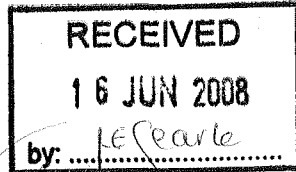


Submission 6
TT 4 June 2008



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Hon Kelvin Thomson MP
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

June 14 2008

Dear Mr Thomson,

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) Inc is the national peak organisation representing more than 2 million disabled women in Australia. For a number of years now, WWDA has been an active contributor in the development of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

WWDA has on a number of occasions, articulated to the Australian Government our commitment to the CRPD along with our expectation that the Australian Government sign and ratify this vitally important treaty – a treaty which marks the final step in the transition towards contextualising the needs, concerns and aspirations of people with disabilities into a framework of human rights.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) goes a long way in affirming the rights and dignity of women with disabilities and is a potentially powerful tool in addressing violations of their human rights. It affords the opportunity to serve as a potent framework to inform and guide domestic legislation, policy, programs and services that impact on women with disabilities - and importantly, it can create the space for disabled women's agency.

In this context, WWDA **strongly endorses** the recommendation of the National Interest Analysis [2008] ATNIA 18 (para 3, p2) of which states:

Early ratification would be highly desirable given Australia's active role in the negotiation of the Convention text, early signature and continued international support for the Convention. It is proposed that this treaty action be undertaken as soon as practicable for these reasons, as well as to increase Australia's prospects of participating in the inaugural election of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities established under Article 34 of the Convention.

WWDA thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide our position on this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Carolyn P Frohmader
Executive Director