

Safak Pavey, is known for her international work in the field of human rights, humanitarian aid and peace-building with a background embracing international civil service, activism and journalism.

The train accident she had whilst studying art and film in Zurich left her with one arm and leg, introducing her further to the world of disabled people, reshaping her perspective. Her struggle to continue her life as a young disabled woman before the public brought more visibility to the silent disabled community in her country as well as leading for change of attitude towards disabilities. She chose to continue the struggle she gave for herself for others. Minorities, children, women who have been subject to violence, disabled people, refugees and all others whose rights have been violated became the focal point of her attention. She worked for various NGOs, developing national programs and international advocacy campaigns for human rights issues.

Between 2003 and 2010, Safak worked for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees both at the HQs and on humanitarian missions in the Middle East, Southwest Asia and Central Europe. Undertaking missions and assignments in countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Hungary, she dealt with different human displacement situations, holding various positions from being a consultant on child rights, education and gender programs to serving as the regional spokesperson and managing global strategic communications. She has also worked as a peace solutions activist in a number of conflict areas including Afghanistan.

Safak Pavey is a founding member of the UN interagency support group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN IASG for CRPD). She campaigned across the UN and civil society platforms to promote the Convention's core principle of 'accessibility', leading various 'inclusive / universal design' projects in partnership with expert institutions.

In 2010, she was appointed as the Secretary to the CRPD Secretariat at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

She left her position at the United Nations and was elected as Deputy of Istanbul at the 2011 elections in Turkey. Hence, she has become the first disabled female member of the Turkish Parliament.

As part of her parliamentary work, she is a member of the Turkey-EU-Accession Committee, EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, Euro-Med Parliamentary Assembly for the Mediterranean Union, Euro-Med Sub-Committee on Energy, Water and Environment, Vice-Chair and Member of Turkish Parliamentary Friendship Groups with South Korea and Norway.

Safak's academic background include graduate & postgraduate degrees in international relations and the EU studies, specializing in "nationalism, ethnicity and minority rights" particularly "Property Rights of Non-Muslims in Islamic Countries" at the London School of Economics, and arts, film and media studies in Switzerland. Her working languages are Turkish, English, French, Italian and at a basic level Farsi, German. She also uses international sign language.

She worked as a translator, independent journalist and documentary film-maker for a number of international broadcast and print media companies. She was the first Turkish columnist of bilingual Armenian-Turkish Agos newspaper.

Up to date, Safak Pavey has published three books. Her latest book *Nereye Gidersem Gokyuzu Benimdir* (Wherever I go the Sky is Mine) published in November 2011, consists of her recollections of social life and a witness account of social freedoms in Iran where she lived for some years.

Safak is also the managerial editor of a legal book "Refugee Rights in Iran" by 2003 Nobel Peace laureate Shirin Ebadi with whom she worked with for several years.

In different capacities, Safak is affiliated with a number of international civil society & knowledge platforms related to human rights, disability, accessibility and universal / inclusive design.

She received various national and international awards for her work and contributions in the field of peace and human rights.

Recently, she has been honoured with the "2011-The Outstanding Young Person of the World Award" by JCI (Junior Chamber International) and the 2012 'International Woman of Courage Award' by the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and First Lady Michelle Obama.

For further information:

<http://www.safakpavey.com/clinton-praises-paveys-tireless-passion-energy/>