa, Minister of Internal Affairs and Social Services, Cook Islands.

12. Ms. Chong Phaik Kee, Director, Department of Social Welfare, Perak, Malaysia, was elected rapporteur.

### **E. Adoption of the agenda**

13. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Review of progress made and challenges faced in the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, 2003-2012.
5. Rights-based development for all: the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and its convergence with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Millennium Development Goals.
6. Adoption of supplemental strategies for the further implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.
7. Adoption of the report of the meeting.

## **II. PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING**

14. Mr. Monthian Buntan, President, Thai Association of the Blind, and Member of Executive Committee, World Blind Union, delivered a keynote address at the meeting. In his address he referred to the spirit of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action which had translated the aspirations of persons with disabilities into reality and marked a paradigm shift from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach. He noted the positive changes in the past five years in all the priority areas of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and referred to the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability and the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Bangkok Draft: Proposed Elements of a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention to Promote and Protect the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which reflected the principles of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, greatly contributed to the formulation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He also drew attention to the challenges that still faced the region, especially with regard to translating accessibility standards and guidelines into practice and mainstreaming disability in poverty alleviation and social security programmes.

15. The meeting had before it the documents entitled “Review of the progress made and challenges faced in the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, 2003-2012” (E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/1), “Partnership: key to the successful implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, 2003-2012” (E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/INF/1), “Strengthening the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action in the Pacific subregion” (E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/INF/2) and “Rights-based approach to development for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific: Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and its linkage to the Millennium Development Goals and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/INF/3).

16. The ESCAP secretariat presented a summary of the midpoint assessment regarding the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action based on the documents presented to the meeting. The presentation highlighted the main achievements over the past five years, especially in the areas of national coordination mechanisms, disability-related policies, data on disability, initiatives at the subregional level and collaboration among stakeholders. While there were noticeable positive developments, many challenges remained to be tackled. It was pointed out that, among others, the most crucial of these challenges was the implementation of laws and plans with sustained resources. Immediate action should be taken to reduce poverty and improve educational and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Other challenges included the development of disaster-resilient accessible communities and the promotion of disability-related normative frameworks in North and Central Asia. The secretariat expressed the hope that Biwako Plus Five would further facilitate the realization of fully barrier-free and rights-based societies.

17. A roundtable discussion was held on the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action in the Pacific subregion. It focused on the success of the collaborative initiative among various stakeholders, including disabled people’s organizations, intergovernmental agencies, Governments and ESCAP. The panel, which included representatives from the Governments of Cook Islands and Papua New Guinea and the disability coordination officer from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, recognized the importance of such a collaborative initiative in developing policies and programmes for persons with disabilities in the region. The Pacific Islands Forum, an intergovernmental body, adopted the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action as one of its policy documents. The panelists also noted the challenges in the region, especially the geographical distances and the lack of resources, which posed an obstacle to the exchange of views and common concerns among the member countries of the Forum.

18. In her presentation, Ms. Amita Dhanda, member, World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, India, emphasized the need for self-advocacy by persons with psychosocial disabilities in



order to overcome normative barriers, such as legislation, rules and judicial decisions which denied an identity to persons with psychosocial disabilities. She explained that persons with psychosocial disabilities were socially stigmatized, discriminated against and excluded because of the different ways they thought, felt, expressed themselves and made decisions. She stated that the lack of social accommodation was demonstrated in several ways, the most significant one being by the denial of legal capacity. She noted that the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities as being equal before the law had been recognized in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and should be put into practice through their application in regional guidelines and policy documents such as the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.

19. Mr. Andrew Byrnes, Professor, Australian Human Rights Centre, Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, provided an overview of that Convention and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He noted that the Convention had innovative provisions such as the right to accessibility, the right to protection and safety in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, the right to live independently as well as be included in the community and the right to personal mobility. The right of persons with disabilities to communicate through the form of communication of their choice and the detailed provisions on international cooperation were also guaranteed for the first time in a human rights treaty. In referring to the relationship between the Convention and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, he stated that they were broadly in alignment as both focused on a rights-based approach, participation of persons with disabilities and capacity-building. With regard to the Millennium Development Goals he noted that, although its targets and indicators made no specific mention of disability, it was necessary however to address the situation of persons with disabilities and to insert disability analysis into policies in order to achieve the Goals.

20. The presentation of Ms. Sae Kani, Project Manager, Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, on inclusive disaster management emphasized the importance of making disaster risk-reduction strategies disability inclusive. She said that during the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005, 168 States adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. However, the Framework had not yet included persons with disabilities as prime targets. She stated that the disaster preparedness of persons with disabilities would be enhanced if the Hyogo Framework for Action could include more disability issues and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action could in turn address the issues of disaster risk reduction.

21. The meeting noted with satisfaction that many Governments had committed themselves to a rights-based approach in addressing the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities. The process that led to the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the previously mentioned Optional Protocol on 13 December 2006 had further reinforced the rights-based approach.

