



Intergovernmental Institution for the use of Micro-algae Spirulina Against Malnutrition
Permanent Consultative Observer with the United Nations Economic and Social Council

Ban Ki-moon hails New Zealand's leadership on disability issues



IIMSAM pictures above: H.E. Amb. R. Maradona with Ban Ki-moon and his wife Mrs. Moon. IIMSAM Picture below: David A. Roosevelt, Great-Grandson of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, Member Board of Governors, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute with H.E. Amb. D.G. of IIMSAM R. Maradona and H.E. Amb. Shariar Rahimi .

(United Nations Headquarters 6 May 2008) IIMSAM's Delegation led by its Director-General Amb. Remigio Maradona who is himself disabled contracting Polio at the age of two. Same illness that affected Former Legendary U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt attended this year's **Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award** which is presented by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute to a UN Member State that makes noteworthy progress towards the full participation of citizens with disabilities as called for in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon congratulated the Government and people of New Zealand, the recipient of this year's award.

In his remarks at the award ceremony, Mr. Ban noted that New Zealand is widely recognized for its leadership on disability issues, particularly as a leading proponent of the Disabilities Convention, which just entered into force on 3 May. Ambassador Don McKay of New Zealand chaired the committee tasked with drafting the Convention, and his ***"inspired leadership ensured an open, transparent and inclusive process that led us to a successful outcome,"*** the Secretary-General noted. The Ambassador's leadership was a reflection of his country's deep commitment to disability issues domestically, Mr. Ban added, noting that the Government's comprehensive disability strategy led New Zealand to adopt Sign Language as its third official language in 1996. It has also promoted quality living for persons with disabilities within their communities. "As a result of these many similar measures, New Zealand has become a model for the world on disability issues," said Mr. Ban. "Your example strengthens our resolve to ensure human rights and development for all – especially through the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in every level of society, from the local to the global." The Secretary-General's own country, the Republic of Korea, was the first recipient of the Award, which was established in 1995.

This year's Award is especially important. It coincides with the sixtieth anniversary of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** -- that great magna carta of the modern age. This document, imbued with the spirit and convictions of Mrs. Roosevelt, speaks to our highest aspirations, as well as our most basic commitments. It underscores our collective belief that if human rights are to truly matter anywhere, they must be ensured everywhere and for everyone. This premise also drives today's Award. We gather to highlight the shared endeavour of Governments, the United Nations, civil society and the private sector to improve the lives of disabled people everywhere, and to give meaning to universality of universal human rights.