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Statement on Japan's decision to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities

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On 4th December 2013, the Japanese Senator Diet has unanimously approved ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Since the convention was initially drafted by the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (Ad Hoc Committee) in the United Nations (UN), we the Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI-Japan) have deeply been involved in the process of discussions and negotiations. We welcome the adaptation of the Japanese Diet and express our sincere gratitude for all the people who have been making efforts towards the ratification.

The discussions, negotiations, and drafting of the UN CRPD had started in 2001. After the eight sessions of the CRPD Committee, the convention and its Optional Protocol were adopted on 13 December 2006 at the UN Headquarters in New York. In cooperation with a number of disabled people's organizations (DPOs), DPI-Japan had sent Mr. Toshihiro Higashi, DPI-Japan board executives, as an adviser to the government delegation. Moreover, the Japan's DPOs and other civil society organizations (CSOs) had sent delegations consisted of more than 200 people in total in the five years, actively lobbied at the ad hoc Committee. We DPOs were united to join the public discussions and negotiations under the slogan of "Nothing about us, without us!". This participation of people with disabilities lies at the foundation of CRPD.

Japan government has signed on CRPD on 28th September 2007, and in March 2009, moved toward its ratification in March 2007. However, from the beginning, we DPOs opposed ratification with speed-before-quality; we sought development of the legal foundation and administrative system to meet requirements leading to ratification of CRPD. With all kinds of approach and enormous effort by organizations and individuals, we prevented Japan government's ratifying CRPD without any improvement of the legislation.

It soon brought the launch of disability policy reform in Japan with substantial

participation of people with disabilities. The reform resulted in the revision of Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities in 2011, and the establishment of the Comprehensive Support Law for Persons with Disabilities in 2012 and the Act to Eliminate Disability Discrimination in 2013. It's noteworthy that Japan has developed these legal foundations though the reform even though there are still so many rooms for further improvements.

However, we would like to emphasize that the ratification is not the end but the beginning. It could be said that we have been in the first stage of disability policy reform so far, but from now on, after the ratification of CRPD, we are going to be in the second stage of the reform. This is where the real fight begins toward an inclusive society ? which is the purpose of CRPD - the society where both people with and without disabilities could safely live in the communities without segregation. There are many problems to solve such as social institutionalization of people with disabilities, social hospitalization of people with psychosocial disabilities for non-medical reasons and the unfulfilled inclusive education system for both children with and without disabilities.

We also need to focus on the present challenges towards future amendments of Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities in, the Comprehensive Support Law for Persons with Disabilities, and the Persons with Disabilities Abuse Prevention Act; and towards implementations of the Act to Eliminate Disability Discrimination and the amended Disabled People Employment Promotion Act.

We, DPI-Japan, hereby announce our firm determination to do our utmost for making CRPD real for persons with disabilities in cooperation with other DPOs and CSOs, thanking all of the people who have worked hard.