The Convention represented the first disability-specific human rights treaty, which provided legal support for the paradigm shift from a charity-based to a rights-based approach to disability issues, the conceptual underpinning of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.

22. The meeting noted that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights would collaborate with the proposed committee on the rights of persons with disabilities in implementing the Convention.

23. The meeting noted that disability-inclusive development had been an increasingly recognized concept in the development field. As a result, an increased number of countries, bilateral and multilateral development banks and international development agencies, both at the global and regional levels, were paying more attention to the integration of disability concerns into their general development policies and projects.

24. The meeting also recognized that the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action as well as the process of elaboration of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had influenced national laws and plans in a positive way. Some Governments had specific articles in their constitutions which mentioned disability, while some Governments had comprehensive disability laws that covered the seven priority areas of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. An increasing number of Governments had a disability-specific anti-discrimination law. Additionally, the region had also witnessed the development of local government-level planning in this regard.

25. The meeting recognized that several Governments in the region had specific plans and programmes aimed at the improvement of the overall quality of life of persons with disabilities.

26. The meeting noted that, with the national plans and programmes on disability, several Governments had ensured steady, if not increased, budget allocations for their implementation. The resources were translated into, inter alia, financial assistance to persons with disabilities, especially children, for education, the provision of subsidies and credit, including interest-free loans, assistance in housing and training for employment.

27. The meeting recognized that several Governments had signed the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region. Other measures undertaken by some Governments included the designation of a national decade of disabled persons, or a national year of disabled persons.

28. The meeting noted that the ESCAP region had witnessed a steady increase in the number of Governments instituting disability coordinating mechanisms at the national level. Multiple forms of institutional arrangements on disability had been made in the region, and these included the involvement of multiple ministries and disabled persons. Some delegations reported that their national coordination mechanisms were placed under the responsibility of the office of the prime minister.

29. The meeting also noted that, although the establishment of national institutional mechanisms was the norm in the region, some Governments still lacked financial and human resources as well as the technical capacity to engage in policy development and implementation.

30. The meeting recognized that, at the regional level, ESCAP played the role of a regional engine towards creating an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities. To promote the effective implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, ESCAP had fully utilized its strengths as the regional catalyst on development issues and as a facilitator of normative development and knowledge management.

31. In this regard, ESCAP organized and convened the Thematic Working Group on Disability-related Concerns, a regional inter-agency working group for promoting and coordinating activities concerning the development and the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. During the five-year period, a total of more than 400 representatives from Governments, United Nations agencies and NGOs had been involved in the meetings of the Working Group and multiple task forces were formed to exchange information and implement the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.

32. The meeting acknowledged that the important role played by the Working Group in promoting the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, and suggested its revitalization at an appropriate time.

33. The meeting also acknowledged the important role played by the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability. As another regional mechanism, the Center attempted to empower persons with disabilities through a variety of means, such as networking and collaboration, information and support and human resources development.

34. Several delegations reported increased collaboration of all stakeholders, namely Governments, United Nations agencies, development organizations, NGOs, especially disabled people's organizations, and the private sector, which had contributed to the successes of the first half of the Decade.

35. In this regard, the meeting noted that, for the remaining five years of the Decade, partnership among all the stakeholders was a crucial key strategy for the successful implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.

36. The meeting noted, in particular, the significant progress that had been made in the Pacific subregion during the first half of the Decade, owing to the close collaboration among stakeholders. For example, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat had played an important role in assisting national Governments in capacity-building in terms of developing policies and establishing institutional mechanisms.

37. The meeting noted that a number of countries in the region had stepped up efforts to collect relevant data vis-à-vis various categories of disabilities. For example, more data were available in terms of demographics and socio-economic status. However, the lack of adequate and comparable data continued to be a major setback in the disability field as it hindered proper evidence-based advocacy, needs assessment, policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation.

38. The meeting noted that the disaster-prone nature of the region as well as conflict situations posed a serious challenge to the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. Natural disasters and conflicts had increased the number of persons with disabilities and accentuated their vulnerabilities, which led to exacerbated poverty. With regard to disaster-stricken communities, however, the need for reconstruction had opened a window of opportunity for Governments, development agencies and persons with disabilities to work together to rebuild communities, which are accessible to persons with disabilities.

39. The meeting also recognized the importance of special and public events at the national and regional levels that contributed to the advancement of the status of persons with disabilities. In this regard, the delegation of China announced that the Special Olympics World Summer Games would be held in Shanghai, in October 2007 and the 2008 Summer Paralympic Games were scheduled to be held in Beijing in September 2008 following the XXIX Olympiad. Additionally, the delegation of the Republic of Korea announced its Government's willingness to host the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting that would conclude the current Decade in 2012.

40. The meeting also reviewed the achievements of countries in the region in the seven priority areas of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action.

