



United Nations Human Rights Council, 23rd Session (27 May – 14 June 2013)

Item 8 General Debate

Monday 10 June 2013

Speaker: BHA representative Hannah Bock

Healthcare and workplace access for the disabled

Mr President.

'No one shall suffer discrimination because of disability'. Article 22 of the VPDA is echoed in Article 3 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany – a state where one in 10 people is disabled.¹

However, real inclusion requires public awareness and a public awareness campaign aimed at both the able and the disabled.

Germany has taken a first step towards this with its 'einfach machen' (making it easier) campaign.² In Germany, every employer with over 20 staff has a choice of providing facilities for disabled employees or of paying compensation. But it is still difficult for the disabled to find employment: 60% of employers pay the compensation.

[From my own experience, I know that of this 60%, more are unwilling to create a decent working place environment for the disabled than are unable to do so.³ The problem seems to be that employers are reluctant to provide a suitable working environment for the disabled even though appropriate assistance is available from the state.]

This is far more complicated than just making buildings accessible, the tools for work must also be accessible; software applications, intranets and the provision of electronic files may present technical problems.⁴

Barriers also exist in the healthcare sector, especially in emergency care. In an emergency, every second may be vital. Communication with wholly or partially deaf patients, for example, is often made difficult because medical staff lack training and translators are not usually immediately available or able to provide a 24 hour service.⁵ [Patients are likely to be frightened in a hospital that doesn't cater for their disability.⁶ Speaking simply or using the "isignIT application"⁷ would ease treatment.]

Germany can and should take the next step towards breaking down the barriers between the able and disabled by providing education about the nature of the barriers and ways to overcome them. All people should have the same rights, including the right to life.

Mr President, we believe the lead taken by Germany should act as a model for other states to follow.

Thank you sir.

¹ <http://www.goethe.de/ges/soz/soz/de3394825.htm>

² <http://www.bmas.de/DE/Themen/Schwerpunkte/NAP/Meldungen/inhalt.html>

³ <http://www.zeit.de/karriere/beruf/2010-08/behindertenquote-firmen>

⁴ <http://www.aktion-mensch.de/inklusion/am-arbeitsplatz/experten-im-interview.php>

⁵ <http://www.dbsv.org/fileadmin/dbsvupload/pdf/BIK-Broschuere-Gemeinsam-Barrieren-abbauen.pdf>

⁶ Sozialgesetzbuch V und IX

⁷ <http://www.caritas.de/neue-caritas/heftarchiv/jahrgang2009/behindertemenscheneuerforderndaskranken>

<https://www.openpetition.de/petition/online/hilfe-fuer-behinderte-finanzierung-der-persoelichen-assistenz-bein-klinkikaufenthalt>

<http://www.isignit-app.de>