



PRESS RELEASE

Hundreds march in Mokhotlong to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disability

Maseru, 5th December 2012: Hundreds of people with disability gathered in Mokhotlong on Monday to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disability. This event, recognised by the United Nations and celebrated each year on 3 December, is aimed at raising awareness of issues faced by persons with disability.

Around 700 people participated in a march around Mokhotlong town in support of equal opportunities for people with disability. The march was followed by a formal ceremony which comprised speeches by various stakeholders in the disability sector including the hon. Minister of Social Development, M'me Matebatso Doti, Principal Chief of Mokhotlong, Nt Morena Mathealira Seeiso and representatives from WLSA, LCN, the Campaign For Education and LNFOD.

The theme chosen for this year's celebration was *Removing the Barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society*. The disability movement in Lesotho chose to specifically focus on the barriers to education as 40% of children with disability aged 5-10 are not enrolled in school, despite free and compulsory primary education.

Bongiwe Buze, President of LNFOD said: "On this day each year people with disability gather to raise awareness of the gap between people with disabilities and the rest of society. However, in order to create an inclusive and accessible society for all we must also be vocal about our rights for the other 364 days."

This is the 9th International Day of Persons with Disability observed in Lesotho. Next years' celebrations will be hosted in Qaches Nek.

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About LNFOD

Established in 1991, the Lesotho National Federation of Organisations of the Disabled (LNFOD) is an umbrella body of organizations dealing with disability in Lesotho. Its mission is to protect the rights of people with disabilities in Lesotho by providing support for disabled people's organizations and empowering their members with life-skills, financial and material resources and representing their needs to the government, development partners and wider society. Its membership consists of the Lesotho National Association of Physically Disabled Persons (LNAPD) Lesotho Society of Mentally Handicapped Persons (LSMHP), Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons (LNLVIP) and National Association of the Deaf in Lesotho (NADL).

For further information, please visit www.lnfod.org.ls