

HUMAN DIMENSIONS IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

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Statement of NGO Little People of Kosova

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We call for the support of OSCE participating states to implement the Non – Discrimination Program in Kosova and Balkan Region.

We believe it is the best tool to improve the position of all minorities, including people with disabilities.

Economic empowerment is at the heart of civil rights for people with disabilities.

We would like to stress, that the Disability Mentoring Day – DMD event is one of most powerful events in the world which promote inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace and in our communities. This idea of DMD came from USA and now is being adopted across the world.

The aim of DMD is provide an opportunity of disabled people to work. Employers agree to employ disabled persons for one or more days and provide a mentor in shadowing someone's job. By building relationships between mentees and mentors working in fields that interest them, Disability Mentoring Day helps to create qualified workers and gives people with disabilities greater direction and motivation. Each year, Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) is observed on the third Wednesday of October. You can find out more about DMD from the website.

Goals of DMD are:

- To improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- To promote disability as part of an inclusive workforce.

- To change attitudes among employers about people with disabilities.
- To increase confidence among people with and without disabilities.

We, the people with disabilities, support the idea of the DMD because it improves the perspective of disabled people, and challenges the perception for the disabled people, the role and their contribution in society.

Through Voluntary Campaign of DMD disabled people in Kosova and else where in the world are learning how to fight challenges ahead of us. In order to change the perception of disabled people and their abilities to contribute to society, time is needed. Changing attitudes is a process- and we are part of that process, bearing in mind that we-as individuals and as a community should be more proactive in achieving our goals.

DMD is one tool that can be used to end discrimination. We need more tools like this to be used in non- Discrimination Program. We also need Laws that protect all minorities not just some.

All OSCE countries including Kosova need to have Disability Act alike US and UK. Making this happen must be a future priority for OSCE and ODIHR .

We recommend that OSCE countries

- adopt DMD event as a tool an Non – Discrimination program
- pass and implement Disability Acts
- support countries alike Kosova to pass and implement Disability Act.