

My name is Tina Minkowitz, from the Center for the Human Rights of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. People labeled with psychiatric disabilities represent ourselves; please ask our opinion on any issue raised about our human rights.

I'd like to start with psychiatric profiling.

The media and politicians focus on isolated crimes committed by people labeled with psychiatric disabilities, which becomes an excuse to enact repressive legislation and policies restricting the rights and freedoms of all people labeled with psychiatric disabilities, particularly in the context of debates about prevention of gun violence.

We'd like the Committee to ask about the inclusion of mental health records in federal and state criminal databases, which violates the right to privacy; about the expansion of forced treatment in institutions and in the community, about a "school to psychiatry" pipeline based on mental health labeling similar to the "school to prison" pipeline, and about government endorsement of media-created stereotypes, and to ask if there are any plans to reverse laws and policies that profile individuals as violent based on disability, as well as race and other labels imposed by society.

On forced treatment and civil commitment, which my colleague will also address:

International law on this issue is evolving based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which prohibits involuntary treatment and involuntary confinement. The Special Rapporteur on Torture has just called for an absolute ban on forced psychiatric interventions, and said that civil commitment is not justified by a motivation to protect the person or others.

We'd like the Committee to ask if there are any plans to repeal mental health laws that permit forced psychiatric interventions and civil commitment, and what is being done to ensure that mental health services are based on the free and informed consent of the person concerned.

We'd also like the Committee to ask about double discrimination against people labeled with psychiatric disabilities in prisons, and about ensuring that mental health services in prison are also based on person's free and informed consent.

Lastly, we'd like the Committee to ask about plans to ratify and fully implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities without any reservations, understandings or declarations.