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MCCL GO argues that Dutch euthanasia violates human rights

Contribution to Netherlands review filed with Human Rights Council in Geneva

GENEVA, Switzerland — Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Global Outreach (MCCL GO), an international non-governmental organization working to secure human rights for all human beings, has submitted a written contribution to the Human Rights Council's upcoming review of the Netherlands. The submission argues that the Dutch practice of euthanasia violates human rights protected by international treaties.

"Thousands of Dutch patients are intentionally killed by euthanasia or assisted suicide each year," says Scott Fischbach, executive director of MCCL GO. "Some are killed because they have dementia or psychiatric problems, like depression or post-traumatic stress. And some mentally incompetent patients are killed even though they have made no request to die."

The practice of euthanasia in the Netherlands threatens to deny patients their right to health. A [2016 study](#) published in JAMA Psychiatry, for example, found that a majority of patients euthanized for psychiatric reasons were described as socially isolated or lonely. "The mental health of some Dutch patients has not been adequately addressed," Fischbach observes.

The Human Rights Council, an inter-governmental U.N. body founded to promote and protect human rights worldwide, conducts a Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of all nations to determine whether they are fulfilling their human rights obligations and commitments. The Council will review the Netherlands during the 27th UPR Working Group session next spring.

MCCL GO's contribution—which is [available online](#)—explains how the Netherlands' euthanasia policy violates the "inherent right to life" of every human being guaranteed under international law. It also violates equality and non-discrimination. "The right to life belongs to not only the young, healthy and able-bodied," says Fischbach, "but also the elderly, sick and disabled."

The [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) calls on nations to "take all necessary measures to ensure [the] effective enjoyment [of the right to life] by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others." The euthanasia of disabled infants, which is accepted in the Netherlands under the [Groningen Protocol](#), is an especially clear violation of this requirement.

MCCL GO's contribution also notes that U.N. treaty bodies have criticized euthanasia in the Netherlands. The Human Rights Committee has [called for](#) the Dutch law to "be reviewed in light of the ... right to life," and has [condemned](#) the Dutch practice of infanticide. The Committee on the Rights of the Child [expressed concern](#) that euthanasia may (under Dutch law) be applied to children as young as 12 years old.

"To fulfill its international human rights obligations," Fischbach concludes, "the Netherlands should prohibit euthanasia and assisted suicide."

MCCL GO is the U.N.- and OAS-accredited global outreach program of the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Education Fund. Our goal is to protect as many human beings as possible from the destruction of abortion, infanticide and euthanasia. Learn more at www.mccl-go.org. Please subscribe to our [RSS Feed](#).