

The following is quoted with permission from The Cape Town Commitment, Part 2 II.4.

4. Christ's peace for people with disabilities

People with disabilities form one of the largest minority groups in the world, estimated to exceed 600 million. The majority of these live in the least developed countries, and are among the poorest of the poor. Although physical or mental impairment is a part of their daily experience, most are also disabled by social attitudes, injustice and lack of access to resources. Serving people with disabilities does not stop with medical care or social provision; it involves fighting alongside them, those who care for them and their families, for inclusion and equality, both in society and in the Church. God calls us to mutual friendship, respect, love, and justice.

A) Let us rise up as Christians worldwide to reject cultural stereotypes, for as the Apostle Paul commented, 'we no longer regard anyone from a human point of view.'^[65] Made in the image of God, we all have gifts God can use in his service. We commit both to minister to people with disabilities, and to receive the ministry they have to give.

B) We encourage church and mission leaders to think not only of mission *among* those with a disability, but to recognize, affirm and facilitate the missional calling of believers with disabilities themselves as part of the Body of Christ.

C) We are grieved that so many people with disabilities are told that their impairment is due to personal sin, lack of faith or unwillingness to be healed. We deny that the Bible teaches this as a universal truth.^[66] Such false teaching is pastorally insensitive and spiritually disabling; it adds the burden of guilt and frustrated hopes to the other barriers that people with disabilities face.

D) We commit ourselves to make our churches places of inclusion and equality for people with disabilities and to stand alongside them in resisting prejudice and in advocating for their needs in wider society.