



BANGLADESH

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Statement by
Bangladesh delegation

at the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening the protection
of the human rights of older persons
New York, August 15, 2013

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by joining the previous speakers in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. We hope under your able leadership, our deliberations on this important issue would achieve desired objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

Ageing is a common phenomenon of life. It is estimated that by 2050 20% of the global population will be of 60 years or higher. One out of every five people will be 60 years or older. They certainly merit our priority attention.

The numerical growth of elderly persons around the world is an eloquent testimony of reduction in mortality, fertility, diseases, improved nutrition, healthcare, education and income. Furthermore, advances in medical sciences and improved social conditions during the past few decades have increased the life span of human beings. As a result, there is a substantial increase in the proportion of elderly population. While population ageing is most advanced in the developed countries, it is rapidly advancing in the developing countries as well.

BANGLADESH is not isolated from this demographic reality. Although in Bangladesh, we have a long cultural of respecting and looking after our elders in the structure of an extended family- the pattern of life is changing, and family composition is undergoing a rapid transformation. With the condition of socio-economic transformation, the elderly population is experiencing a difficult time.

The government of Bangladesh within its resource constraint, has taken a range of social safety net programmes targeting the elderly people. These include old age allowance distressed women's pension, old home.

Poverty is at the root of suffering of most of older persons. As such, the Government has undertaken cash and food transfer programmes, micro-finance and other special poverty alleviation programmes for the vulnerable section of society including the elderly.

Government officials receive usual pension benefits after their retirement. People from other services receive financial support in the form of gratuity. Retired officials can take active part in different income-earning activities.

For the elderly persons, who are not covered by retirement benefits, old age allowance is in place. Currently, about 2.4 million elderly people are covered under this programme. The Old Age Allowance supports the aged persons, increase their status in the family and bring back their sense of security.

The government has also built a successful partnership with the NGOs and civil society organisations in addressing the issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh organized a global consultation on population dynamics-one of the 11 thematic areas identified for the port 2015 development agenda, where discussion on ageing featured importantly. We have forwarded the outcome of the consultation of the event as Dhaka Declaration for consideration in the 2015 Development Agenda. We hope that the finding of Dhaka event will find appropriate place in possible 2015 development framework.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.
