



UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty dealing with the rights of disabled people.

- It was adopted in 2006 in the New York headquarters of the United Nations and entered into force in 2008.
- Currently, the convention has received 177 ratifications.
- The UNCRPD is aimed at:
 - Ending discrimination against persons with disabilities.
 - Enabling persons with disabilities to live independently.
 - Making the education system more inclusive.
 - Making sure persons with disabilities are protected against all forms of abuse, violence and exploitation.
- The idea behind the convention is a result of decades of work by the UN in highlighting the rights of the disabled.
- A chief goal behind the treaty is to eliminate the idea that disabled people are objects of charity and reiterate the fact that they have equal rights as much as any other person in society.
- They are also active members of society and can make informed decisions based on their free will.
- The convention reaffirms that all persons have equal rights and fundamental freedoms.
- It also stresses on the areas where certain adaptations have to be made so that disabled people can enjoy those rights equally.
- The convention covers a vast range of aspects including health, education, access to justice, employment, personal security, access to information, and independent living.
- Parties to the convention must ensure that they take adequate measures to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights and freedoms of individuals with disabilities and promote respect for the dignity of persons with disabilities.
- The convention is legally binding.
- The UNCRPD is one of the fastest negotiated human rights treaties and also the one that received the highest number of signatories on its opening day.
- Another unique feature of the convention is that it is applicable to all forms of disabilities including physical, psycho-social and intellectual (cross-disability).

UNCRPD Governance

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the expert body that monitors the implementation of the convention by parties.

- All parties to the convention are obliged to send reports to this committee stating how they are implementing the convention and the progress made so far.
- The first report is to be sent within two years of signing.
- Subsequently, the report should be sent every four years.

Optional Protocol to UNCRPD

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that individuals who believe their rights as per the convention have been violated can bring their complaints to the UN Disability Committee (only after they have exhausted the option of seeking redress with their respective national government).

UNCRPD and India

- India ratified the UNCRPD in October 2007.
- The Parliament enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 with a view to fulfilling the obligations under the UNCRPD.
- The government also launched the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan (Accessible India Campaign) with the objective of making government buildings more accessible to the disabled people.