41. With regard to the first priority area, the meeting observed that some Governments in the region took specific measures to support the formation of or strengthen existing self-help organizations of persons with disabilities and related family and parent associations. In addition, over the past five years, the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes had significantly increased. An important example was their participation in the drafting process of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

42. With regard to the second priority area, which concerned women with disabilities, the meeting noted that some Governments in the region had anti-discrimination measures to safeguard the rights of women with disabilities. In this regard, one delegate noted that a technical working group on women with disabilities was established under its national advisory and consultative council.

43. Despite the increased attention in that area, however, it was noted with concern that many women with disabilities were still unable to play leadership roles owing to continued social exclusion and the lack of empowerment, training and opportunities. The meeting noted that in several countries the participation and equal representation of women with disabilities had been promoted either by their laws or policies on self-help organizations.

44. With regard to the third priority area, the meeting recognized that increased efforts were made by Governments to enhance the access of children and youth with disabilities to education. However, their access to education remained at a significantly lower level compared with those children without disabilities. Nonetheless, some Governments also had taken measures to provide community-based early intervention services and training programmes for young children.

45. With regard to the fourth priority area, the meeting recognized that some countries had ratified, over the past five years, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983. More countries had also adopted laws, policies on non-discrimination and provided services related to skills training and employment promotion. In this regard, some Governments had established disability-inclusive vocational centres and other training services for employment.

46. The meeting noted that some Governments had secured preliminary or localized data on the employment status of persons with disabilities which indicated the disparity in the employment rate between persons with and without disabilities.

47. With regard to priority area five, the meeting noted that significant progress had taken place concerning the enactment of relevant and specific laws and regulations on built environments. Increased attention was also given to “accessible tourism” as a useful means for bringing benefits not only to persons with disabilities but also to the tourism industry. However, there remained challenges in the region, and these had to be faced in order to enhance the accessibility of the existing built environment and transport, especially in rural and remote areas.

48. With reference to the sixth priority area on access to information and communications, including information, communications and assistive technologies, the meeting observed that a number of Governments had put in place ICT-accessibility guidelines for persons with disabilities and one of them had established guidelines for the developers of standards in order to address the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities. The meeting also noted the progress made with regard to standardized sign languages and Braille.

49. With regard to the seventh priority area, concerning poverty alleviation through capacity-building, social security and sustainable livelihood programmes, the meeting noted that Governments in the region had made significant efforts in involving persons with disabilities in the poverty alleviation schemes of Governments, in providing interest-free micro-credit and monthly cash assistance for severely disabled persons as well as education subsidies for students with disabilities at all schooling levels. The meeting also noted with concern the marked disparity between persons with and without disabilities, irrespective of a country’s economic status.

50. The meeting noted however that more comprehensive social protection programmes were necessary, especially for employment enhancement, health-care provision and poverty alleviation for persons with disabilities.

### **III. ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIWAKO MILLENNIUM FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**

51. The meeting had before it the document entitled “Draft Biwako Plus Five: Further efforts towards an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific” (E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/L.3).

52. The meeting agreed that the Biwako Plus Five would supplement the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and, for the remaining five years of the Decade, both measures would continue to serve as regional guidelines towards realizing an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

53. In referring to paragraph 19 of the document E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/L.3, the delegation of the United States of America made a statement (see the annex to the present document for a copy of the statement).

54. The meeting considered Biwako Plus Five and adopted it on 21 September 2007.

### **IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

55. The meeting adopted its report on 21 September 2007.

## **Annexes**

### ***Annex I***

#### **Written statement submitted by the delegation of the United States of America.**

“In connection with the para 19 of the Biwako Plus Five under the heading of D. Training and employment, including self-employment, the United States does not recognize a ‘right to work’ as a right enforceable by the State. One cannot go to the courts and obtain redress if one cannot get work. The United States rather supports the concept that persons with disabilities have access to opportunities to work on equal basis with others”.

## *Annex II*

### **BIWAKO PLUS FIVE: FURTHER EFFORTS TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE, BARRIER-FREE AND RIGHTS-BASED SOCIETY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

#### **I. PREAMBLE**

1. The Asian and Pacific region is the home to two thirds of the 650 million persons with disabilities in the world. In order to ensure greater recognition of their rights, Governments and other stakeholders in the Asian and Pacific region have taken a number of measures. By its resolution 58/4 of 22 May 2002 on promoting an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for people with disabilities in the Asian and Pacific region in the twenty-first century, the Commission extended the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002,<sup>a</sup> for another decade, that is, from 2003 to 2012. Since then, a number of initiatives have been launched in line with the extended Decade. Among them was the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society in Asia and the Pacific,<sup>b</sup> which was adopted by the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Conclude the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, held in Otsu, Shiga, Japan, in October 2002, as the defining policy guideline for the new Decade. The extension of the Decade carried forward the goal of the previous Decade, 1993-2002, and the commitment made by Governments signing the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region:<sup>c</sup> the full participation and equality of persons with disabilities.

2. The Biwako Millennium Framework for Action builds on both the achievements and the lessons learned from the implementation of the policy guideline adopted for the previous Decade: the Agenda for Action for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002 (E/ESCAP/APDDP/2). It emphasizes the paradigm shift from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach for the development of persons with disabilities. It also promotes a barrier-free, inclusive and rights-based society, which embraces the diversity of human beings. Further, it enables and advances the socio-economic contribution of its members and ensures the realization of those rights by persons with disabilities. The Biwako Millennium Framework for Action identifies 7 priority areas and 4 major strategic areas, with 21 targets and 17 strategies. Through Commission resolution 59/3 of 4 September 2003, Governments of countries in Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with other stakeholders, such as United Nations agencies, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and civil society organizations, reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. In its resolution 61/8 of 18 May 2005 on the mid-point review of the

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<sup>a</sup> See Commission resolution 48/3 of 23 April 1992.

<sup>b</sup> See Commission resolution 59/3 of 4 September 2003 (for the text of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, see E/ESCAP/APDDP/4/Rev.1).

<sup>c</sup> Adopted at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Launch the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, held in Beijing, 1-5 December 1992. See also Commission resolution 49/6 of 29 April 1993 on the Proclamation and Agenda for Action for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002.



implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to hold a high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Decade in 2007.

3. One of the most significant developments during the first five years of the extended Decade was the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol<sup>d</sup> to the Convention. This marked the beginning of a new era in the global efforts to promote and safeguard the civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of persons with disabilities, and to promote disability-inclusive development and international cooperation. In adopting the Convention, the General Assembly called upon States to consider signing and ratifying the Convention and the Optional Protocol as a matter of priority. The Convention represents the latest thinking of the States Members of the United Nations about this issue. It recognizes that the promotion of the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and of full participation by persons with disabilities will result in their enhanced sense of belonging and in significant advances in the human, social and economic development of society and the eradication of poverty. Building on regional experiences in the formulation and implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, members and associate members of the Commission contributed to the global drafting process through a series of efforts that included the submission, in 2003, of proposals and a regional draft entitled the “Bangkok Draft” to the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. Both the Convention and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action pursue the common goal of achieving a barrier-free, inclusive and rights-based society. The effective implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action will contribute significantly to the implementation of the Convention, and the steps taken by the States that ratify the Convention will contribute to the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action by those States.

4. The first five years of the extended Decade witnessed other significant developments as well. For example, in 2004, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) published a joint position paper<sup>e</sup> in which they expounded the rights-based approach to community-based rehabilitation and services. The World Summit on the Information Society adopted the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society<sup>f</sup> on 18 November 2005, which addressed the importance of universal design and assistive technologies that promote access for all persons, including those with disabilities. WHO addressed the need to research and implement the most

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<sup>d</sup> General Assembly resolution 61/106 of 13 December 2006, annexes I and II.

<sup>e</sup> International Labour Office, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and World Health Organization, *CBR: A Strategy for Rehabilitation, Equalization of Opportunities, Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities* (Geneva, World Health Organization, 2004).

<sup>f</sup> See A/60/687.

effective measures to prevent disabilities in collaboration with communities and other sectors.<sup>g</sup> The World Conference on Disaster Reduction, in adopting the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,<sup>h</sup> recommended, inter alia, the strengthening of the implementation of social safety-net mechanisms to assist the poor, the elderly and the disabled.

5. Research for the midpoint review shows that the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action has resulted in many positive developments. Increasing numbers of Governments in the region have shown their commitment to disability issues by signing the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities.<sup>i</sup> Thus far, 46 Governments have become signatories. Many Governments have also taken steps to incorporate the concept of the rights of persons with disabilities into their constitutions, legislation, national plans of action, and policies and programmes. Persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific have proven their capability in this regard. They have addressed their needs and engaged in policy discourse during the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They have also become increasingly active in the decision-making process at the regional and national levels. An increasing number of international aid and development cooperation agencies have started to explore and adopt “disability-inclusive development”, which focuses on mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities into general development policymaking and operations.

6. Despite such progress, challenges and obstacles still remain. The lack of availability and the quality of demographic data and socio-economic indicators concerning disability continue to be major problems. Many Governments and other stakeholders report that the lack of financial and human resources, technical knowledge and capacities hinder their implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. Although the Asian and Pacific region enjoys steady improvement in the development of disability policy, the implementation of such policies has to be ensured and their impact measured. While more persons with disabilities are becoming increasingly empowered, due attention should be paid to marginalized groups, such as those with psychosocial disabilities, intellectual disabilities or multiple disabilities and those living in rural and remote areas. ESCAP is also tasked with promoting the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action in subregions such as North and Central Asia and mainstreaming the disability perspective in subregional intergovernmental mechanisms. During the last five years, the efforts being made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals have been reviewed vigorously. The Goals relating to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger and achieving universal primary education have been translated into targets for two of the seven priority areas of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. Later, the rights of persons with disabilities

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<sup>g</sup> World Health Assembly resolution WHA58.23 of 25 May 2005 on disability, including prevention, management and rehabilitation.

