WBU and ICEVI welcome UN Panel’s report on post-2015

At a special summit on education held in Madrid on the occasion of the 75th birthday of the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind (ONCE), the World Blind Union (WBU) and ICEVI (the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment) have given a warm welcome to the report of the UN Secretary General’s High Level Panel on the framework which should follow the Millennium Development Goals when they run out in 2015. The report recommends that people with disabilities should be much more fully included in the post-2015 framework than they were in the MDG's, particularly in the goals relating to poverty reduction and education.

The Education for All (EFA) programme under the MDG framework has had considerable success in reducing the number of children not in school from 108 million to 61 million, but this has meant that disabled children are progressively more marginalised. It is estimated that there are 6 million children worldwide with a visual impairment, 80% of them in developing countries. Of these, over 90% or 4.4 million receive no education at all.

Arnt Holte, President of WBU, and Lord Colin Low, President of ICEVI, said: “Being disabled more than doubles your chance of never enrolling in school in some countries. Equal access to education for all reduces inequality and poverty. We hope that this Panel's report will mean that blind and disabled children are no longer left out of account when planning education services so that they are enabled to take their rightful place in the community and fulfil their true potential.”