World Blind Union General Assembly 2025

Resolutions

This document contains resolutions submitted to the World Blind Union General Assembly 2025 for approval.

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# Resolution 1: Accessible Education for Persons with Visual Disabilities

Submitted by: East Timor Blind Union (ETBU) and Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired – Timor-Leste (AHDMTL)

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**Considering:**

That education is a fundamental human right for all people;

That many persons with visual disabilities in developing countries, including Timor-Leste, face barriers in accessing inclusive and accessible education;

That assistive technology and teacher training are essential for ensuring equal learning opportunities.

**Noting:**

The importance of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), especially Article 24 on Education;

The WBU Strategic Plan which emphasizes advocacy for inclusive education worldwide.

**Therefore, be it resolved that the World Blind Union:**

1. Calls upon all governments to ensure that persons with visual disabilities have equal access to quality and inclusive education at all levels.

2. Encourages international cooperation to provide resources such as braille materials, screen readers, and other assistive technologies.

3. Urges teacher training institutions to include inclusive education practices for persons with visual disabilities in their curricula.

4. Requests the WBU Education Committee to monitor progress and report back at the next General Assembly.

# Resolution 2: The creation of the Global Communication System for the Blind

Proposing Country: Panama

WBU Member Organization: National Union of the Blind of Panama

Proposing Person: Professor Fausto Pérez, President of the UNCP and First Delegate to the WBU

The General Assembly of the World Blind Union, in the exercise of its powers, adopts the following resolution:

The World Blind Union, considering:

1. That in current times, access to information and communications has been recognized as a universal right in international instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is binding in all member states that have ratified it.

2. That the World Blind Union, as the highest representation of blind persons worldwide, must stand out for developing policies and actions in accordance with the provisions of the aforementioned international instruments, especially when such actions favor the integral development of this population.

3. That the development of the associative movement of persons with visual disabilities and the work of blind people’s organizations in different countries around the world is information of great value not only for blind persons but also for the world in general; therefore, access to such information constitutes an inalienable right, requiring immediate action from the new authorities of the WBU.

4. That the great advantages offered by technological development in the field of communications greatly facilitate the reception, systematization, and dissemination of relevant and instant information, which would allow us to remain up to date on what is happening with blind persons in different countries and regions worldwide.

Resolves:

1. To urge the new Executive Committee of the WBU to manage and promote the establishment of a coordinating communication body, capable of directing, receiving, systematizing, and disseminating on a monthly basis information on the most important events taking place in our countries related to the field of blindness, as well as the actions carried out by the new Executive Committee of the WBU.

2. To call upon each WBU member country to voluntarily promote the creation of small communication teams to provide periodic reports on relevant events occurring in their country, which will serve as informational material for dissemination before the WBU’s global communication coordinating team.

Issued in the city of São Paulo, Federative Republic of Brazil, on the 4th day of September, 2025.

Postscript:

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COUNTRY CODE for calls: 507

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# Resolution 3: The Right on Literacy, to learn and to use Braille for blind children

Submitted by:

Swedish Association of the Visually Impaired (Synskadades Riksforbund)

Danish Association of the Blind (Dansk Blindesamfund)

Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (Nakovammaisten liitto)

Icelandic Association of the Visually Impaired (Blindrafelagid)

Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (Norges Blindeforbund)

**The World Blind Union declares**

This year we are celebrating Braille 200 years globally. Despite this blind and partially sighted children and youth in the world are not guaranteed to learn and to use Braille in school as stated in article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Learning to read and to write braille is the only existing way of literacy for blind persons. Blind children who do not learn braille are excluded from any education and from participation in society, social life and political decisions.

Braille is the only way to gain active reading and writing skills, which are the basis for all education and most jobs you can have as an adult.

Recognising that sighted children benefit from constant incidental exposure to printed text in everyday environments, while blind children encounter Braille only in specially prepared materials, the Assembly urges manufacturers and service providers to apply universal design by incorporating Braille on products, packaging, and public information, thereby promoting equal opportunities for Braille literacy development. Braille Signage should be used in public buildings and areas to make the use of Braille more readily accessed for Braille to be more available and accessible in day-to-day settings.

We would also like to point out that learning braille must also be offered to adults who become blind, because this is a very big group of people who need rehabilitation.