<sup>h</sup> A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap.I, resolution 2.

<sup>i</sup> E/ESCAP/902, annex I.

were specifically recognized in the 2005 World Summit Outcome,<sup>j</sup> as the attention they received in the Millennium Development Goals had not been adequate from a disability perspective. Natural disasters and other situations entailing heightened risk, including armed conflict, exacerbate the physical, institutional, attitudinal and informational barriers facing all people, but in particular, persons with disabilities. Such situations underline the need for better disability-inclusive disaster management with regard to both natural and man-made disasters.

7. In taking forward the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, ministerial-level representatives of countries in the region discussed and finalized the present document at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, held in Bangkok from 19 to 21 September 2007. The Biwako Plus Five outcome draws upon the findings of the five-year review, taking into consideration global developments, the emerging needs of the region with regard to disability and the challenges and obstacles which need to be overcome. It supplements the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action in the hope of making a significant contribution to the enhanced implementation of the Framework over the remaining five years of the Decade (2008-2012) by promoting the creation of an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for all.

## **II. NATURE AND OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES OF BIWAKO PLUS FIVE**

8. Biwako Plus Five supplements the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. In terms of content, Biwako Plus Five distinguishes itself from the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action by (a) providing additional actions in the 7 priority areas, (b) reconfiguring the 4 strategy areas into 5 areas with 25 additional strategies, and (c) adding 3 strategies under “cooperation and support and monitoring and review”.

9. Biwako Plus Five should be implemented on the basis of the same principles and policy directions delineated in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. However, the following three aspects should be amplified:

(a) First, Governments shall, within the limit of their economic capacity and development, take appropriate measures to devise national strategies and action plans for the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five. Governments should recognize the importance of international cooperation and partnership, in support of national efforts, including through the transfer of resources and technologies, as appropriate;

(b) Second, partnership among different stakeholders, namely, Governments, representatives of disabled people’s organizations, international, regional and national non-governmental organizations, development organizations and agencies, and the private sector, as

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<sup>j</sup> General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005.

appropriate, should be promoted in all relevant activities, including research, data collection, needs assessment, policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, capacity-building and awareness-raising;

(c) Third, the diversity of persons with disabilities should be respected not only because they are the targets of policies, programmes and projects but also because they are partners in the decision-making process concerning disability as well as implementers and evaluators of projects and policies.

### **III. PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION UNDER THE BIWAKO MILLENNIUM FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**

10. The Biwako Millennium Framework for Action contained 21 targets categorized under 7 priority areas. Although the dates for achieving targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 16, 17 and 18 were set before 2007, the Governments and other stakeholders that have not yet attained those targets may need to strengthen their efforts in order to achieve them as soon as possible.

11. Further efforts need to be made in order to achieve those targets where progress has been found to be inadequate and where action has been lagging. The following are additional actions that may help countries to achieve the targets under each of the priority areas.

#### **A. Self-help organizations of persons with disabilities and related family and parent associations**

##### *Actions required*

12. Governments at all levels are encouraged to support:

(a) The development of organizations for persons with disabilities and related family and parent associations at the local and national levels, and the promotion of their networking at the regional, subregional and interregional levels, paying particular attention to the self-help organizations of persons with intellectual disabilities, psychosocial disabilities and multiple disabilities;

(b) The participation of persons with disabilities in the political and civil processes as well as in the development, implementation and monitoring of economic and social policies and programmes at all levels;

(c) The development of young men and women with disabilities as leaders;

(d) The development of partnerships with self-help organizations, in particular cooperation between urban-based self-help groups/organizations of persons with disabilities and their rural counterparts.

13. Self-help organizations and related family and parent organizations, with the support of Governments at all levels, should mainstream themselves into the self-help organizations of other vulnerable groups and communities.

## **B. Women with disabilities**

### *Actions required*

14. Governments should promote:

(a) The inclusion of gender perspectives in disability-relevant policies, programmes, plans and legislation;

(b) The inclusion of the perspectives of women with disabilities in the development of gender-relevant policies, programmes, plans and legislation;

(c) The participation of women with disabilities and organizations of women with disabilities in the processes of developing both gender-relevant and disability-related policies, programmes, plans and legislation.

15. Governments recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination and, in this regard, together with self-help organizations, should support the economic, social, cultural and political empowerment of women with disabilities, in particular through leadership and management training on a sustained basis. Governments should take appropriate measures to address discrimination against women with disabilities in all matters, including those relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, to ensure their full development, advancement and empowerment.

16. Self-help organizations should review their existing structure, policies, plans and operations, taking into account the needs of women with disabilities, and actively support their empowerment, with a view to helping them to participate fully in decision-making processes.

