

30 July 2014

## Opening Statement by AGE Platform Europe

Distinguished chair, members of the Bureau and delegates,  
Thank you for giving me the floor.

I am speaking on behalf of AGE Platform Europe (AGE), the self-advocacy network representing directly over 40 million older people in the European Union. Our members wish to reiterate their great appreciation for the work of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) as a unique international forum aiming to discuss and advance the rights of older people.

AGE sincerely appreciates the increased participation of civil society both as participants and as panellists to this working group and thanks the Bureau and Secretariat for their outstanding efforts to include NGOs in the deliberations. At the same time we wish to underline our previous call for a more inclusive debate with the direct involvement of older persons both in the OEWG and also in national and regional consultations aiming to ensure that the positions presented by delegations at the OEWG are genuinely informed by the views of older persons in their respective countries and regions.

AGE warmly welcomes the appointment of Ms. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte as Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and is convinced that her mandate will bring genuine added value and complement the ongoing work of the OEWG.

Within Europe an important development took place this year as the Council of Europe adopted the Recommendation on the promotion of human rights of older persons. This is the first European document that proclaims that all human rights and fundamental freedoms apply to older persons on an equal basis with others and represents a good reference document for policies and advocacy.

Our members however still believe that there is need to work at the international level to efficiently tackle the challenges of our older population. This is why we await with great interest the discussions of the 5<sup>th</sup> session, which focus on a number of issues that have not received sufficient attention by the existing human rights mechanisms, including elder abuse, care and end-of-life planning. To efficiently prepare our participation in this session AGE Platform Europe recently organised an expert workshop on the human rights of older people in need of care and assistance. The outcomes of this meeting were submitted as a written contribution to the OEWG, intended to be used as a ground for reflections on the specific elements of a new international instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons. We hope that in the following days, Member States will also make concrete forward-looking proposals, which would respond to the General Assembly resolution 67/139.

We look forward to fruitful discussions on what steps need to be taken at the international level to achieve equality across all ages.

Ebbe Johansen  
Vice-President

