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U.S. Statement  
Special Event on Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
March 26, 2007

Thank you, Mr. President.

The United States welcomed the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the General Assembly last December and congratulates all those involved in the process, including Ambassador Don MacKay of New Zealand, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee.

We were pleased to participate actively in the Ad Hoc Committee's work, including through providing information on our national law and policy – such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and President Bush's New Freedom Agenda – as well as on our foreign assistance programs related to disabilities.

We also greatly appreciated the constructive role that members of civil society played throughout the Convention process.

There is much to be proud of in the Convention. It is based on respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all persons with disabilities. It contains strong provisions on a variety of important issues, including political participation, access to justice, accessibility, health, the crucial role of family, and end of life issues.

Moving beyond the Convention itself to the broader of issue of the role of disability issues in the United Nations system, what are the Panel's ideas for how the robust policies reflected in the Convention can be integrated into our work here and elsewhere?