



From Crisis to Commitment: Rooting Justice in the Places We Call Home

*Michèle Biss, Executive Director,
National Right to Housing Network*



Land Acknowledgement



The human right to housing makes me think of...

“The right to housing is not just a rallying cry. It, like human rights more generally, offers concrete standards that can be implemented and measured for progress.”

– UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing

Where does the right to housing come from?

- International agreements citing economic and social rights:
 - UN Declaration of Human Rights (1954)
 - International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1976)
 - International Covenant on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2010)



The right to adequate housing in international law

7 essential features of adequate housing:

- i. Legal security of tenure
- ii. Availability of services and materials
- iii. Affordability
- iv. Habitability
- v. Accessibility
- vi. Location
- vii. Cultural adequacy

Principles of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*

- Progressive realization
- Maximum available resources
- Human Rights Goals and Timelines (i.e., ending homelessness in the shortest possible time)

The right to adequate housing is not just about housing programs but also about **legal protections of housing rights, tax measures, planning, and regulation of investors.**



Nation building starts with...



The story of advocacy to get to the NHSA

- The right to housing in the courts
 - The *Tanudjaja v. Canada (AG)* case
- Going to treaty bodies reviews of Canada
- Open letter campaign
- *National Housing Strategy Act* legislated in 2019



The 2019 *National Housing Strategy Act*

“The right to adequate housing is a **fundamental human right**... essential to the **inherent dignity and well-being** of the person and to building sustainable and inclusive communities.”

CANADA'S HUMAN RIGHTS ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS





Systemic Reviews by the Federal Housing Advocate and Review Panel

- Government responses to **encampments**
- Inadequate housing for **Métis** in Saskatchewan
- **Financialization** of housing
- Homelessness for **women, girls, and gender-diverse persons** (especially Indigenous women and 2-Spirit persons)
- **Next up:** Accessible housing for **persons with disabilities**

The Crisis Ends with Us: Human Rights Claims to the Federal Housing Advocate



Federal Housing Advocate Request for a formal review of the lack of accessible housing

- People with disabilities are four times more likely to experience homelessness.
- In 2020, only 8.9% public housing units were accessible
- In June 2025, the Federal Housing Advocate referred new systemic housing issue to the National Housing Council

Build Canada Homes and Applying the National Housing Strategy Act

- It is declared to be the housing policy of the Government of Canada to
- **(a)** recognize that the right to adequate housing is a **fundamental human right** affirmed in international law;
- **(b)** recognize that housing is essential to the **inherent dignity and well-being of the person** and to building sustainable and inclusive communities;
- **(c)** support improved **housing outcomes** for the people of Canada; and
- **(d)** further the **progressive realization** of the right to adequate housing as recognized in the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**.

How can you get involved?

- Collect information on the systemic issues and challenges in securing an accessible home
- Hear from lived experts and document their experiences
- If possible, identify how it violates Canada's international obligations
- Finally- Make your own submission (with all the above information) to the Federal Housing Advocate or to the Review Panel

Thank You!

Michèle Biss, Executive Director

michele@housingrights.ca

housingrights.ca



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