

Closing Statement-Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC)

Statement from the
Canadian Human Rights Commission

To the 32nd session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the occasion of Canada's combined 2nd and 3rd Periodic Reviews

March 2025

****CLOSING REMARKS: (3 mins - delivered in French)**

On behalf of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, I would like to thank the Committee and commend you on your continued work to advance the rights of people with disabilities in Canada, and worldwide.

I would also like to thank the Canadian delegation for their engagement in this review. We hope that this engagement helps to spur ongoing and meaningful domestic action and progress for the rights of people with disabilities.

As Canada's National Monitoring Mechanism, the Canadian Human Rights Commission occupies a unique role. We have a responsibility to monitor Canada's implementation of the Convention, as articulated under article 33.

At the same time, we recognize that this work cannot be accomplished without funding, alone or in isolation.

Our engagements with disability communities are paramount. They have emphasized the breadth and interdependence of issues facing people with disabilities in Canada.

We encourage this Committee to take an intersectional approach to their recommendations. We need comprehensive action to address the diverse lives and intersectional experiences of people with disabilities.

Civil society has been clear that they are tired of the status quo. That they feel support has been perfunctory and superficial.

Engagement must be accompanied by impactful action and measurable outcomes.

And...people must be heard and included at every step along the way.

In the spirit of "Nothing Without Us," a concerted effort must be made to include Indigenous, Black and other racialized people, as well as women and gender diverse people, children and youth, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, people with non-traditional forms of disability, people living in poverty, people living in institutions, and all other groups of people with disabilities living at the intersections and on the margins.

People have a right to have a role in their own futures. They have a right to be included in the systems, decisions and policies that impact their lives.

We would therefore like to give a special thank-you today to civil society and disability communities.

For their tireless efforts to raise and analyse issues, to close knowledge gaps, to amplify stories, to engage with decision-makers, and to advance disability rights in Canada.

We encourage government leaders to acknowledge you as the experts you are, and to invest in relationships of listening and learning with you.

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In conclusion, we believe it is possible to overcome jurisdictional challenges and to fully realize the promise of the Convention. But Canada must make the rights of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and economic, social, and cultural rights justiciable across Canada. Canada must also heed the recommendations that we and civil society have made to adopt a new national framework for human rights implementation that is substantial meaningful and coordinated across Canada.

We look forward to the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations.

We also encourage Canada to commit to these recommendations and to implement them without delay.

People with disabilities have waited long enough. It is time to act.

Thank you for your time.

435 spoken words = 2.4 min English