



The Third Annual International Shafallah Forum on Sport and Ability

Shafallah Declaration

Doha, Qatar

April 20th – 22nd, 2008

Recognizing the breadth of human rights and fundamental freedoms, a core part of which is the right of persons with disabilities to sport and recreation, delegates from around the world met at the 2008 Shafallah Forum to open a dialogue on sport and ability,

Recalling that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration without distinction of any kind,

Reaffirming the principles of equality for persons with disabilities in sport and recreation embodied in the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons and the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities,

Observing the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights,

Recognizing the role of sport and recreation in society in fostering social inclusion,

Acknowledging the valued existing and potential athletic contributions made by persons with disabilities to the overall well-being and diversity of their communities and that the promotion of the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities in sport will result in their enhanced sense of belonging and in significant advances in the human, social and economic development of society,

Realizing the potential of sport to empower persons with disabilities to realize their full participation in the economic and political life of their community,

Considering the discrimination experienced by persons with disabilities in enjoying their human rights and fundamental freedoms and barriers that exist in accessing sport and recreation,

Recognizing the double discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities in accessing their right to participate in sport and recreation,

Reaffirming the need to ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participate in play, recreation, leisure and sporting activities, including in the school system, community spaces, playgrounds and recreation areas,

Observing the need to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices that hinder the participation of persons with disabilities in sport and recreation and the need to promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities as participants, competitors and spectators in sport and recreation,

Understanding the importance of access to a choice of disability-specific or mainstream options for persons with disabilities to explore their sport and recreation potential,

Encouraging the participation of persons with disabilities in sport and recreation activities at all levels,

Observing the need to facilitate and support capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programs and best practices,

Encouraging the facilitation of cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge developing adaptive sport and recreation at all levels,

Recognizing the important role of international cooperation in supporting national and local efforts to ensure that sport and recreation is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities, including inclusive development programs,

Desiring to implement the principles embodied in the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to secure the earliest adoption of practical measures to enable persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in sport and recreation,

Observing that Shafallah delegates demonstrated leadership in advancing sport as inclusion through exploring new and creative avenues for persons with disabilities to enjoy and exercise their right to sport.

Now, therefore,

The Shafallah Forum encourages the strengthening of the dialogue among and between individuals and organizations involved in disability, sport, and human rights to advance the human rights of persons with disabilities in sport and recreation. The Forum further recognizes the importance of education and awareness-raising to promote inclusive practices across cultures and communities and society.