

RIGHT TO HEALTH AND ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

Submission by:

UNIVERSAL PEACE AND VIOLENCE AMELIORATION CENTRE
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SUBSTANTIVE INPUT

**THE CHAIR OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP FOR THE PURPOSE OF
STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN
RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS**

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1. NATIONAL AND LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Federal Executive Council has ratified the National Policy on Ageing for Older Persons in Nigeria. The approval was given on Wednesday February 10, 2021 at the FEC meeting presided over by the of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The objective of the policy is to have a society where older persons are guaranteed security, independence, participation, comprehensive care, self-fulfillment and dignity. It covers intersecting spectrum of issues and opportunities for older women and men in urban and rural settings, older persons living with disabilities, older migrants, internally displaced older persons, Poor older persons and older persons that are full of vigor contributing to the progress of families, communities and the larger society.

Very few national legal and policy frameworks have been put in place in Nigeria to ensure the enjoyment of standard physical and mental health facilities and services of older persons, but are yet to be implemented and practiced nationwide.

Currently, no steps have been taken to ensure that older persons have access to affordable and good quality health care and services in Nigeria. Older persons are still faced with inability to meet medical and related health care bills. Also there are no established evidence-based statistics of the number of older persons regarding their rights to health care and services in Nigeria of recent.

No steps have been taken to provide adequate training for legislators, policymakers, health and care personnel on the rights to health of older persons.

2. PROGRESSIVE REALIZATION AND THE USE OF MAXIMUM AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Few steps have been taken in Nigeria to address economic insecurity and poverty in older age and to ensure the right to an adequate standard of living for older persons such as establishment of senior citizens centers and enactment of ACTS to protect older persons against economic insecurity by ensuring the right to work and access to the labour market by older persons, while guaranteeing access to justice by them.

3. EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In Nigeria policies and laws have been put in place to eliminate ageism and discrimination based on age. These policies and laws cover reasonable aspects relating to health, housing, insurance, social safety nets, social welfare and transportation.

Also, with recent government legislation on the abolishment of age discrimination, the elimination of ageism, ageist stereotypes, prejudices and behaviors that devalue older persons' right to economic security has been curtailed through such policies and passed into law as an ACT.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

Mechanisms currently in place for older persons to lodge complaints and seek redress for denial of their right to participate in and contribute to sustainable development includes the following:

- i. Establishing a Bill for an act to provide certain rights and privileges for Older Persons in order to ensure health and economic reliefs and Protection for their social and civil rights and for other related matters, 2019.
- ii. National Senior Citizens Centre ACT, 2017: An Act to establish the National Senior Citizens Centre in the country to cater for the needs of senior citizens; and for related matters.

Other necessary Mechanisms that might need to be put in place for older persons to lodge complaints and seek redress for denial of their economic security and enjoyment of the right to an adequate standard of living includes the following:

- i. Ensuring that social protection and social security systems are established and effectively managed.
- ii. Ensuring that a comprehensive database of older persons living in poverty is created and regularly updated.
- iii. Ensuring that jobs are created specifically with older persons in consideration.
- iv. Ensuring the active representation and participation of older persons in all functional National Action Planning.
- v. Monitoring and Evaluation to track the effective management and accountability of existing frameworks and mechanisms.
- vi. Ensuring an open and transparent feedback mechanism at all levels for older persons to lodge their complaints or recommendations.

