

Statement to the Human Rights Council on the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' visit to Canada
43rd Session of the Human Rights Council
February 28, 2020

Thank you, Madame President,

We welcome the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities' report on her visit to Canada. We appreciate the attention to the human rights protection gaps in Canada's legal and policy framework that do not adequately address the systemic and structural causes of discrimination against persons with disabilities. However, we are disappointed that the Special Rapporteur did not integrate a gender analysis throughout the report despite consultations and inputs from women with disabilities and their representative and allied civil society organizations.

The exclusive focus on violence against women with disabilities within the report is not helpful in challenging protectionist approaches to disability nor does it make the connection between women with disabilities' subjection to various forms of violence and the realization of other human rights, including the right to effective remedies. The report also misses an opportunity to make recommendations on Canada's positive obligations including ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and services, providing comprehensive sexuality education that is inclusive of persons with disabilities and that actively dismantles reinforcing stereotypes related to gender, sexuality and disability, and centering the leadership, voice and experiences of women with disabilities in all aspects of decision making that affect their lives.

We also note in the Government's response, a lack of commitment to meaningfully integrate the principles and legal obligations enshrined in the Convention of the Rights of Persons' with Disabilities and Canada's citing differing jurisdictional responsibilities. This response is not unique to this Convention and Canada must step up its policy coherence efforts to fulfill its legal obligations under all the human rights treaties it has ratified.

I thank you.



Action Canada
for Sexual Health & Rights