



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
2 February 2024

English only

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-fourth session

11 September–13 October 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Maryam Ghasemi Educational Charity Institute, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 August 2023]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Indigenous Women and Disabled Individuals in Canada**

### **Introduction**

We vehemently condemn the coerced sterilization of certain indigenous women and disabled individuals in Canada with profound disgust and concern. Such actions not only violate the fundamental human rights of these individuals but also transgress principles of social justice and human rights. Freedom and autonomy over one's body and personal health are inherent rights that must be upheld without discrimination of any kind. Coerced sterilization actions lead to dissatisfaction and erosion of individual identity, instead of promoting respect for human rights, anthropology, and cultural diversity, and instead inflict harm upon the Canadian community.

We emphasize that respect for human rights and human dignity should form the economic, social, and cultural foundation of Canada. Efforts to end coerced sterilization must demand the most earnest attention not only from the government and Canadian authorities but from the entire society as well. Furthermore, the forced sterilization of women and disabled individuals is not only a violation of their bodily autonomy but also a grave breach of medical ethics and international human rights standards. It perpetuates systemic discrimination, exacerbates existing inequalities, and erodes trust in the healthcare system.

We call upon international human rights organizations, the medical community, and concerned citizens to join us in condemning forced sterilization practices and advocating for justice and dignity for all individuals, regardless of their background or ability. Canada needs to uphold its commitment to human rights, rectify past wrongs, and pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable society where the rights of all individuals are genuinely respected and protected. Furthermore, the combination of these actions must go hand in hand with respecting cultural diversity and enhancing attention to the specific needs and circumstances of women and disabled individuals. We emphasize that in the implementation of measures, the voices of indigenous and disabled individuals must be heard, and they should be included in the decision-making process.

Not only Canada but all nations are obligated to rectify any violations of human rights, especially against vulnerable minorities. We urge Canada to continue its commitment to its legal and human values, and we believe that this country can exemplify a dynamic and adaptable society that upholds principles of justice and equality, showing respect for all its members and acknowledging their rights to address this situation, Canada must swiftly and resolutely halt coerced sterilization practices and demonstrate a heightened commitment to rectify this issue. This involves conducting impartial and thorough investigations into reported cases, holding accountable those responsible, and providing substantial reparations to the affected women and individuals. Simultaneously, it's imperative to implement stringent measures within the healthcare system to prevent future violations. Additionally, comprehensive education and awareness programs should be introduced to promote an understanding of human rights and the unique concerns of women and disabled individuals.

Achieving these objectives necessitates the active participation of indigenous and disabled communities in decision-making processes and policy formulation. Social responsibility and support for these individuals should be bolstered through legal and societal measures.

In essence, transitioning from coerced sterilization to a culture of respect for human rights and preservation of individual dignity, regardless of expertise or abilities, requires both governmental commitment and profound moral responsibility. Implementing the aforementioned strategies meticulously and garnering collective support for these actions are crucial for enhancing the quality of life for all individuals and promoting social understanding and justice.

We, raise our voices in strong condemnation of the unjust and inhumane actions taken by the Canadian government, violating the rights of Indigenous women and imposing restrictions on individuals with disabilities in matters of reproduction.

The decisions made by the Canadian government not only blatantly disregard international human rights principles but also stand in stark contrast to basic human decency. All individuals, without discrimination, should be free to decide upon forming families and raising children without undue pressure or coercive measures.

Furthermore, regulations and policies that lead to significant limitations on the reproductive choices of disabled individuals constitute a clear violation of their human rights. Such actions undermine the principles of equal participation and decision-making within society and deny individuals their inherent right to make choices concerning their family lives.

Through collective efforts of international communities and human rights advocates, we hope that the Canadian government will adhere to its international obligations and halt these unfair practices related to the sterilization of Indigenous women and the restrictions on reproduction for individuals with disabilities. These actions only serve to exacerbate tensions and imbalances within society, obstructing the realization of sustainable development and social justice.

### **Suggestions:**

We call upon Canada to take serious and effective measures to halt the practice of coerced sterilization of indigenous women and disabled individuals. This involves promoting awareness and comprehensive education about human rights, addressing the root causes of coerced practices, and bolstering legal and social support to safeguard the rights of these individuals.

Canada must take immediate steps to ensure accountability for these reprehensible actions. This includes conducting thorough investigations into reported cases, holding those responsible accountable, and providing reparations to the survivors. Additionally, there is an urgent need to implement safeguards within the medical system to prevent such violations from occurring in the future.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the enforced sterilization of indigenous women and disabled individuals in Canada is vehemently condemned as a grave violation of fundamental human rights and medical ethics. This ongoing practice exacerbates discrimination, undermines the diversity-based fabric of societies, and severely damages trust in healthcare systems. These actions represent a distressing breach of human rights in a society known for advocating such values.

We encourage all individuals and communities to seek information and awareness about human rights and international principles and to promote these values within their societies. Our joint endeavors can contribute to the improvement of global human rights and guide societies toward a more just and equitable future.

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