

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. Y. HALİT ÇEVİK
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Mr. Chair,

Turkey attaches great importance to the well being of the elderly and thus we believe the Working Group is a valuable platform where governments and NGOs could meet and discuss issues with regards to the human rights of older persons and ways to best address them.

In this regard, Turkey will continue its support to the efforts of the Working Group, as we have been doing since its inception. I would like to extend our gratitude for the leadership of Argentina as the Chair of the Working Group.

Population ageing is taking place in all countries and Turkey is no exception to this. Although the issue of ageing has been affiliated more with developed economies, we are all aware that this universal phenomenon is being experienced by the developing countries as well. In this vein, we welcome the current references made to older persons in the Outcome Document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

The 21st century will be “the century of ageing and international migration” and in this regard, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), adopted in 2002, was a milestone. Since its adoption, progress has been achieved across a broad range of issues which are of crucial importance to the wellbeing of the elderly. The results of the second global review and appraisal of the International Plan of Action, have been a significant contribution to the ongoing efforts.

However, we still have a long way to go to achieve and to encourage “a society for all ages” at the global scale. These include improving health care, preventing violence against older women and men, participation of older persons into the decision making processes and reducing poverty among older persons.

Turkey is still considered as a “young population”, but it is ageing faster than many developed countries. By 2050 Turkish population above the age of 65 will increase from 7% to 21%, the majority of them living in urban spaces. Like many countries, Turkey has to manage its economic and social development processes and accumulate the resources it will need to face the challenges of an ageing population.

To respond to this demographic transition, Turkey had adopted the National Plan of Action on Aging in 2007, with the active participation of Turkish NGOs. The Plan sets the legal and policy framework of equality necessary for a comprehensive approach to elderly rights.

Furthermore, as a result of the amendments that had been made in 2010, Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution was revised to stipulate positive discrimination for the older persons to strengthen the protection of their constitutional rights.

The Implementation Program for the Action Plan, was initiated by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in 2013. The plan involves number of agencies across the government and it established an annual monitoring mechanism. It has a focus on increasing elderly's participation to development and decision making processes and improvement of comprehensive long term care services.

On that note, I would like to reiterate the commitment of my country to provide its full support to the efforts carried out for the welfare of the older persons and the agenda before the Working Group in this regard.

Thank you Mr. Chair.