



IIMA
Human Rights Office
Istituto Internazionale
Maria Ausiliatrice



55th Session of the HRC
Geneva: 22 March 2024
Item 6 - UPR Outcomes - Canada
Speaker: Michelle Rapier

Oral statement submitted by

Edmund Rice International

And co-signed by

IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di Don Bosco

VIDES International – International Volunteerism Organization for

Women, Education and Development

With the support of

Thomas More Collegiate

Vancouver College

VIDES Canada St.

Edmund Rice International, on behalf of this coalition commends the participation of Canada in its 4th UPR.

We commend Canada's commitment to advancing reconciliation and renewing its relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, especially concerning food security and access to clean drinking water.¹

Furthermore, we remain deeply concerned about protection of the rights of some of Canada's **most vulnerable people**, in particular, **the elderly, people with disabilities and people experiencing mental illness**. While welcoming the acceptance of recommendation n. 37.279², we remain concerned by the eligibility criteria for receiving Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) and the promotion of MAID as a more cost effective alternative to other health care options, to the detriment of the ultimate protection of Canada's most vulnerable.

This NGO Coalition calls on Canada to:

- a) **adopt prompt and effective measures to ensure food security and access to clean drinking water for indigenous communities;**
- b) **improve ease of access, funding and staffing for Long Term Care Facilities in order to provide adequate assistance to the elderly, including quality palliative care;**
- c) **ensure adequate and meaningful participation of people with disabilities, as well their representative organizations, in drafting laws, policies and regulations that affect their rights, particularly with regard to MAID.**
- d) **update the eligibility criteria for MAID to ensure protection of the most vulnerable, including the removal of mental illness as one of the co-qualifying considerations for access to MAID.**

Thank you.

¹ Recommendations n. 37.160 Continue efforts to combat poverty and ensure an adequate standard of living, especially for Indigenous Peoples (Tunisia); 37.161 Ensure that adequate measures are put in place to reduce poverty and inequalities facing persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples (Estonia); 37.164 Develop a national strategy to protect Indigenous and communities in the north of the country whose food security is threatened because of climate change (Cuba); 37.175 Collaborate further with Indigenous communities and to develop plans for addressing long-term and sustainable water and sanitation solutions (Slovenia); 37.176 Update existing legislation to provide remote First Nations communities with legally enforceable, sustainable and safe drinking water protections (Ireland); 37.177 Adopt measures to guarantee the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation in the entire territory, especially for Indigenous communities (Spain); 37.178 Continue work to ensure access to clean drinking water in First Nations communities (Australia). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Canada, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/12, 19 December 2023, and its Addendum, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/12/Add.1.

² Recommendation n. 37.279 Implement human rights-based mental health policies aligned with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including by investing in community-based services, with a view to eliminate stigma, discrimination and coercion in mental health and to respect the rights, will and preferences of persons with mental health conditions (Portugal). Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Canada, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/12, 19 December 2023, and its Addendum, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/12/Add.1.