Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

BC must ensure independence of the legal profession and access to justice

Statement

4 November 2026

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) acknowledges the results of the British Columbia election on 24 October 2026 and welcomes the promise to repeal the 2024 *Legal Professions Act*.

LRWC urges the government to ensure that governance of BC's legal profession fully adheres to international human rights law and standards, including the UN *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*. Independence entails the entitlement of lawyers to form and join self-governing professional associations with executive bodies elected by their members and which operate without interference by governments or others.

The UN Basic Principles also require cooperation between governments and lawyers' professional bodies to ensure everyone's access to legal services to protect their rights, including adequate legal aid for people who cannot afford legal representation.

Full, effective, and transparent consultation and cooperation with lawyers, including the Law Society of BC, lawyers associations, Indigenous Peoples' representative bodies, notaries public, paralegals, the judiciary, and the public are essential to ensure a public consensus on a governance structure of the legal profession that guarantees independence of the legal profession and equal access to justice for all people in British Columbia.

LRWC looks forward to working with the BC government to ensure laws, policies and practices that ensure respect, protection, and fulfilment of all of BC's international human rights obligations and the rule of law.

Lawyers Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) is an organization of Canadian lawyers who promote human rights and the rule of law. LRWC promotes the adoption and implementation of international law and standards designed to protect the independence and security of lawyers and human rights defenders around the world. LRWC was granted Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2005. See more at www.lrwc.org.

Contact:
Joey Doyle, Co-chair,
Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, info@lrwc.org