

IFHOH Press Release
International Day of Persons with Disabilities
3 December 2016

We are pleased to mark¹ the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, an international observance promoted by the United Nations since 1992. This year's theme is *Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want*.

The theme refers to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by world leaders in September 2015. Over the next 15 years these goals will apply to all countries in a universal effort to end poverty and inequality while creating sustainable societies that leave no one behind.

The International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) has collaborated with other international organizations as part of the civil society movement to include persons with disabilities in the SDGs. For our community, SDG progress means access to hearing aids, assistive technology, captioning, cochlear implants and peer and professional support services.

Our constituency forms one of the largest groups of persons with disabilities. There are over 360 million persons with hearing loss among the estimated one billion people living with disabilities worldwide.² As a result, persons with hearing loss constitute one-third of all persons with disabilities in the world and is one of the largest category of disability.

We urge governments to ensure that our community is part of their Sustainable Development Goals as they plan to implement the 2030 agenda. In doing so, they will be achieving many of the goals of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) which came into force 10 years ago.

The disability community's motto of *Leave No One Behind* applies to the hard of hearing community. No hard of hearing person should be left behind. On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, all hard of hearing people should be remembered and included.

IFHOH is an international, non-profit umbrella organization which provides a platform for co-operation and information exchange among its members and interested parties. IFHOH, and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH), work to promote greater understanding of hearing loss issues and to improve access for hard of hearing people.

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¹ For more information about SDGs go to <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

² WHO statistics: http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/WHO_GE_HL.pdf ;
http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/factsheet.pdf?ua=1