



For Immediate Release

Minister Cannon Invites Disability Stakeholders to Witness Ratification of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Convention Advances Disability Rights as Human Rights

New York, March 11, 2010 - Today the Government of Canada has ratified the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Canada is now the 82nd country to make this international commitment to protecting and advancing the human rights of persons with disabilities.

Traci Walters, National Advisor to Independent Living Canada, was in attendance at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City to witness this historic moment. "Today's ratification marks the culmination of years of work by the Government of Canada and the organizations that represent Canadians with disabilities," she said. "It demonstrates to Canadians with disabilities that our Government is thoroughly committed to the promotion and protection of the human rights of all Canadians citizens."

"The importance of ratification of the CRPD for Canadians with disabilities cannot be overstated," said Kelly Nadeau, National Chairperson of Independent Living Canada. "Ratification enshrines the rights of Canadians with disabilities to be fully included in all spheres of Canadian life and is a formal and international acknowledgement of the contributions that people with disabilities make to Canadian society."

By tabling the CRPD in the House last December 3, 2009, on the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Government of Canada promised to consider disability issues as matters of national importance. Today the Government has followed through with that promise.

"This is truly an historic day for persons with disabilities in Canada and it was an honour to be invited to participate in the final step of this process," said Walters. "Today Canadians with disabilities are enormously grateful to all Members of Parliament and to all Parties for their support in developing and ratifying the CRPD, as well as to the groups and organizations such as the Council of Canadians with Disabilities and the Canadian Association for Community Living which played an integral role in representing Canadians with disabilities at home and on the international stage."

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