

# First Russian Elected to UN Committee on Disabled Persons

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A Russian representative has been elected to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the first time in its history, the TASS news agency reported Wednesday.

Valery Rukhledev, President of the All-Russian Society for the Deaf, was elected along with eight others to sit on the 18-member committee.

“This is an indication of the support our country is receiving for our efforts to protect the rights of disabled people of the international community,” said a spokesperson for Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, TASS reported.

The committee monitors the implementation of policies which protect the rights of disabled people, as set out by UN Convention.

Mr. Rukhledev's appointment comes at a time of changing attitudes towards disabled people in Russia, which has included the opening of new state-run facilities such as the country's first center for children on the autistic spectrum in Moscow.

Mr. Rukhledev will serve until 2020 alongside new representatives from Hungary, Kenya, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, and Japan.

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