

**Sign Language Interpreters and Natural Disasters
Liz Scott Gibson, WASLI President**

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As I write this, WASLI has just heard from Asia Regional Representative, Emiko Ichikawa, letting us know of the situation in Japan after the devastation wreaked by the recent terrible earthquake and tsunami. She writes that 16,000 people have died, and 400,000 are in evacuation centres. Communications are difficult with electricity shortages making it hard to recharge mobile phones, and shortages of fuel mean that people cannot drive any distance to find out how people are.

Enormous efforts are being made by NRASLI & JASLI working in conjunction with the Japanese Federation of the Deaf to ensure that everything is being done to see that Deaf people have access to the information they need and that sign language interpreters are provided where possible. It was heartening to glimpse a

Japanese Sign Language interpreter by the side of the country's prime minister on a recent television broadcast.

Over the past year we have seen many parts of the world experience natural disasters. There have been major floods in Africa, Australia and Brazil, a cyclone in Madagascar, earthquakes in Chile, Haiti and New Zealand. Many people have lost their homes, and need medical assistance. Deaf Sign Language users are particularly disadvantaged, and are often the last to know where to go to get food, water and medical aid. Whilst television is used to provide information in many countries, only a few have taken the steps needed to make sure information is provided in sign language.

Following the earthquake in Chile last year, WASLI's Latin America representative, Jose

Luis Brieva-Padilla, and I, as WASLI President, sent letters to the authorities to advocate for the inclusion of sign language interpreters on television broadcasts, as we were shocked that the efforts of sign language interpreters in that country to volunteer their services had been ignored.

Article 11 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with



Emiko Ichikawa
(Japan)
WASLI Asia Regional
Representative

For the latest updates, and information about interpreting events around the world, join WASLI on Facebook

Cont.

Disabilities requires states to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters. This surely must mean the provision of information in sign language and the use of interpreters when

required?
WASLI takes this matter very seriously. We hope to begin discussions with the WFD to collect and analyse experiences from around the world and explore how examples of good practice can be shared and protocols established to ensure that sign language interpreting provision

is readily available in times of emergency. If any of you have experiences to contribute, please let us know. But for now, our sympathy is with the people of Japan and all those who have suffered in natural disasters gone by.

Links to interpreted post-disaster information in New Zealand and Australia

See here for links to information about the Queensland floods, as well as media briefings interpreted into Auslan (Australian Sign Language): <http://www.deafsocietynew.org.au/floods/>

See here for an article about signed language interpreting in New Zealand following the earthquake in Christchurch: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/christchurch-earthquake/4805402/Sign-man-becomesvital-link>

And here for an example of a press conference interpreted in NZSL (New Zealand Sign Language): <http://www.3news.co.nz/VIDEO-Christchurch-quake-press-conference-Monday-morning/tabid/309/articleID/200207/Default.aspx>

Ghana: Deaf Demand more Sign Language Interpreters

Story from: <http://www.worldwithouthearing.com/>

Members of the National Deaf Association of Ghana told Citi FM that they want the government to encourage more people to learn sign language and employ more interpreters. They say this could be possible if the country's sign were recognised as an official language. They pointed to the recent death of a deaf man named Kofi Mensah, 34, at a hospital. Mr. Mensah's wife brought her husband to the hospital because he had trouble breathing. His wife was also deaf and neither of them could read or write. There was no way for Mrs. Mensah to explain her husband's history of heart trouble to the doctors, so he died without proper treatment. There are an estimated 20,000 deaf Ghanaians in the country.

Shortage of ASL Interpreters in Quebec

Story from: <http://www.worldwithouthearing.com/>

CBC reports that there is a critical shortage of American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters in the predominately French-speaking province of Quebec and that more professionals need to be trained. There are thousands of deaf Anglophones in Quebec but only a about 10 qualified sign language interpreters. There is a growing need for a formal, bachelor's degree program in visual interpretation in Quebec, says University of Quebec in Montreal (UQÀM) linguistics lecturer Suzanne Villeneuve. Two years ago, she authored a study that examined the need for sign language interpreter training and submitted it to Quebec's Education Department. A ministry spokesperson says they are looking into the recommendations.

Welcome to ISLIA: The Indian Sign Language Interpreters Association

Monica Punjabi Verma President, ISLIA

ISLIA was set up to have a platform that provides easy access to information to the Deaf community through sign language interpreters. It has been set up by a small team of Indian Sign Language (ISL) trainers and interpreters who have all been certified by, and are registered with the only government body that offers training in Indian Sign Language: Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped (AYJNIHH - Mumbai) and the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI - New Delhi). ISLIA firmly believes that the Deaf community has a rich culture and heritage which is unique. To understand the Deaf

better and to effectively support the Deaf community we must first learn to communicate with them. ISLIA aims at providing professional sign language interpreting services to the Deaf community in India.

