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United Nations Urges Canada to Repeal MAiD Track 2

OTTAWA, ON (March 27, 2025) – The Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) welcomes the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Concluding Observations from Canada's March 2025 review. The Observations sharply criticize the Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) Track 2 provisions, which apply to people with disabilities. The Committee also warns Canada against expanding eligibility for MAiD to people with mental illness as a sole condition.

The Committee considers that MAiD Track 2 is a severe breach of the rights of persons with disabilities, especially women, under the right to life (Article 10), revealing the following critical issues:

- The Committee is extremely concerned about the 2021 amendments via Bill C-7, expanding MAiD by removing the 'foreseeable death' criterion, rooted in ableist views of disability and suffering rather than addressing inequality (para. 79-80).
- Track 2 MAiD disproportionately affects women with disabilities and marginalized groups, with increasing usage (para. 82).
- The 2027 expansion to mental illness, plus proposed extensions to "mature minors" and advance requests, lacks sufficient safeguards (para. 83).
- There has been inadequate consultation with Indigenous Peoples, including non-status and off-reserve individuals with disabilities. (para. 84).
- No federal independent oversight mechanism exists for MAiD (para. 85).

In response to these alarming findings, the Committee has issued urgent recommendations to protect the right to life of persons with disabilities and to address the systemic failures that exacerbate the risks of MAiD Track 2:

- Repeal Track 2 MAiD, including the 2027 expansion for mental illness as a sole condition.
- Reject proposals to extend MAiD to "mature minors" and advance requests.
- Invest significantly in federal, provincial, and territorial measures to address the social determinants of health, including poverty, healthcare, housing, homelessness prevention, violence against women prevention, mental health supports, home care, and employment.
- Enhance community-led consultations with Indigenous Peoples, including non-status and off-reserve individuals with disabilities, respecting self-determination.
- Establish a resourced federal independent oversight mechanism for MAiD monitoring and complaints.

Elizabeth Sheehy and Janine Benedet, leading Canadian experts on criminal law, violence against women and MAiD Track 2, represented FAFIA at the review in Geneva on March 11-12, 2025 and presented the urgent concerns of women with disabilities. They emphasized that MAiD Track 2 threatens the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, disproportionately endangering women with disabilities who already face systemic barriers to healthcare, social support, and economic security. FAFIA cautioned that, without robust safeguards and investment in alternatives, this law coerces vulnerable individuals into choosing death because they have no option of a life with dignity.

The Committee has previously criticized Canada's MAiD framework, notably in its 2017 review and 2016 inquiry, for failing to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities. The Committee's latest recommendations are its strongest yet. They reinforce the need for Canada to align its laws with international human rights standards.

"Canada's MAiD Track 2 regime violates the rights of all people with disabilities and has a disproportionate impact on women with disabilities. Canada must heed the UN's clear call for repeal" said Elizabeth Sheehy.

FAFIA urges the Canadian government to:

1. Repeal MAiD Track 2, including the planned expansion to people on the sole basis of mental illness.
2. Commit to no further expansion of MAiD, including expansion related to advance requests and mature minors.
3. Invest in mental health services, disability supports, and poverty alleviation measures to ensure no one is driven to seek death due to lack of viable alternatives.
4. Fully implement the CRPD Committee's recommendations to safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities.

The rights of women with disabilities must not be ignored. The time to act is now.

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The **Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA)** is a grassroots feminist advocacy organization dedicated to advancing the human rights of all women in Canada, with a particular focus on Indigenous women and other marginalized groups. FAFIA works to hold Canada accountable to its international human rights commitments and advocates for policies that address systemic discrimination and inequality. Through research, advocacy, and collaboration with partners across the country, FAFIA strives to make equality a lived reality for all women in Canada.

For more information, visit fafia-afai.org.



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