



Human Rights Council – 34th session
Clustered ID - SR on disabilities and IE on albinism
Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

Thank you Mr. President,

Action Canada makes this statement on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative.

We congratulate the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities on her comprehensive report on access to support by persons with disabilities. However, while the report highlights the importance of support within the family; it fails to recognize the family as primary perpetrators of sexual violence, especially on women and girls with disabilities. There have been numerous documented cases of women and girls with disability having to undergo forced sterilization in order to prevent pregnancy from sexual violence. In a number of south asian and east African countries, rape of women and girls with disabilities by family and community members as a cure for HIV/AIDS is common practice.

Further, while the report addresses access to justice, the assumed lack of legal capacity is a huge barrier for women and girls with disability. This worsens for women and girls with psychosocial disabilities as their testimonies are rarely considered and their right to be involved in the decisions that affect them are severely limited. Within the civil legal framework, the assumed lack of legal capacity deprives women and girls with disabilities from engaging in consensual relationships, getting married, having and raising children, achieving their desired level of independence and having control over their fertility, in violation of Article 23 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We strongly call upon to the Human Rights Council, United Nations and member states to shift focus to the empowerment, sexual well-being, freedom to express desires and self determination of women and girls with disability, and away from protective measures. The Council, UN and member states are further urged to intervene in ensuring that States take into consideration the development of disability specific indicators in monitoring mainstream programmes and develop mechanisms to ensure holistic access to justice to women and girls with disabilities.

Thank you