



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
VÉRIFIER AU PRONONCÉ

STATEMENT BY
SARA JIWANI
EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA

OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING

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DÉCLARATION DE
SARA JIWANI
EMPLOI ET DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL CANADA

GROUPE DE TRAVAIL À COMPOSITION NON LIMITÉE SUR LE
VIEILLISSEMENT

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Merci Monsieur le President,

I would like to start by thanking all participants for their contributions to the discussions during this 5th session of the Working Group. Canada is confident that these discussions are a positive step towards enhancing the protection and implementation of the rights of older persons.

During this session, we heard many views on existing gaps in the protection of older persons, as well as how to use existing mechanisms to strengthen their human rights.

An important example, we discussed is how to better use existing international framework including the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), which commits governments to integrate the rights and needs of older persons into national, as well as international, economic and social development policies.

We have also heard that neglect, abuse, and violence against older persons continue to be major policy issues in all regions, regardless of level of development.

What Canada takes from the discussions in this Working Group is that the situation of older persons cannot be overlooked. Seniors make up the fastest-growing demographic around the world, and concrete steps and action are required to mitigate the many challenges they face through: access to

knowledge, education and training, income security and social protection, care and end of life planning, so that older persons can continue to be active participants in society.

The challenges facing the world's older persons is not a lack of international law, but because of a wider set of considerations which all societies must work to address. There are important legal frameworks in place, including a rich body of legally binding international human rights treaties. These provide older persons with the universal recognition that basic rights and fundamental freedoms inherent to all human beings, and equally applicable to everyone, as human rights apply in all corners of the Earth and to people of all ages.

The creation of a new convention on the rights of older persons only serves to reiterate rights all human beings enjoy under existing human rights conventions, changing almost nothing on the ground. A new convention would provide little by way of new protections, would add to an already overburdened human rights reporting and monitoring system, and would not bring about timely change.

We must opt for concrete action. The world's attention and efforts on the rights of older persons need to be focused on domestic implementation by Member States through national program and policy measures. In focusing on domestic implementation, we also believe that States can rely upon the wide array of laws, frameworks and other tools in the UN system including: the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, existing treaties and General

Assembly resolutions, special mechanisms such as Member State periodic reviews, and the independent expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

Mr. Chair, the Working Group's discussions of various gaps have helped to clarify where existing rights may need further elaboration and how member States and the UN system can better support the implementation of human rights in respect of older persons. Canada is pleased to see that discussions on the way forward are underway.

Canada takes the protection and promotion of the human rights of its population very seriously. By this we mean that all levels of government, federal, provincial and territorial, share a strong commitment and work together to protect and advance the human rights of all Canadians, including older persons. We see human rights as inherent to individual dignity; we also understand the fundamental link between the full realization of human rights to a secure, prosperous and peaceful society.

While Canada is aware that challenges remain to be tackled in order to ensure the well-being of older persons across our country, we will continue to evaluate and improve upon our current programs and policies in order to better protect and promote the human rights of older persons. We will also continue to participate in the work of this Working Group, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging process and any other UN efforts to

encourage member States to respect, protect and promote the human rights of older persons.

Mr. Chair, Canada is grateful to be a part of this Working Group, as it continues to deliver an excellent platform for keeping the rights of older persons on the international agenda and for sharing ideas, solutions and best practices.

Thank you.