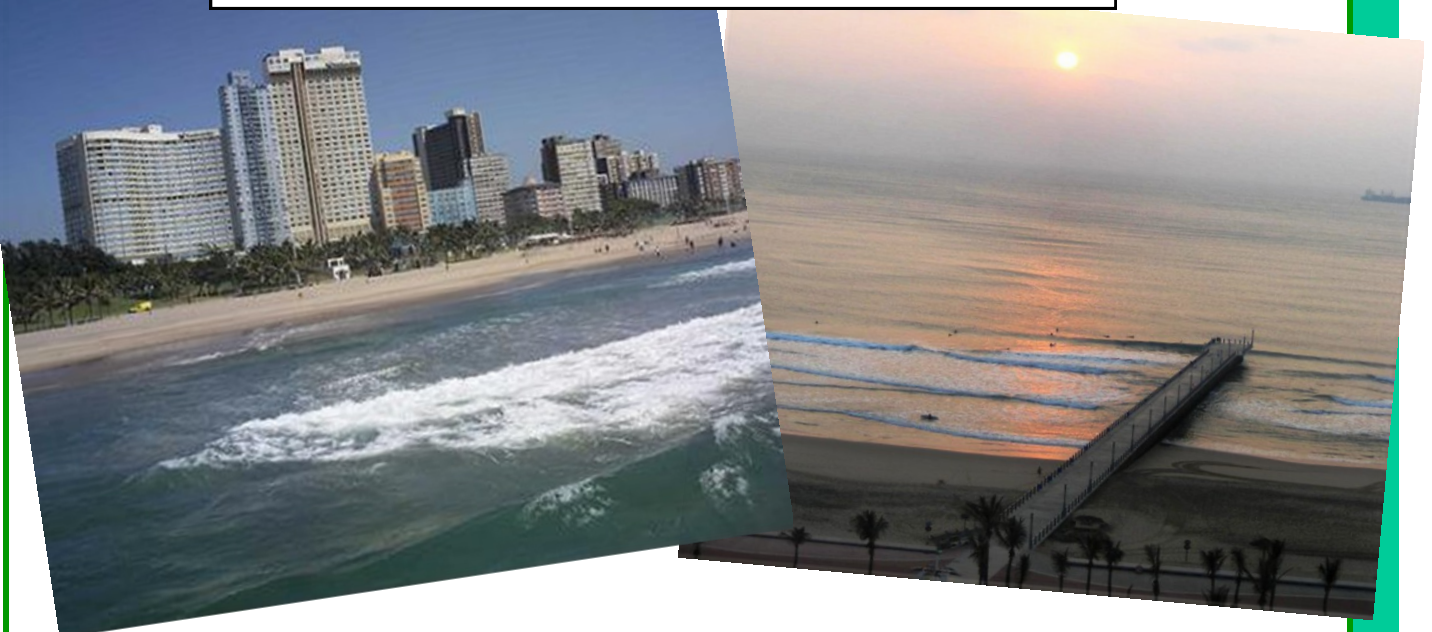
ISLIA has tasked itself with raising awareness within both Deaf and hearing communities to the existence of our services, and the positive impact they can have on the quality of life of a Deaf person. At ISLIA we aim to recognise and promote sign language interpreting as a career option for many. We are the only association that has trained and certified sign language interpreters across India.

ISLIA encourages parents and siblings of Deaf people to learn sign language in order to communicate effectively with their Deaf children. ISLIA encourages the educators of Deaf to learn and use sign language to enhance two way communication in education. This will enable both the educators and the Deaf students to understand and enjoy every session in class. ISLIA also encourages people in general to learn sign language to communicate with the Deaf community and understand Deaf culture. All these will help bridge the gap of communication between the hearing and the Deaf.

