

Statement of interpretation on Article 15

For a long time, aid to the handicapped was classed together with aid to the aged; since the second world war, aid to handicapped persons has developed on separate lines, under the influence of Anglo-Saxon legislation. Traditional assistance policies are now out of date and in legislation the emphasis regarding this category of persons has shifted to vocational training and rehabilitation, the reintegration within society. The overriding purpose is that such persons shall be enabled to work and be independent. The Charter reflects this trend and, after referring to handicapped persons in Articles 9 and 10, raises the right of physically or mentally disabled persons to training, vocational rehabilitation and social resettlement to the level of a separate social right. Such a right is inconceivable in the absence of means for bringing it into effect and the Charter therefore incorporates some of the provisions already contained in relevant ILO recommendations. Under Article 15, the Contracting Parties undertake to guarantee to disabled persons:

- training facilities, including, where necessary, specialised institutions (Paragraph 1);
- that their placing shall be promoted by means of specialised services, sheltered employment and measures to encourage employers to admit physically or mentally disabled persons to employment (Paragraph 2).

All the states whose first reports were before the Committee have accepted the whole of this article. The Committee, having considered the reports, recognised that substantial progress had been made in this field by all the countries concerned. In some cases, however, the results obtained were still insufficient. It was thought that a recommendation should be submitted to Norway regarding its undertakings pursuant to Paragraph 1.

On the other hand, owing to the absence of information on certain points, the Committee was unable to give a definite assessment on the Danish and Norwegian answers to the questions posed under Paragraph 2. In the same context, the Committee felt that it needed to indicate in greater detail the scope of the obligations deriving from the two paragraphs in this article.