



Canadian
Association for
Community Living

Association canadienne
pour l'intégration
communautaire

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Canada a World Leader for Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Today in New York, Canada will be among the first countries to sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the official signing ceremony at UN headquarters. At a press conference this morning announcing Canada's intention to sign the Convention today, Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay said, "By signing the Convention, we are demonstrating our leadership and the importance we attach to the rights of persons with disabilities... The commitment of Canada's new Government with respect to issues of disability is clear. We have a strong commitment to ensuring that persons with disabilities enjoy full participation in society and can contribute to the community to their full potential."

With great pride, the Canadian Association for Community Living will be participating in today's ceremony to applaud Canada's commitment and bear witness to this historic moment. It seems particularly fitting that Canada be there because of its historic international leadership on disability - in particular defining disability as a human rights issue.

While the Convention was adopted in December 2006, today marks the first day that countries can begin the formal process for making the Convention a legally binding international treaty. To become party to a Convention a country must both sign and ratify the Convention. This morning the Government of Canada signalled its intention to "continue to work very closely with the provinces and territories toward ratification."

CACL President, Zuhy Sayeed, expressed her great pleasure about Canada's announcement to sign today: "We know the Government does not make these decisions lightly. It took a great deal of effort on behalf of the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments to make this happen. We believe that this is a sign of the significant commitment of this Government to the rights of persons with disabilities."

Michael Bach, CACL Executive Vice President, remarked: "Today is a great day for Canada and a great day for Canadians with disabilities."

- 30 -

For more information, contact Michael Bach, CACL Executive Vice-President at (416) 209 7942.