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**FIRST WORLD  
CONGRESS FOR PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES**  
RUSSIA YEKATERINBURG 2017



WORLD CONGRESSES  
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

*Berlin, February 2017*

*Hello World,*

Recently, a small initiative group had another meeting in Yekaterinburg, where they discussed the months to come before the First World Congress. Outside, it was snowing, the temperature dropped to  $-21^{\circ}$ ; inside, the atmosphere was full of excitement and happy anticipation. We have been working on gathering all of you in Russia for four years already. Will we succeed? We know that for many it will be a very long and expensive trip, but in return they will receive something unforgettable.

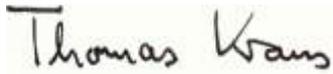
The preparation to the Congress is in progress. We are impressed with the collaboration of the civil society and the state bodies who work together to make the World Congress a large-scale event. At this stage, what we really need is to raise public awareness about the Congress more actively. On the level of governments, this dissemination happens during their meetings in different countries. We inform embassies, state organs and enterprises about the Congress. We care about the participants, that is, you, dear friends! It is important for the preparation to go the best way possible; yet it is even more important for the Congress to improve the situation with people with disabilities in the world.

We managed to get a deal with local hotels about the accommodation for all participants. Universities and other educational facilities will research the event and, we hope, will learn much from what they observe. From a thousand volunteer applications we received, we will select 100 people who will help and assist you during the event. In the forthcoming months, we will work on the preparation of the Congress intensively.

In the workshops of Blagoe Delo NGO, the workers have been producing presents and gifts for each participant. An artist with a disability composed an anthem of the Congress, which we will learn together. There will be a drama performance which will touch on some famous motives from *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, showing them in a new light. This performance will rely on the participation of groups from all over the world and we hope that you will support us in that. When you submit your registration application, please let us know how you would be able to participate in making this idea come true. "Special" people will tell us about the life goals that they have achieved and activities they have done for other people. Values will be made visible through thoughts, art and activities. In the end of the Congress, there will be a gala-concert and a closing event. But we will not keep the Congress within a closed community, we will try to make it visible in Yekaterinburg, the fourth largest city in Russia. To do so, we will prepare a special exhibition and another big event in which the city population will be included. For the moment, we keep the details about this latter event a mystery.

As you know, a hard winter is followed by a great summer. We are working on making it come true but we need your help! Many participants have already submitted their applications, but the majority is from Europe, where is the rest of the world? Let's make the First World Congress for persons with disabilities in Yekaterinburg a truly world-scale event. Join us, include yourself!

Welcome to Russia, to the Urals!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Kraus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first letter 'T'.

Thomas Kraus (the initiator of the worldwide congresses)

Enclosed you will find the Congress brochure. For further details and registration please visit our website: [www.kongress2017.ru](http://www.kongress2017.ru). Practical things will be explained under the FAQ (Frequently asked questions) section. For all matters concerning the Congress, please contact the Congress Office by emailing to [kongress2017.ekb@gmail.com](mailto:kongress2017.ekb@gmail.com).