



HelpAge International Closing Statement
Open-ended Working Group on Ageing
Second Working Session, 1 – 4 August 2011

Identification of existing gaps at international level and measures to address them

Thank you, Madam Moderator, distinguished delegates.

HelpAge International is a global network of over 80 organisations working directly with older people and their associations in over 50 countries. HelpAge is also a member of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People. As such we would like to thank the Bureau for the inclusion of older people on the panels at this session.

Older people's organizations across our network have expressed their strong desire to work towards a universal instrument to empower them to claim their rights and address the normative gap that we do believe exists.

We have heard at this and at the first session of the Open-ended Working Group in April that a number of Treaty Body General Comments and other advisory documents do indeed refer to older people as a group that is vulnerable to violation of their rights.

But it has also been demonstrated that these measures have failed to result in adequate and systematic protection of older people's rights within the existing protection regime.

We also appreciate the concerns around adding to the existing human rights system but do not feel that arguments regarding resources should have a major bearing on discussions about responding to the extreme violations of rights that this body is addressing.

In light of this, we welcome the suggestions that have been made on how to strengthen the protection of older people's rights as important steps towards an international instrument that clearly articulates the specific application of existing human rights norms to older people.

HelpAge International and members of our network look forward to working with the Open-ended Working Group towards this end.

Thank you.

HelpAge International, August 2011, www.helpage.org