

[Date]

Dear Mr. Cannon,

I am writing to you as a concerned Canadian.

In 2000, the United Nations established the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The eight MDGs – with a target completion date of 2015 – form a clear set of objectives to meet the needs of the world's poorest. Except that they don't. There are 650 million people with disabilities in the world and the MDGs do not include any of them. People with disabilities are disproportionately represented among those living in poverty, without including them the MDGs cannot be achieved.

As you know, the World Summit to be held on September 20-22 in New York will review progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is required that governments provide their feedback by July 30, 2010.

Persons with disabilities have been largely absent in the MDGs both at international and national level, notwithstanding the fact that they constitute 10% of the world's population. 80% of persons with disabilities live in developing countries.

According to UNESCO, 90% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school. While the literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3%, in some countries, it is as low as 1% for women with disabilities. These are two examples that show the relevance of the MDGs for persons with disabilities, but also the fact that the MDGs cannot be achieved if persons with disabilities are not considered.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has yet to result in increased attention to the rights of persons with disabilities within the MDGs. Leading the push for the needs of persons with disabilities to be actively recognized in the MDGs would truly make Canada a leader on the global stage.

I would kindly ask that you advocate for the needs of persons with disabilities during the current negotiations.

Thank you in advance for the attention you will give to this important matter.

Respectfully yours,

[Signature]

[Your name]