The World Blind Union 11th General Assembly, gathered in Sao Paulo 3 – 5 September 2025, resolves:

* Blind children and young learners must be included in all types of education.
* They must get literacy with braille and must have the opportunity to use braille in every educational context.
* The awareness of how important it is to learn Braille must increase.
* They must be provided with adapted materials and textbooks, assistive technology equipment.
* They must be supported by competent special teachers.
* Blind children in the world should be confident and comfortable using Braille in school and at home. They should be empowered and proud of being a braille reading child and must be guaranteed their right to learn and to use Braille.
* The cost of assistive technologies that facilitate the production of Braille is comparatively high, and so is electronic equipment that enables reading and writing Braille. We urge that the costs associated with Children gaining access to reading and writing Braille be paid by appropriate governmental agencies.
* WBU will put all efforts needed to make countries, parliaments, governments and ministries concerned, to take all measures to ensure that all blind children are guaranteed to learn and to use braille.
* WBU together with the International Council for Education of Visually Impaired (ICEVI) will make a joint statement and raise the importance of braille in school and in life with UN, UNICEF and UNESCO.

States, which do not support blind children in literacy with braille are acting against the UNCRPD.

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# Resolution 4: Advancing Independent Living, Digital Accessibility, and Inclusive Empowerment of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons in Least Developed and Developing Countries

Submitted by: Nepal Association of the Blind (NAB)
Status: National Member of the World Blind Union
For consideration at: 11th WBU General Assembly 2025

**Preamble**

The World Blind Union General Assembly,

Recognizing that millions of blind and partially sighted persons in least developed and developing countries, particularly in geographically isolated, mountainous, and landlocked regions, continue to face compounded barriers in accessing education, employment, technology, independent living, social protection, political participation, and full inclusion in society;

Recalling the obligations of States Parties under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), in particular: Article 9 on accessibility; Article 19 on living independently and being included in the community (including access to personal assistance and community support); Article 21 on freedom of expression and access to information; Article 24 on education; Article 27 on work and employment; Article 28 on an adequate standard of living and social protection; Article 29 on participation in political and public life; and Article 32 on international cooperation;

Acknowledging that implementation gaps remain significant in least developed and developing countries, particularly in contexts affected by poverty, climate change, conflict, and limited infrastructure;

Reaffirming the commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to 'leave no one behind,' with urgent attention to inclusive education, employment, accessibility, social protection, and political participation for blind and partially sighted persons;

Concerned about the persistent lack of personal assistance services, digital accessibility, and assistive technology in local languages;

Recognizing that progress requires governments and international development agencies to allocate resources, including at least three percent (3%) of budgets, directly for the empowerment and inclusion of blind and partially sighted persons, and to consult closely and actively with representative organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), in particular organizations of blind and partially sighted persons;

**Resolution**

**I. Legal and Treaty Obligations**

1. CALLS UPON all Member States to give full effect to CRPD Articles 9, 19, 21, 24, 27, 28, 29, and 32 by:

* Adopting and enforcing accessibility legislation and standards across physical, digital, and communication environments (Article 9).
* Establishing and funding personal assistance schemes and community-based services to guarantee independent living (Article 19).
* Ensuring freedom of expression and access to information through accessible formats, technologies, and communication (Article 21).
* Guaranteeing inclusive education with accessible materials, trained teachers, inclusive examinations, and scholarships (Article 24).
* Enforcing employment inclusion measures, including reasonable accommodation, quotas, entrepreneurship support, and fair recruitment (Article 27).
* Providing adequate social protection, income support, assistive devices, and community housing services (Article 28).
* Securing equal opportunities for participation in political and public life, including accessible voting systems and support for candidates with disabilities (Article 29).
* Mainstreaming disability inclusion in all international cooperation and allocating resources to inclusive development (Article 32).

**II. Digital Accessibility and Technological Innovation**

2. URGES governments to adopt and enforce WCAG 2.2 digital accessibility standards across all public websites, mobile applications, and digital services;

3. ENCOURAGES investment in assistive technologies, including local-language text-to-speech systems, accurate OCR for diverse scripts, subsidized access, and responsible AI tools designed for accessibility;

4. RECOMMENDS the establishment of regional centers of excellence for assistive technology innovation, research, and knowledge sharing among least developed and developing countries.

**III. Inclusive Education and Employment**

5. STRESSES the urgent need for accessible learning materials, adequately trained teachers, inclusive examinations, and targeted scholarships for blind and partially sighted learners;

6. CALLS UPON governments and development partners to establish specialized TVET and employment pathways, enforce disability employment quotas, create reasonable accommodation funds, and support entrepreneurship by blind and partially sighted persons.

