

Emma Roddick MSP, Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees
The Scottish Government
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Via email: ministeremr@gov.scot

17 August 2023

Dear Minister,

Follow-Up Procedure of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Today, the UK Independent Mechanism (UKIM) – a group made up of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC), the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) - [published a report](#) assessing the rights of disabled people across the UK. This report was submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Committee) in July, as part of the review of its inquiry into the UK, taking place this month.

The report forms part of the Committee's Follow-Up procedure examining the 2016 finding of 'grave and systemic' violations of disabled people's human rights in the UK. The Committee made eleven recommendations to ensure compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

By ratifying the UN CRPD, the UK is bound by international law to respect, protect and fulfil the rights it contains. Responsibility for implementing UN human rights treaties lies with both the UK-wide and devolved institutions, including the Scottish Government.

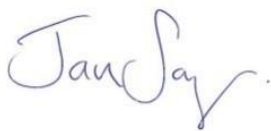
Through the development of UKIM's report, the EHRC and SHRC examined the particular evidence in respect of progress in Scotland. Our organisations share the view that there has been insufficient and sometimes no progress across all eleven recommendation areas. While some areas of progress could be identified – for example, the rollout of devolved social security – this has been insufficient to safeguard the rights of disabled people in the context of austerity, COVID-19 and the present cost-of-living-crisis.

The SHRC has also published a report it commissioned from the Scottish Independent Living Coalition (SILC) to inform its submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which highlights the profound concerns of disabled people and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs). The SHRC is also currently undertaking focused work exploring the human rights concerns in respect of disabled people in institutional care in Scotland, which will publish in early 2024. Later this year the EHRC will publish the next in its series of statutory reports, the *Equality and Human Rights Monitor: Is Scotland Fairer*. These reports monitor the progress of equality and human rights in Scotland including an update on the issues face by disabled people.

The EHRC and the SHRC - as the Equality Body and National Human Rights Institution respectively in devolved areas – urge the Scottish Government to act to ensure the rights of disabled people are fully realised. In particular, we note the opportunities available with the anticipated publication of revised Scottish Government disability strategy, A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People, the incorporation of the UNCRPD and other international human rights frameworks, the powers available across social security and the Independent Living Fund.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss the report and the ongoing Follow-Up procedure, which will include a meeting at the United Nations on 28th August 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Jan Savage
Executive Director
Scottish Human Rights Commission



John Wilkes
Head of Scotland
Equality and Human Rights
Commission