



OSS 2007

“Opération de Sauvegarde des Sourds”

Operation to Safeguard the Deaf

Patrick BELISSEN
OSS2007

4, rue du Poirier
86190 QUINÇAY – France
patrick.belissen@free.fr
Oovoo : belpat
Skype : belpatoss

Allen COLIN
World Federation of the Deaf

France, October 25, 2012

Dear Mr. President,

I am Patrick BELISSEN, president of OSS2007 (Operation to Safeguard the Deaf), association affiliated to the National Federation of the Deaf in France. Our aim is to safeguard our Deaf culture and Deaf language.

Our linguistic and cultural heritage is now seriously threatened because of the cochlear implant that affects more than 80% of children, and because of the integration of Deaf children in hearing people schools. Manifestations of the decline in the Deaf language and in the Deaf culture are obvious: more and more Deaf children are deprived from Deaf language and from any contact with Deaf community. This policy represents a serious threat to their future and to our community's survival. I think that the situation is similar in Europe and in the whole world, and I believe we do share the same concerns.

The numerous attempts to negotiate through the classical way with the French Government to establish official recognition of our needs and rights never came off.

Therefore we have chosen to launch a major operation with high media impact to make our voice heard. We are organizing a march from Paris to Milan in the next year (from March 23rd to May 11th, 2013), for which a small group of 5 or 6 French Deaf people have volunteered. We chose Milan since – as you know – the 1880 congress that set the prohibition of Deaf language in the education of Deaf children is highly symbolic for the

Deaf people of all over the world. The goal of this march is, thanks to the media and to the mass mobilization of the Deaf people, to focus public opinion on our situation. We want the society to change its perspective on us, to be seen no more as ill persons, but as human beings who can live fully thanks to their language and their culture. The point is in short: say our word! To overturn the fateful sentence of the 1880 congress of Milan: « *Viva la parola!* »

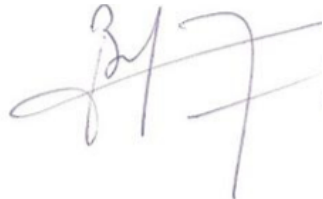
This is just a summary of the project, and I would be glad to give you more information later on about our operation. I am at your disposal for a webcam chat (through Oovoo, Skype or iChat).

I request your high patronage. It is very important that our operation is credible to Europeans and people from all over the world, in particular to the National Federation of the Deaf in Italy (ENS), whose collaboration is useful to us so that our organization can happen in the best conditions and reach the expected outcome. Thus, I will be glad to receive a letter and/or a video testifying your patronage.

I also wish you could convey the information on our operation to your community network so that the Deaf people are informed of our march and support us.

Hoping that our project will draw your attention, we wait for your answer to be able to make progress in the organization.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PB' followed by a stylized flourish.

Patrick BELISSEN
President of OSS2007

P.S.: enclosed with this letter is a translation in International Sign Language

Link: <http://youtu.be/tlg0d3d3qFU>