**IV. Budgetary Commitments and International Cooperation**

7. URGES all international funding agencies, bilateral donors, and multilateral organizations to allocate at least three percent (3%) of total development and humanitarian budgets specifically for the empowerment, independent living, and inclusion of blind and partially sighted persons;

8. REQUESTS that all donors and governments require evidence of meaningful consultation with representative organizations of blind and partially sighted persons in all program cycles;

9. CALLS FOR transparent and tagged budget lines for assistive technology, personal assistance, accessible information production including Marrakesh Treaty implementation, and organizational capacity building of representative OPDs.

**V. Data, Gender Equality, and Climate Resilience**

10. CALLS FOR strengthened disability-disaggregated data systems to inform evidence-based policies;

11. EMPHASIZES targeted leadership and empowerment programs for women and girls with visual impairments and gender-responsive measures;

12. URGES States and humanitarian actors to integrate disability inclusion into disaster risk reduction and climate resilience strategies, including multi-sensory early warning systems, accessible evacuation and shelters, and inclusive relief distribution.

**VI. Implementation and Monitoring**

13. REQUESTS the World Blind Union Executive Committee to establish a monitoring mechanism with regular reporting from member organizations;

14. CALLS FOR the creation of a Global South Development Fund, managed transparently with the participation of regional OPDs, to support implementation of this resolution;

15. DECIDES that progress under this resolution shall be reviewed at each Council meeting of the World Blind Union and presented at the next General Assembly.

**Contact Information**

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# Resolution 5: The development of strategies aimed at fostering unity among blind people around the world.

Country: Panama.

Member Organization: National Union of the Blind of Panama.

Proponent: Fausto Pérez, First Delegate of the member organization.

**Resolution:**

1. That up to the present, due to the diversity of languages, great geographical distances, different worldviews, and varying economic and social conditions, among others, it has been difficult to achieve the long-desired unity among blind people around the world.

2. That for the new authorities and the member organizations of the WBU, it is a major challenge to develop strategies aimed at building and consolidating ties of unity among the members of this international body.

3. That there exists a vast amount of knowledge, experiences, and information in the different organizations of our countries, related to issues such as: the development of the associative movement, political advocacy, education, work, health, family, community, sports, and leisure activities, among others; which would enrich us and promote greater development of both organizations and blind individuals themselves.

4. That the digital paradigm that characterizes the present times offers all the facilities and advantages to make possible the development of mechanisms for interlinguistic, geographical, and other types of connection.

**It resolves:**

1. To urge the new executive committee, in agreement with the member organizations, to gradually develop horizontal connection ties among the grassroots of our organizations, including national, regional, and/or global leadership bodies.

2. The strategies or mechanisms of connection will focus mainly on areas such as: experiences, knowledge, information, best practices, legislation, associated with the coverage and development of the associative movement of blind people, political advocacy, education, health, work, family, community, sports, recreation, territorial inclusion, and targeted development of groups such as women, youth, older adults, marginalized ethnic populations, or migrants with visual disabilities.

Given in the city of São Paulo, Federative Republic of Brazil, on the 5th day of September, 2025.

**Postscript:**

Name of proponent: Professor Fausto PÉREZ;

President of the National Union of the Blind of Panama.

Country Code: 507

Mobile: 66-93-79-17.

# Resolution 6: Youth inclusion in the governance of the World Blind Union

Submitted by: the Ghana Blind Union

Whereas:

* The meaningful inclusion of youth in decision-making bodies has become a recognized standard across global governance and development agendas;
* Youth perspectives and participation are increasingly integrated into disability rights platforms at both national and international levels;
* The World Blind Union (WBU), as the global voice representing organizations of people who are blind or partially sighted, benefits from reflecting the diversity of its constituency, including youth;
* Including youth governance strengthens leadership by introducing fresh insights, innovation, and contributes to long-term organizational sustainability;
* It is both timely and necessary for WBU governance practices to evolve to ensure relevance, responsiveness, and legitimacy.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

1. The WBU General Assembly requests the WBU Officers to establish a Youth Inclusion Working Group by the time of its first meeting in 2026, whose mandate will be to:
	1. Review global best practices on youth representation in similar international federations;
	2. Consult with youth leaders, regional youth networks, and WBU member organizations from all regions;
	3. Evaluate various mechanisms for youth inclusion, including possible models such as youth seats (voting or non-voting), advisory positions, or rotating membership;
	4. Propose specific constitutional amendments or governance adjustments needed to formalize youth representation.
2. The Youth Inclusion Working Group shall present a detailed proposal (including recommended wording for constitutional changes) to the next General Assembly scheduled in 2029 for consideration and approval.
3. The General Assembly reaffirms that until such time as formal youth representation is implemented, existing processes for ensuring inclusive participation remain in effect.