17. Self-help organizations and networks of women with disabilities, in collaboration with community-based development organizations and Governments at all levels, should sensitize communities in remote areas to the potential negative impacts of culture on women and girls with disabilities and address their issues through community-based development processes.

## **C. Early detection, early intervention and education**

### *Actions required*

18. Governments should:

(a) Explore the possibility of establishing efficient coordination and communication mechanisms among government bodies responsible for health and education matters in the provision of services to infants and young children with disabilities in terms of early identification, assessment, referral to, or enrolment in, early intervention and health-care services, preschools and schools;

(b) Pay increased attention to ensuring that the number of trained personnel in early intervention services is sufficient to provide services for all children with disabilities and their families in urban, rural and remote areas;

(c) Promote the access of persons with disabilities to an inclusive education system, including the acquisition of literacy skills, and to adult education and life-long learning;

(d) Promote the education of all children, including those with visual and hearing impairments, deafblind and those who have learning and intellectual disabilities, so that it is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication;

(e) Take appropriate measures to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education and to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are adept in sign language, Braille, augmentative or alternative communication;

(f) Take appropriate measures, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to involve persons with disabilities in sports, both as spectators and as active participants.

#### **D. Training and employment, including self-employment**

##### *Actions required*

19. Governments should:

(a) Recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others, and promote the realization of the right to work for persons with disabilities, including those who become disabled during the course of employment;

(b) Develop comprehensive strategies to address the barriers to employment of persons with disabilities, especially those in remote, rural, agricultural and economically depressed areas, while paying particular attention to new developments in community-based approaches, in order to ensure improved access to resources and services, such as cooperatives, social enterprises, self-employment initiatives, microfinance schemes and on-the-job and peer training;

(c) Develop national and multinational partnerships, with support from non-governmental organizations, self-help organizations and other stakeholders, aimed at increasing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities by providing incentives to facilitate hiring, retention and advancement, promoting positive awareness of their skills and employment, and operating joint training and employment programmes;

(d) Include persons with disabilities in mainstream public employment services and provide with support services persons with disabilities and their employers so that they could assist with the recruitment, placement and retention in jobs of persons with disabilities and maintain rosters of job-ready persons with disabilities for referral to potential employers;

(e) Adopt policies and practices related to job-readiness training and/or skills redevelopment or retraining for adults with disabilities who lack employment experience or whose skills are obsolete or who can no longer return to their former jobs owing to their disability.

#### **E. Access to built environments and public transport**

##### *Actions required*

20. Governments should:

(a) Take appropriate measures to enforce accessibility standards effectively and to promote accessibility in both existing and newly built environments and public transport;

(b) Promote the concept of universal design among public and private entities, with a view to benefiting persons with different disabilities;

(c) Ensure, in collaboration with other stakeholders, that all services which are open to or provided for the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities;

(d) Encourage and promote the research into and the development of good quality mobility aids and devices at affordable prices in order to enable access by persons with disabilities to built environments, public transport, information and communications, and other services;

(e) Take appropriate measures to promote accessible tourism.

#### **F. Access to information and communications, including information, communications and assistive technologies**

##### *Actions required*

21. Governments should:

(a) Actively promote accessibility in respect of information and communications, including information and communication technology, for persons with disabilities in order to ensure the full enjoyment of their rights and, in so doing, comply with the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda of the World Summit on the Information Society;

(b) Promote the production and dissemination of public information in accessible languages and the modes and means of communication, including plain language, via accessible technologies;

(c) Take appropriate measures to recognize and promote the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative means of communication and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication chosen by persons with disabilities in facilities and services open or made available to the public, and in all other forms of official interaction;

(d) Take appropriate measures, in collaboration with the private sector, to promote the availability of various forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and

professional sign-language interpreters, to facilitate the accessibility of persons with disabilities to built environments, services of a public nature, including banking and postal services and those which are provided electronically;

(e) Promote, together with other stakeholders, research and development, as well as the procurement of information and assistive technologies that abide by universal design concepts and internationally recognized accessibility standards;

(f) Take appropriate measures to support, in collaboration with national organizations of the deaf, the development of sign language and the training of sign language interpreters, and recognize the use of sign language in educational, employment-related and legal processes.

#### **G. Poverty alleviation through capacity-building, social security and sustainable livelihood programmes**

##### *Actions required*

22. Governments should:

(a) Mainstream disability perspectives in national development frameworks, such as poverty reduction strategy papers;

(b) Review existing social security policies and practices and modify them, as necessary, to promote personal mobility, health, rehabilitation and rehabilitation services, education and an adequate standard of living and social protection for persons with disabilities. Where they do not exist, policies aimed at providing basic services should be developed and implemented. The provision of basic assistive devices that meet the needs of persons with disabilities as well as any personal assistance needed should be promoted.

