

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

*Justice K. Ramaswamy**

All of you have joined together with a zeal and commitment for enabling the disabled to ensure the rights given, not only under the UN Declarations of 1971 and 1975 to the persons with disabilities but also the laws enacted by the Union Parliament. We have the plethora of laws but the law alone will not meet the situation. What requires to be done is a commitment towards the disabled, to enable them to avail of the rights and to remove the inhibitions among the members of the family that the children if they had known as the disabled they will have the bad look from the society or the trauma with which the parents and the members of the family suffer from. This commitment is needed not necessarily from the environment of the law alone. Law is only an enabling structure to meet the ultimate goals but the implementation part is more effective one. It is suggested by Harish N. Salve that involvement of the private sector would also enable to implement the rights of the disabled and to have them enjoy those rights after removal of the disabilities. I would suggest that in our experience as members of the National Human Rights Commission, what needs to be done is the public, the NGOs and the like-minded people

We have come across some of the NGOs who are really committed. Take the case of mental care taken by *Sewak* in Calcutta. Three persons are responsible for that. They are professionals but they live and their earnings are only for living, but they live for the service of these disabled. What I am seeking to impress upon is their commitment to the cause and there are also some institutions who collect the funds from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, show the statistics but they do nothing. This is a crime on the disabled, and a crime on the society. But eliciting the cooperation of the enlightened sections of society and carrying of the campaign is most important part and in that most of the youngsters who have got a great zeal to do their bit in this area also galore. We have to channelise their energies and ensure that the disabled also get the benefit of the law, the benefit of the philanthropy from the public sector and the private sector. And even private individuals are willing to contribute for the removal of the disabilities provided they find that the persons who

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are operating are genuinely interested in it and the money given by them will not be misused. There are people in India who are charitable. They can contribute a great deal for that purpose. I request all those who have gathered here, who have got the same zeal to do a little bit of service to these disabled persons to channelise those resources and work unitedly to remove these difficulties. I deeply thank the Indian Law Institute, which is a premier institute of the country for taking up this task and organising a national seminar.

