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FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT: On His Own Terms

Season return of Foreign Correspondent.

Airs 8.00 pm Tuesday July 10 on ABC TV and iview

This is the inside story of 104-year-old activist David Goodall's last days in Europe as he farewells family and campaigns for the right to die, up to his final hour.

"I still have a visceral reaction to it when I think about it," says Duncan Goodall, David's grandson. "Having someone take their own life is repellent to me. But when you think it through and you sort of rationalise it...it makes sense."

The ABC's Charlotte Hamlyn, based in Perth, first met Dr Goodall on his 100th birthday and is the only Australian journalist to document Dr Goodall's journey to Switzerland.

In a powerful and ultimately life-affirming film, we follow Dr Goodall and his family from Perth to France to Switzerland and see them navigate their way



through the bureaucracy of death and become unlikely stars in an international media drama.

"He could have excluded the media in a way that was good and comfortable for him. Instead he made a very difficult choice to bring everyone in and make sacrifices and change things for the better." Duncan Goodall, Grandson

Dr Goodall's story attracted global attention because his decision to die was unusual: the renowned botanist was technically healthy but poor eyesight and mobility meant he no longer found joy in life.

"Up to even the age of 90 I was enjoying life," he tells *Foreign Correspondent* reporter Charlotte Hamlyn, *"but not now."*

At 104, Dr David Goodall was fearful of losing his cherished independence and his daughter reveals to *Foreign Correspondent* that after a failed attempt to kill himself earlier this year he decided to seek help with an assisted suicide in Switzerland.

"He'd always planned that at some point, if life was not worth living or there was not enough quality, that this is what he would do. But... that failed." Karen Goodall-Smith, Daughter

"You don't change his mind," says his Bordeaux-based daughter-in-law, Hana Goodall. *"He always thinks in a different way and it's a destiny of an unusual man to make an unusual decision."*

Switzerland has some of the most liberal laws on assisted suicide in the world. The process is different to voluntary euthanasia because the person must carry out the act themselves. Swiss law also allows foreigners in, with over 200 making the one-way trip there annually, including at least one Australian a year, leading to claims of 'suicide tourism'.

Foreign Correspondent films with Dr Goodall until his final hour, when he is instructed how to administer the drugs that will kill him. Right to the end, he takes every opportunity to remind people of the need for debate about assisted dying laws.

"I'm not ill," He insists as his grandson helps him complete the final paperwork. *"Do you hope that by publicising it you will get people talking about it after your death?"* asks one of the many foreign reporters who flocked to Basel to cover the story. *"I'm happy that should be so, yes,"* agrees Dr Goodall

On His Own Terms, the inside story of 104-year-old activist David Goodall's last days, airs on *Foreign Correspondent* at 8.00pm Tuesday July 10 on ABC TV (repeated 1.30pm Fridays, 7.30 Saturdays on ABC News). Also on iview.

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Media Release

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