Dr. Peter K. Obeng-Asamoa

(Executive Director)

On behalf of the Ghana Blind Union

# Resolution 7: Calling upon governments and international bodies to safeguard the mobility and safety of blind and partially sighted persons by adopting and implementing Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems (AVAS)

Moved by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) in the USA and the German Federation of Blind and Partially Sighted People (DBSV)

**Recognizing** that electric and hybrid vehicles pose specific safety risks to blind and partially sighted pedestrians because of their low sound emissions at low and moderate speeds;

**Acknowledging** that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) obliges States Parties to ensure accessibility and personal mobility on an equal basis with others;

**Recalling** that the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) adopted Regulation No. 138 to the 1958 Agreement, which requires Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems (AVAS) in “quiet road transport vehicles” to enhance their audibility and thus improve the safety of pedestrians, in particular those who are blind or partially sighted;

Highlighting that more than 60 countries are Contracting Parties to UNECE Regulation No. 138 and that other countries have adopted or aligned national regulations with this standard, in some cases introducing even stricter requirements;

Underlining that the continued revision and enforcement of AVAS standards requires strong and coordinated advocacy to ensure that the interests and safety of blind and partially sighted persons are protected;

Noting the studies that have shown the risk quiet vehicles pose.

Welcoming the ongoing work of the World Blind Union (WBU), in cooperation with the National Federation of the Blind (NFB, USA), the German Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (DBSV), and other member organizations, in representing the voices of blind and partially sighted persons at these negotiations;

The WBU General Assembly, meeting in São Paulo, Brazil, 1–5 September 2025, hereby resolves:

1. That WBU reaffirms its strong commitment to ensuring that all blind and partially sighted people can move safely and independently in environments increasingly dominated by electric and hybrid vehicles in shared spaces and notes in the upcoming strategic planning that this important advocacy work must continue.
2. That WBU will continue to represent the global blindness community in international negotiations on AVAS, advocating for mandatory and effective sound standards that provide sufficient audibility to blind and partially sighted pedestrians.
3. That WBU calls upon all member organizations to support this advocacy effort by collecting and sharing relevant research, data, and testimonies from their countries and regions.
4. That WBU urges all governments to adopt, implement, and enforce strong AVAS regulations that produce a safe level of sound, at least in line with UNECE Regulation No. 138, and to resist efforts to weaken these standards.
5. That WBU invites international bodies, including UNECE and the United Nations, to continue consulting with the WBU to ensure that the perspectives of blind and partially sighted persons remain central to all discussions on vehicle safety standards.

# Resolution 8: Establish contacts and working relations with mainstream humanitarian aid organizations

We, member organizations of the World Blind Union from 32 countries (full list in the end of the document) across the world, present the following resolution for consideration and adoption by WBU General Assembly being held at Sao Paulo, Brazil from 1st to 5th of September 2025.

The number of humanitarian crises caused by natural disasters and conflicts are increasing. In these situations, mainstream disaster relief and humanitarian aid organizations as well as development organizations targeting poverty alleviation and food security provide shelter, medical help, care and basic amenities to the impacted population and population at risk. These organizations are often international and actions coordinated on international level.

Despite the disability movements continued efforts to improve the inclusivity of humanitarian aid, blind and partially sighted people are often not able to access aid and assistance in an equal manner compared to the general population. Organizations of blind and partially sighted people are not able to establish contact with the mainstream organizations on local level to share information on the needs of blind and partially sighted people or support the inclusivity of humanitarian response.

Therefore, the General Assembly of WBU resolves that in its next strategic plan, one of the focus areas of WBU’s work is to establish contacts and working relations with mainstream humanitarian aid organizations as well as development organizations in order to facilitate the connection between local OPDs and mainstream organizations when humanitarian crisis unfolds.