#### **IV. KEY STRATEGIES**

23. The Biwako Millennium Framework for Action has 10 strategies categorized under the following 4 areas of “strategies to achieve the targets of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action:

(a) National plan of action (five years) on disability;

(b) Promotion of a rights-based approach to disability issues;

(c) Disability statistics/common definition of disabilities for planning;

(d) Strengthened community-based approaches to the prevention of causes of disability, rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities.

24. The following strategies build on and expand the strategies set out in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. They reflect the lessons learned from the efforts already undertaken to implement the Framework, and the need to address new issues and concerns which have emerged since



the adoption of the Framework. Accordingly, the four strategic areas in the Framework were reexamined and restructured as follows:

- (a) Reinforce a rights-based approach to disability issues;
- (b) Promote an enabling environment and strengthen effective mechanisms for policy formulation and implementation;
- (c) Improve the availability and quality of data and other information on disabilities for policy formulation and implementation;
- (d) Promote disability-inclusive development;
- (e) Strengthen comprehensive community-based approaches to disability issues for the prevention of the causes of disability and for the rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities.

25. The restructured strategic area, “reinforce a rights-based approach to disability issues”, expands on the existing strategy: “promotion of a rights-based approach to disability issues,” in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, taking into consideration the greater importance of the rights-based approach embodied in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Another restructured strategic area, “promote an enabling environment and strengthen effective mechanisms for policy formulation and implementation”, was added because it is necessary to reemphasize the institutional and other factors that would enable undertaking what is promoted in both the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five. The existing strategy in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, “national plan of action (five years) on disability”, was integrated into this revised strategy. The restructured strategic area, “improve the availability and the quality of data and other information on disabilities for the purposes of policy formulation and implementation”, expands on the existing strategy: “disability statistics/common definition of disabilities for planning” in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, taking into account the need to intensify efforts to obtain and utilize effective data and information on disabilities. The restructured strategic area, “promote disability-inclusive development”, was added because the mainstreaming of disability perspectives into development assistance activities has been increasingly deemed effective in attaining the goals of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action. The restructured strategic area, “strengthen comprehensive community-based approaches to (a) prevent the causes of disability, (b) the rehabilitation and (c) the empowerment of persons with disabilities”, expands an existing strategy: “strengthened community-based approaches to the prevention of causes of disability, rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities”, which reflects the evolving concept of community-based rehabilitation. Furthermore, although the target dates for strategies 1, 8 and 9 in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action were set before 2007, Governments and other stakeholders that have not achieved the targets will need to continue their efforts to achieve them as soon as possible. Strategies 6 and 7 of the Framework, which

have been nullified with the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, were reformulated as strategies 4 and 5 in the present document.

#### **A. Reinforcing a rights-based approach to disability issues**

##### *Strategy 1*

26. Governments take note of a newly emerging trend in understanding disability as an evolving concept and are encouraged to recognize disability as a result of the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Governments are encouraged to incorporate this understanding of disability into their existing and new policies. Particular attention should be paid to the removal of any barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from fully participating in society and exercising their rights.

##### *Strategy 2*

27. Governments should consider steps to amend or repeal any laws that are not consistent with the international instruments on human rights and disability to which they are parties, and to adopt laws that would promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

##### *Strategy 3*

28. Governments are encouraged to take appropriate measures, including development and implementation of antidiscrimination legislation, to effectively promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

##### *Strategy 4*

29. Governments are encouraged to consider the establishment of an effective, independent, advisory and representative mechanism, or the designation of an existing mechanism, to assist in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the legal, administrative and institutional systems aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

##### *Strategy 5*

30. Governments are encouraged to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the Convention as a matter of priority, and to promote and protect the right of persons with disabilities so that they may enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

##### *Strategy 6*

31. Governments, in collaboration with all stakeholders, should take positive measures in facilitating the provision of reasonable accommodation to equalize the opportunities that exist for persons with disabilities in all areas of life. Reasonable accommodation refers to necessary and

appropriate modifications and adjustments that do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, in order to ensure that persons with disabilities can enjoy or exercise, on an equal basis with others, all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Strategy 7*

32. Governments should promote access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

**B. Promoting an enabling environment and strengthening effective mechanisms for policy formulation and implementation**

*Strategy 8*

33. Governments at all levels are encouraged to develop or update an action plan on disability with time-bound targets and to allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of the plan and the monitoring of implementation. Where appropriate, lessons learned from the previous action plan should be taken into account.

*Strategy 9*

34. Governments should, if they have not already done so, establish or designate an institutional mechanism to coordinate and monitor policies and programmes concerning disability; this should ensure both the effective and regular participation of representatives of all ministries and the participation of persons with disabilities. Local government should be an integral part of this mechanism.

*Strategy 10*

35. Governments should, within the limits of their economic capacity and level of development, adequately and on a sustainable basis finance the implementation of relevant policies and programmes, data collection and capacity-building for government officials, experts and persons with disabilities as well as the operation of a mechanism for coordinating disability-related matters.

