



**Intergovernmental Institution for the use of Micro-algae Spirulina Against Malnutrition**  
**Permanent Observer with the United Nations Economic and Social Council**  
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*“There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread”*  
**Mahatma Gandhi**

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**IIMSAM Director General H.E. Ambassador Remigio M. Maradona’s official statement on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities**



*“As a disabled person who was inflicted with polio melitis of upper extremities at the age of two, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities has a special relevance for me.*

*The year 2008 celebrates the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At the United Nations my work for the Rights of the Disabled especially participation at the various sessions of the United Nations Ad-Hoc Committee on Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities was an attempt that the aspirations of various international legal and human rights instruments that affirm the right of the disabled for dignity and justice translate into concrete affirmative action.*

*While leading IIMSAM, I ensured that the Spirulina initiatives of the organization to counter malnutrition and hunger specifically prioritise, target and reach out to the disabled which is a traditionally marginalized populace. I am glad to apprise you that many of regional country programmes of IIMSAM are led by disabled persons who have proved through their extraordinary work and determination that if given equal opportunities, we the disabled can contribute towards making universal human rights a reality and the world a better place for all of us.” - **United Nations Headquarters, New York, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008***

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**Around 10 per cent of the world’s population or 650 million people, live with disabilities. However, all over the world, persons with disabilities continue to face barriers to their participation in society and are often forced to live on the margins of society. They are routinely denied basic rights such as to equal recognition before the law and legal capacity, freedom of expression and opinion, and the right to participate in political and public life- Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations**