



HEU recognizes International Day for Persons with Disabilities – December 3

Today, people around the world are recognizing the International Day for Persons with Disabilities – a day that was established by the United Nations (UN) to create awareness, understanding, and action for the legal and social rights of persons with disabilities.

An estimated 15 per cent of the global population – over one billion people – live with a disability, according to the World Health Organization's 2015 statistics.

The 2016 theme– *Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want* – aims at creating a more inclusive and equitable world for persons with disabilities. These goals include eradicating any barriers relating to the physical environment, information and communications technology, or societal attitudes that people with disabilities encounter each day.

CUPE National has proclaimed 2016 the *Year of Health and Safety*. This includes an upcoming Health and Safety Learning Conference and a new OH&S learning series. As the B.C. health services division of CUPE, HEU has representatives on this working group, including members of the union's People with disAbilities Standing Committee.

The working group liaises with the Canadian Labour Congress and Council of Canadians with Disabilities to ensure Canada fulfills its obligations to protect the rights of people with disabilities.

In 2010, Canada ratified and implemented the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, and submitted its first report on compliance to the UN in 2014.

Although disability rights activists say Canada has a long way to go in supporting people with disabilities, who often find themselves in poverty and lacking adequate care, Canada was a pioneer in securing legal protections for people with disabilities through new language in the *Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*.

To find out what's happening in your community to mark December 3, visit the Council of Canadians with Disabilities <<http://www.ccdonline.ca/>>.

You can also find useful resources on CUPE National's website at <<http://cupe.ca/health-and-safety-workers-disabilities>>.

December 3, 2016