**“At ISLIA, we
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For more information about ISLIA please visit www.islia.org
Or email infoislia@gmail.com

The packed conference programme has been announced! Check out the three days of speakers and presentations on the following pages. Register at: www.wasli.org



WASLI Conference Programme

Thursday 14 July 2011	
	Breakfast
Morning	WASLI General Members' Meeting
	Lunch
Afternoon	<p>Opening ceremony: Liz Scott Gibson (WASLI President) Markku Jokinen (WFD President) Bruno Druchen (National Director of DeafSA)</p> <p>Keynote: Colin Allen</p>
	Dinner on your own & Regional Meetings
19:00 – 20:30	Cocktail Party
Friday 15 July 2011	
	Breakfast
8:30 – 10:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Wheatley & Maya de Wit "Joint cooperation: The only way forward" 2. Arun Rao "He is Dimp and Duff! : The Challenges of Interpreting in India" (India) 3. Awoii Patrick Micheal "A Glimpse at Development of Sign Language Interpretation in Uganda" (Uganda) 4. Country Reports (England/Wales/N. Ireland, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Australia)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Robert Adam - Do we agree on the role of a Deaf interpreter? (UK) 2. Maria Cristina Pires Pereira (given by Angela Russo) "Person reference during sign language interpreted conversations" (Brazil) 3. Christopher Stone & Debra Russell "Interpreting in International Sign: Decisions of Deaf and non-deaf Interpreters" (UK and Canada) 4. Country Reports (Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Burundi, Cambodia)
	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paul Bartlett & Stuart Anderson "The value of Deaf input in Interpreting training" 2. Rachel Mckee, Della Goswell & Jemina Napier "Expanding horizons: A collaborative model for the delivery of one interpreter education program in two countries" (New Zealand & Australia) 3. Angela Murray & Joneti Rokotuibau "Working together to support the Solomon Islands: An emerging Deaf and interpreting community" (New Zealand & Fiji) 4. Country Reports (Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia)
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:45	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Len Roberson, Debra Russell & Risa Shaw "Current Practices in Signed Language Interpreting in Legal Settings in North America" (USA & Canada) 2. Jordi Ferré & Melton Bustinza "Collaboration between interpreters" (Spain & Chile) 3. Hend Al-Showaier, Saudia Arabia 4. Country Reports (Denmark, Scotland, Ethiopia, Finland, Netherlands. South Africa)
	Dinner on your own

Please help to create an opportunity!

The WASLI conference only happens every four years, and WASLI is seeking funding to enable interpreters from developing countries to attend this conference. We have had so many people apply for sponsorship that we are embarrassed in having to turn them away. We are having one last push to raise funds to get at least one more person there. If we exceed the target, we can possibly help more than one.

Lots of small donations can add up to a lot. Some Canadian interpreters have donated the cost of a coffee and cake. Graduating college students - again from Canada - have raised about US\$400. UK interpreter training centres are being challenged to do the same and two have already responded with donations of £150 each.

Please help to create an opportunity that will benefit one interpreter, his or her colleagues and Deaf clients in a developing country! Donate on line at www.JustGiving.com/WASLI today, using your credit card or PayPal account. (Note: payments are collected in British pounds).

Saturday 16 July	
	Breakfast
8:30 – 10:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Harumi Kimura & Noriko Miyazawa "Training for more liberal translation: From the lessons of interpreting course in Japan" (Japan) 2. Jeff Davis "Interpreting in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts: Charting a course in collaboration" 3. Ananda van der Wal & Trudie Theunissen "Deaf interpreter training in South Africa: A Pilot Project" (South Africa) 4. Country Reports (India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Zimbabwe, USA, Swaziland)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christian Ramirez "The Committee of International Cooperation for Bible Translation in Sign Languages (CICBTSL)" 2. Elizabeth Mendoza "Thinking Through Ethics: The Development of Ethical Decision-Making Among Sign Language Interpreters" (USA) 3. Paul Michaels "Interpreting for the Deaf gay community: perceptions of interpreting in the LGBT community from the perspective of interpreters and their consumers" 4. Country Reports (Korea, Kosovo, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malaysia)
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Darren Byrne & Senan Dunne "Sign Language Interpreters and Deafhood: A match made in...?" (Ireland) 2. Jemina Napier "6-Up: Research on signed language interpreting in Australia" (Australia) 3. Soya Mori "IS Interpreter in Asia and Pacific region: From experience as IS Interpreter for JICA-JFD Deaf leadership training program" 4. Country Reports (Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, New Zealand, Peru)
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tessa Padden & Clare Canton "Deaf Interpreters Breaking Through" 2. Della Goswell "Not reinventing the wheel: borrowing other codes of ethics" (Australia) 3. Odette Belinda Swift "Exploring the roles of post-secondary educational SASL interpreters" (South Africa) 4. Country Reports (Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain Sweden Taiwan)
18:30	Banquet/Closing

“Please help to create an opportunity that will benefit one interpreter, his or her colleagues and their Deaf clients in a developing country!”

For conference information in English and Spanish, go to:

www.wasli.org

SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH THE WORLD!

Please send updates, announcements, articles and photos from your part of the world for the next WASLI newsletter.

Please email them to: newsletter@wasli.org



IMPORTANT

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