



Open-ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons

Pre-recorded video General Discussion - 29 March 2021 - Measures to enhance the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons

Statement by **International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA)**

Read by Silvia Perel-Levin

INPEA welcomes this important and long overdue discussion on the human rights of older persons. This Working Group cannot simply pick up where it left off **two years ago** as if it was business as usual.

This past year has seen unacceptable levels of preventable suffering and death by older persons. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated the systemic, day-to-day discrimination faced by older people in virtually every country. We have been subjected to ageist hate speech and stigmatization. Many older persons, particularly older women are suffering intolerable levels of violence, abuse and neglect both at home and in institutions.

Ageism and the lack of adequate measures to protect older people's rights, led to either the denial of treatment or non-admittance to hospital, especially of older care home residents.

Arbitrary age-based measures have deepened existing inequalities and denied older persons also equal access to social and economic security, employment, continued learning, support services, justice and full participation in family, social and economic life. These are human rights violations. Governments' failure to protect the rights of their older citizens cannot be excused.

We regret there is not more representation of civil society and older persons in this session's Programme of Work. We strongly protest the limitations imposed on our participation and the shrinking of the Civil Society space

However, we believe that we can make a difference this week. The world is watching. We call on Member States to take meaningful steps towards the protection of the rights of people in older age.

Listen to Civil Society. We are your partners. Hear what the panel experts say this week.

Adopt the recommendations of the UN Secretary General who called in his policy brief of May 2020 to 'build stronger legal frameworks and to accelerate the efforts to develop proposals for an international legal instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons.'

Do Include in the discussions of this session the OHCHR updated Study on normative standards and adopt its recommendations, even if it is not in the Programme of Work.

Distinguished delegates, compliance with General Assembly resolutions is your duty. You have the mandate. Take the courageous, correct step to begin drafting the text for a binding UN Convention to protect the rights of all older people.

The time to act is Now for the older persons of today and those of the future.

Thank you