



BRITISH COLUMBIA ABORIGINAL NETWORK ON DISABILITY SOCIETY

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“Organization in Special Consultative Status with the United Nation’s Economic and Social Council since 2018”

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I hope this letter of invitation finds you well. My name is Neil Belanger, and I am the Executive Director with the British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS). BCANDS is an internationally recognized and award winning, not-for-profit, Indigenous disability organization, in operation since 1991. BCANDS provides a variety of disability related programs and services across Canada and holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations.

I am contacting you today in hopes of gaining your partnership and collaboration in working to ensure persons with disabilities in Canada have equal access and full enjoyment of all human rights.

BCANDS, in alliance with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), is working on a project to engage CSOs and Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) across the country to participate in the United Nations review of Canada’s implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

As part of this project, in 2019, Indigenous and non-Indigenous CSOs and DPOs from across the country provided input about the key issues the United Nations should focus on when reviewing Canada. To read this input, please visit:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICS%2fCAN%2f35628&Lang=en

During the next step in the United Nations process, Canada will report to the United Nations and CSOs and DPOs will also have an opportunity to write a report. This report, sometimes called a Shadow Report or Parallel Report, is a necessary tool for the United Nations to effectively review and evaluate Canada’s compliance with the CRPD. As such, we are hoping your organization is able to provide valuable insight and recommendations about existing barriers that prevent people with disabilities from being fully included in society, in relation to the issues that the UN is focusing on as it reviews Canada.

Our mission, with our partner agencies, is to ensure Canada is meeting its obligations under the CRPD by providing a platform for Civil Society Organizations to join the conversation and provide their insight, experience, and expertise in the development of the next Shadow Report.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The CRPD is an international human rights treaty that describes fundamental rights for persons with disabilities. The CRPD contains articles, each of which describe particular human rights for persons with disabilities, such as the right to accommodations at work, the right to life, equal access to education, the right to participate in political processes, and many other fundamental rights.

Canada ratified the Convention in March 2010 and acceded to the Optional Protocol in December 2018 and is obliged to submit regular reports to the UN CRPD Committee on how the rights in the Convention are being implemented in Canada.

“The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.” (Article 1, CRPD).

For further information on the CRPD, please visit:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

Your participation in the development of the next Shadow Report can contribute to systemic change for persons with disabilities in Canada, so all individuals are able to have full and equal access to their collective human rights.

If this is of interest to you and your organization, please contact me directly through the information listed below, I can then provide you with additional information about this project and connect you with our Lead CRPD Consultant Mr. Steven Estey.

Attached to this letter is a list of organizations that are currently involved in developing the Parallel Report. This list is included so that if your organization is part of one of these agencies or affiliated as a member, you can coordinate your participation with them where appropriate. I look forward to our working together.

Take good care and thank you for your time.



Neil Belanger
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Abilities Centre	Accessibility for All
Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights	Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians
Altergo	Alzheimers Society of Canada
ARCH Disability Law Centre	Autistics United Canada
BCANDS	Canada Without Poverty
Canadian Association of the Deaf Association	Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder
Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work	Canadian Disability Participation Project
Canadian Disability Policy Alliance	Canadian Health Coalition
Canadian Labour Congress	Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Canadian Paralympic Committee	
Childhood Disability: Participation and Knowledge Translation Lab	
Communication Disabilities Access Canada	
Confederation des organismes de personnes handicapées du Quebec	
Council of Canadians with Disabilities	Deafblind Ontario Services
Dementia Advocacy Canada	Dementia Alliance International
Disability Alliance BC	DisAbled Women's Network Canada
Easter Seals Canada	Egale Canada Human Rights Trust
Elizabeth Fry Society of Toronto	Eviance
Inclusion Canada (formerly CACL)	Inclusive Education Canada
Independent Living Canada	
Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society	
Keremeos Measuring Up Team	Mad Canada Shadow Report Group
March of Dimes Canada	Mouvement PHAS
National Coalition of People who use Guide and Service Dogs	
National Educational Association of Disabled Students	National MEFM Action Network
National Network for Mental Health	Neil Squire Society
Not Dead Yet	Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups
People First of Canada	Prisoner Legal Services
Quebec Accessible	REALIZE
Rick Hansen Foundation	Spinal Cord Injury Canada
Universal Design Network of Canada	