*Strategy 11*

36. All stakeholders should raise awareness of the rights-based approach and disability-inclusive development through effective networking and collaboration with the media, research institutions, legal professionals, donor and development agencies and the private sector.

*Strategy 12*

37. Governments, together with other stakeholders, should ensure that the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and the present document are disseminated in an appropriate manner.

**C. Improving the availability and quality of data and other information on disabilities  
for policy formulation and implementation**

*Strategy 13*

38. The importance of collecting data on disabilities should be stressed and advocated not only within the United Nations system but also among decision makers at the national level, including national statistical offices, as well as academic institutions, self-help organizations and other civil society organizations.

*Strategy 14*

39. Governments are encouraged to develop policies or laws to mandate the collection of data on disabilities, as well as the allocation of the requisite resources. Such policies and laws should, among other things, respect the privacy of persons with disabilities.

*Strategy 15*

40. As far as possible, data should be classified by the socio-economic status of persons with disabilities, including the type of impairment, sex, age, education, employment and income.

*Strategy 16*

41. Governments should build national capacity so that data on disability can be regularly collected through population censuses and surveys and disseminated.

*Strategy 17*

42. Governments are encouraged to develop innovative methods of data collection in order to capture the needs of persons with disabilities, in particular those who are illiterate or who live in remote areas.

*Strategy 18*

43. Governments are encouraged to undertake regular assessments of the impact of policies and programmes which are intended to improve the situation of persons with disabilities and to ensure that they fully enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Strategy 19*

44. Governments, in cooperation with ESCAP, should, as appropriate, take measures to ascertain the concerns of disabled persons and to develop future action plans through questionnaires and surveys, depending on the availability of resources.

*Strategy 20*

45. ESCAP, other United Nations organizations, agencies and intergovernmental organizations, should, upon request, assist Governments in setting statistical standards and in formulating policy regarding persons with disabilities.

#### **D. Promoting disability-inclusive development**

##### *Strategy 21*

46. Governments at all levels, in collaboration with United Nations development organizations and agencies, international, regional and national development organizations, the private sector and other civil society organizations, should mainstream disability perspectives in the development and implementation of all social and economic development plans, in particular those related to the Millennium Development Goals. The development of disability indicators for the Millennium Development Goals should be considered.

##### *Strategy 22*

47. International, regional and national development organizations and agencies, including United Nations development organizations and agencies, are encouraged to mainstream disability perspectives into the development and the implementation of their general policies and programmes. Economic and technical cooperation should also be an integral part of this endeavour.

##### *Strategy 23*

48. Disability-inclusive disaster management should be promoted. Disability perspectives should be duly included in the implementation of policies and initiatives in this area, including the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, an international framework for promoting the commitment of Governments to disaster management. Universal design concepts should be integrated into infrastructure development in disaster-preparedness and post-disaster reconstruction activities.

#### **E. Strengthening comprehensive community-based approaches to disability issues for the prevention of the causes of disability and for the rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities**

##### *Strategy 24*

49. Governments, in collaboration with United Nations development organizations and agencies, international, regional and national development organizations and agencies, the private sector and other civil society organizations, are encouraged to apply comprehensive community-based rehabilitation (CBR) measures, taking into account the recommendations contained in the ILO/UNESCO/WHO joint position paper referred to in paragraph 4 above.

##### *Strategy 25*

50. Governments are encouraged to take appropriate and effective measures to reduce the preventable causes of disabilities, such as traffic accidents and diseases.

## **V. ENHANCING COOPERATION AND SUPPORT IN PURSUANCE OF THE BIWAKO MILLENNIUM FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**

51. The Biwako Millennium Framework for Action has seven strategies categorized under three areas of “cooperation and support in pursuance of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action”, namely “subregional cooperation and collaboration”, “regional collaboration” and “interregional collaboration”. The following are additional strategies to reinforce the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action targets.

### *Strategy 26*

52. Together with such partners as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the World Health Organization and relevant funds, agencies and other entities within the United Nations system, ESCAP should enhance inter-agency coordination to implement the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five effectively.

### *Strategy 27*

53. Governments and international organizations are encouraged to enhance subregional cooperation and collaboration through their involvement in subregional governmental organizations and through regional programmes and projects, such as the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia. Collaboration with regional and subregional disability-related organizations, projects and activities, such as the Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability, the Asia and Pacific Disability Forum and the Pacific Islands Forum, should be encouraged.

### *Strategy 28*

54. In support of the effective implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five, ESCAP is encouraged to develop knowledge networks and disseminate and exchange information throughout the region concerning good practices in cooperation with stakeholders, including civil society organizations and the private sector, and in partnership with international and regional forums, such as the Asia-Pacific Development Centre on Disability, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Asia and Pacific Disability Forum.

## **VI. ENHANCING EFFECTIVE MONITORING AND REVIEW**

55. A review of the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five should be conducted at the end of the Decade, in 2012, at the regional, subregional and national levels.

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