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Office of the Child and Youth

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MEDIA STATEMENT

May 17, 2022

Canada Appears Before the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child CCCYA Calls for Concrete Action on Improving Respect for Children's Rights

SASKATOON – Lisa Broda, President of the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates attends the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child proceedings on behalf of CCCYA, as Canada is set to appear before the UN Committee to respond to its progress on implementing the rights of children.

As a State Party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Canada is required to report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child every five years on its progress in implementing the UNCRC. To date, Canada's reporting and responses have been inadequate. "It is time that Canada step up and do what is right for the young people in this country," said Broda. "Implementing the rights of children is critical to ensure young people can live to their full potential," Broda stated.

The Council submitted an Alternative Report to the UN Committee detailing the status of child rights in Canada from the perspective of its members and participated in meetings with the Committee and the Canadian government in which the CCCYA raised its concerns and identified areas in which improvements are needed.

Canada is appearing before the UN Committee on May 17 & 18, 2022 to engage in dialogue and answer questions directly from the UN Committee. The CCCYA has urged Canada to present the Committee with concrete action plans to move forward on key issues, many of which reflect past recommendations of the Committee, to better respect, protect and fulfill the rights of children in Canada, including:

- Ratification of the 3rd Optional Protocol to the UNCRC;
- Incorporation of the UNCRC into Canadian law;
- Development of a comprehensive national strategy for children's rights;
- Adoption of a comprehensive national data collection system;
- Ensuring equal access to independent advocacy in every jurisdiction through:
 - the establishment of an independent child advocacy office in every province and territory,
 - support for the efforts and recommendations of CCCYA, and
 - the establishment of a National Commissioner for Children and Youth;
- Repeal of section 43 of the *Criminal Code* (corporal punishment); and,
- Development of a National Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy.

The information gathered by the Committee will result in a document outlining its Concluding Observations, or recommendations to Canada on improvements

required for the best interests of children. “It will be imperative that Canada take these observations or recommendations seriously and demonstrate their commitment to the rights of children through implementation,” said Broda.

The Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates is an association of children's Advocates, Representatives, and Ombudspersons from across Canada who are independent officers of the legislatures in their respective jurisdictions, with legislated mandates to promote and protect children’s human rights through complaint resolution, advice to government, amplification of child and youth voices, and public education functions.

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For more go to www.cccya.ca

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