

**MEDIA RELEASE****8 March 2010****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Disabled women waiting for 25 years – still nothing to celebrate!!**

International Women's Day is supposed to be a celebration of "Progress for all" this year according to the United Nation's Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. "Sadly today brings forward no good news for women with disabilities when it comes to violence prevention. Given the grim statistics on violence against women with disabilities and the fact that there has been no appreciable change, we are hardly in the mood to celebrate today." notes the organization's President, Carmela Hutchison.

"Rates of violence against disabled women and girls continue to occur at a much higher rate (40%) and there is nothing being done to reverse this trend. DAWN-RAFH Canada began working on this issue from our very earliest days, conducting research, providing resources and policy recommendations for two and a half decades now! "

A recent update of that early work by DAWN-RAFH Canada reveals that while some shelters have made improvements, (<http://www.dawncanada.net/ENG/ENGwelcome.htm#NAAS> ) many report that access to funding has been a huge barrier to making significant changes. DAWN-RAFH Canada's recommendations to the Government of Canada include the creation of a national network of accessible shelters and a significant increase in funding for resources!

Approximately 1.9 million women in Canada live with disability. Despite this DAWN-RAFH Canada is the only national organization working on behalf of women and girls with disabilities in Canada.

We are very pleased to be working with our partners at YWCA Canada as part of their **Life Beyond Shelters Campaign** this year for International Women's Day ([http://www.ywcacanada.ca/public\\_eng/index.cfm](http://www.ywcacanada.ca/public_eng/index.cfm)). It is only through the kind significant leadership engagement we have seen from YWCA Canada that we can expect there to be any real change for our women any time soon. Two members of our Board participated in the video project that will be part of the United Nations Consultations on the Status of Women CSW54 - NGO Parallel Forum next week - you can watch Zelda Rempel, our provincial representative from Saskatchewan speak out on You Tube at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-267un4R4pU&feature=related>

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