

Panel presentation by Thailand
at Panel 1: Promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of
older persons: contributions from the second global review and appraisal of
the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing,
Fourth working session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing,
12 August 2013, 15.00- 18.00 hrs., Conference Room 3, Conference Building

Mr. Chairman,

I am honoured to present to you the experiences and views from the Asia-Pacific region on its implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA).

Asia-Pacific is witnessing an unprecedented ageing population. By 2050, the number of older persons in Asia and the Pacific would triple, from less than half a billion to an estimated 1.3 billion, which means that one in every four person in the region will be older than 60 years old. Older women will also outnumber older men since women comprise 60 per cent of the ageing population. The rapid demographic transition in Asia and the Pacific will have significant impact for the region. One which Governments must prepare for and response to.

It is, therefore, most timely that a decade after the adoption of MIPAA, relevant stakeholders in the region gathered to review the progress made in the region in the implementation of MIPAA and identify key priorities for the next implementation cycle and areas for further regional cooperation. The Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing was held between 10- 12 September 2012 in Bangkok. It was attended by 30 members and associate member of UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific or ESCAP, representatives of civil society organizations and various UN agencies.

Mr. Chairman,

At the Meeting, ESCAP presented the results from a regional survey. The results showed that much progress had been achieved in the implementation of MIPAA including in the following areas; developing national plans and mechanisms on ageing; strengthening social protection systems; engaging the active participation of older persons in policy formulation; and ensuring accessible, affordable and available health-care services.

At the same time, the survey identified some challenges including shortage of resources to support the implementation of national plans and policies on ageing; difficulties in mainstreaming gender dimensions of ageing; marginalization of employment opportunities for older persons; uneven social protection coverage; inadequate investment in health-care; and lack of measures to address violence and abuse directed at older persons.

Mr. Chairman,

To address this profound demographic transition and its many challenges, the Meeting adopted the Bangkok Statement on the Asia-Pacific review of the implementation of the MIPAA. The Bangkok Statement serves as Asia-Pacific's input to the global review and appraisal of the MIPAA being conducted under the Commission for Social Development this year.

The main recommendation which Asia-Pacific member states wishes to stress is the crucial importance of addressing the rights of older persons in legal and policy frameworks. In addition, the Bangkok Statement focuses on three priority areas; older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age, and ensuring enabling and supportive environment.

Key recommendations under "**older persons and development**" include implementation of specific national policies and establishment of national mechanism on ageing.

In "**advancing health and well-being in old age**", the Bangkok Statement calls for adapting health and social systems to respond to the needs of older persons through an integrated continuum of care, including preventive care,

acute care, chronic disease management, long term care and end-of-life care. Participants also call for healthy and active ageing and the right to healthcare. Moreover, the importance of home and community-based care to improve coverage and quality of care in formal and informal setting were also underlined.

In "**ensuring enabling and supportive environment**", the key recommendations are the creation and promotion of enabling environments to support the active participation of older persons in community and society, including through increased investment in the universal design of housing, public buildings, public spaces and local infrastructure.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the Asia-Pacific member states agree that MIPAA provides an overarching framework for the preparation and response to ageing in the region. The Bangkok Statement also welcomes the role of civil society in supporting older persons and governments on issues related to ageing. Thailand believes that with socio-economic development policies which take full account of ageing, right to health and supportive environment, as well as political commitment, the Asia-Pacific region can successfully prepare for the ageing of societies, and turn the challenges into opportunities in order to build a quality and healthy ageing societies.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
