

Pakistan's Statement during Open-ended Working Group
on Ageing
Concluding Session, 21 April 2011

Thank your Mr. Chairman,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the skilled and successful conduct of this Working Group. We would also like to extend our appreciation and thanks to all the distinguished panelists that we had the pleasure to interact in the last two days for their inspiring presentations. It indeed was a productive session that gave us an overview of various approaches and perspectives on dealing with the issue of ageing.

Pakistan would like to reiterate the importance it attaches to the issue of non-discrimination and the commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of all segments of its society in accordance with its constitutional obligations. In my previous statement I had the honour to list some of the steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to promote and protect the rights of older persons and today would like to share that the concerned Ministry of Social Welfare is in the process of finalizing a comprehensive "Senior Citizens Welfare Bill". The draft of this Bill has been completed, which also provides for establishment of an independent and non-profit body called Senior Citizens Council to study, advice and recommend plans and measures to be taken for the welfare of senior citizens. It also entails a number of welfare measures in different spheres of life. The bill will shortly be processed for necessary legislative and executive approvals.

Mr. Chairman,

We have heard views of distinguished colleagues and experts on the need, urgency and way forward in dealing with this very important issue. Despite the differences of views on the way forward there is a genuine desire to understand and address the

concerns relating to discrimination against or promotion and protection of the rights of the older persons. We believe that discussions held during this Session would provide due guidance in formulating and crystallizing different options from the perspective of their applicability, utility and comprehensiveness. We therefore, look forward to receiving the summary of the discussions held during this Working Group.

We are sympathetic to the views of colleagues who intend embarking on the road to crafting a Convention on the subject. However, the counter view put forward such as waiting for the 2nd Review of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing as well as the need to first identifying gaps in the process with a view to finding appropriate solutions are also important and merit our careful consideration.

Guided by the common desire to ensure the best for this respected segment of our society, we must move forward in accordance with our national and developmental priorities to ensure that there is no discrimination and their rights as equal members of the society are promoted and protected at all times.

In conclusion, we reiterate the assurance of our constructive engagement and support in carrying forward the work of this Working Group.

Thank you.