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United States

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* American Printing House for the Blind
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* National Industries for the Blind
* National Library service for the Blind and the Physically Disabled

# Resolution 9: Calling upon UNESCO to consider recognizing the Learning and Use of Braille for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Moved by the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind (ONCE), the French Federation for the Social Promotion of the Blind and Partially Sighted in France (CFPSAA) and the German Federation of Blind and Partially Sighted People (DBSV)

**Celebrating** the 200th anniversary of the creation of the Braille code and its use and learning;

**Acknowledging** that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities acknowledges Braille as a form of communication and calls upon States Parties to adopt appropriate measures to safeguard its learning and use, including: the use of Braille signage in buildings and other facilities open to the public; accepting and facilitating the use of Braille to ensure freedom of expression and opinion and access to information; facilitating the learning of Braille by people with a visual impairment to guarantee full and equal participation in education and as members of the community; and employing teachers qualified in Braille to help ensure the realization of the right to education;

**Recalling** thatBraille is a unique tactile system developed for people who are blind or partially sighted and using it allows people with sight loss to develop essential reading and writing skills and learning capacities;

**Underlining** the vital importance of Braille in ensuring full and equal access by people who are visually impaired to the written word;

**Highlighting** the fact that Louis Braille, the inventor of the code, stated that “braille literacy is equal to print literacy, and literacy is what makes people equal";

**Recalling** that studies have shown how braille literacy is directly correlated with academic achievement and employment among the blind and partially sighted;

**Underlining** that the inclusion of the use and learning of braille as part of UNESCO’s intangible cultural heritage represents a major act of international recognition. Beyond its symbolism, it establishes a new perspective on braille, affirming its dimension as a transmissible culture, a human practice, and a living heritage. This approach commits signature states to guarantee its preservation and promotion, as well as to ensure compliance with safeguarding measures, establishing braille as a universal right, essential to the equality, dignity, and full citizenship of blind and visually impaired people

**Welcoming** the current campaign undertaken by organisations from the visually impaired community, including the French organizations of the Blind and Partially Sighted, the German Federation of Blind and Partially Sighted People (DBSV), the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind (ONCE) and the European Blind Union (EBU) to promote the inclusion of the Learning and Use of Braille (*l’apprentissage et l’usage du Braille*) on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage;

**The WBU General Assembly, meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1-5 September 2025, hereby resolves:**

1 That WBU firmly and unequivocally supports the campaign for the Learning and Use of Braille to be recognised by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage.

2 To offer all and any support it is able to provide to the campaign.

3 That it encourages all States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) to nominate the Learning and Use of Braille for inscription on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

4 That it calls upon UNESCO to consider such nominations positively and include the Learning and Use of Braille on its List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

# Resolution 10: Updating WBU constitution submitted to the WBU Assembly in Sao Paolo, Brazil 1 – 5 September 2025

Submitted by the delegates of Danish Association of the Blind Jesper Bentil Holten and Mads Brix Monggaard.

As well as honorary life member John David Heilbrunn

Whereas

* We have noted the 16 amendments circulated to the WBU membership on 21st of July 2025.
* We acknowledge that many of the amendments put forward seek to address the challenges of WBU being a global organisation organised into six regions and with limited financial and human resources.
* We also acknowledge that the role of a constitution is to provide clear non-conflictual instructions on organisational structures, powers and resources.
* We believe the constitution is the basis for the Union to be able to operate in a powerful, goal-oriented manner to the benefit of its members.
* We note that the global situation as of today is complicated and offers political and human challenges to a larger degree than what has been the case for WBU in the past.
* We further note that the constitution in its current form was developed and adopted in a time where the possibilities for meeting and making decisions in digital settings

We resolve that

* The Officers of WBU together with the next constitutions committee ensure that the constitution and additional bylaws are revised in a way that enables a smooth and operational bases for regional/global collaboration
* The Officers together with the new constitutions committee revise the constitution to ensure the constitution is taking into account the realities of a digital world and the possibilities it offers to bringing membership of a global organistation together
* Proposals for amendments to the constitution as well as their rationales are brought to the 12th General Assembly of WBU for decision well in advance, to fully engage the WBU membership.

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# Resolution 11: Fee Structure

Submitted by CNIB, Canada.

**Whereas:** The World Blind Union (WBU) is committed to the inclusion of all countries as members, irrespective of size or economic circumstance; and,

**Whereas:** The WBUs existing fee structure may no longer serve the best interests of the organization, its current and potential future members; and,

**Whereas:** Minor reviews of WBUs membership fee structure were undertaken in 2010 and 2013, and a complete and comprehensive revision has not taken place since 2007;

**Be it resolved that**: The World Blind Union create a working group or other such committee to undertake a full and complete examination and evaluation of the current membership fee structure, its assessment criteria, and operation; and,

**That**, the committee be empowered to recommend such changes as it may deem necessary to ensure a fee structure that is viable, responsive, and equitable for all current and potential future members; and,

**That**, in accordance with Article IV, Section 3(d) of the WBU constitution, the committee shall present its report and recommendations to the WBU Executive Committee for review and subsequent presentation to the WBU General Assembly, with a recommendation for approval.