

**ENSURING INCLUSION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES IN U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE WOMEN'S PROGRAMMING**

**WHEREAS**, the June 9, 2011 report of the World Health Organization and the World Bank titled "World Report on Disability" indicates that, worldwide, the prevalence of disability has dramatically increased from 10% to 15% of the population, which is about one billion people and includes an increased estimate of the proportion that are women and girls with disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Ambassador for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer have engaged in vigorous efforts to advance the rights of women and girls in the areas of health, including sexual and reproductive health and maternal mortality, education, economic development, anti-trafficking, and conflict and post-conflict environments; and

**WHEREAS**, women and girls with disabilities are rarely included in such efforts and, if included, their participation is rarely part of the media coverage of such efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, women and girls with disabilities are more often subjected to sexual and gender-based violence and the numbers of women with disabilities increases as a result of conflict, necessitating their inclusion in programs addressing sexual and gender-based violence and anti-trafficking programs, especially in regions of conflict;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Organization for Women (NOW) advocate that the US Department of State (DOS) do the following:

- Address concerns of women and girls with disabilities in migrant and refugee policy and programming; and
- Include women and girls with disabilities in anti-trafficking programs, making it understood that women and girls with disabilities are often victims and that disabilities often result from trafficking; and
- Include women and girls with disabilities in programs addressing economic empowerment of women, such as micro-finance, leadership skill development, mentoring programs, and economic skills workshops; and
- Include images of women and girls with disabilities in the DOS multimedia activities; and
- Include women and girls with disabilities and their organizations in meetings with women's groups held during country visits by the Secretary of State and the Ambassador for Global Women's Issues; and
- Ensure that issues of concern to women and girls with disabilities be included in DOS' multilateral diplomacy at the United Nations Security Council, General Assembly, Commission on the Status of Women, Human Rights Council, and at other international and regional multilateral organizations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NOW advocate that the DOS collaborate with both Special Advisor for International Disability Rights Judith E. Heumann and with organizations representing women and girls with disabilities to take vigorous and targeted efforts to increase the number of women and girls with disabilities who participate in education exchange programs, with a goal of at least 10% of such participants; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the NOW Disability Rights Committee in collaboration with the NOW Global Feminist Issues and Strategies Committee, in consultation with the National NOW officers, draft a letter to the Secretary of State and other appropriate individuals to advocate for the issues elaborated in this resolution.