

Press Release
Note No. 5830

Note to Correspondents

ITALIAN PRESIDENT CIAMPI TO ACCEPT FDR INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY
AWARD AT UNITED NATIONS, 17 NOVEMBER

Christopher Reeve Will Salute Italy for Work on UN Programme of Action
Concerning Disabled Persons

NEW YORK, 12 November -- Italy's President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi will accept the seventh annual Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award on behalf of his country at a ceremony at the United Nations on Monday, 17 November at 11 a.m. World famous disability rights advocate Christopher Reeve will participate in the ceremony, to be held at the Economic and Social Council Chamber.

Other prominent speakers include Julian R. Hunte, President of the General Assembly; Nane Annan; David A. Roosevelt, great-grandson of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Trustee of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute; Ambassador William vanden Heuvel, co-chair of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute; Alan A. Reich, Chairman, World Committee on Disability; and Kenneth Behring, Founder and Chairman, The Wheelchair Foundation.

Italy will be honoured for its exemplary efforts to improve the lives of people with disabilities. The Award is given out by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the World Committee on Disability. It recognizes outstanding action in support of the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in 1982 (resolution 37/52).

The World Programme of Action is a global strategy to enhance disability prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities, which advocates full participation of persons with disabilities in social life and national development. "Equalization of opportunities" is its guiding philosophy for achieving full participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of social and economic life. Accordingly, disability issues should not be treated in isolation, but within the context of normal community services.

The Award includes a bust of Mr. Roosevelt, \$50,000 for an outstanding disability program in Italy, and 1,000 wheelchairs for people with mobility impairments in Italy. Past recipients are the Republic of Korea, Canada, Ireland, Hungary, Thailand and Ecuador.

For further information, please contact: Edoardo Bellando, Department of Public Information, tel.: (212) 963 8275

Member States interested in applying for the Award may contact the World Committee on Disability (tel.: (202) 293-5960, or visiting the following Web

site: www.worldcommitteeondisability.org.)

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