

22 January 2019

His Excellency Mr. Martin Garcia Moritan
United Nations Ambassador
U.N. Headquarters
New York, NY 10017
U.S.A

Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building

Dear Ambassador Garcia Moritan,

We would like to thank you on behalf of our organization, SOS Rassismus und Diskriminierung Schweiz based in Zurich city, for your excellent service to the international community. The Open-ended Working Group's 10th session on Ageing brings into perspective the social protection and educational & training issues faced by the elderly around the world. Therefore, we would like to the best of our efforts to provide substantial factual input from our observations and databases as to the 'Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building' focus area.

SOS Racism and Discrimination Switzerland is a constituent of the advisory network for the victims of racism. We operate an information, consulting and triage consultancy, to offer help and support to our fellow residents who are affected by discrimination, racism, intolerance and structural violence. One of the main tasks consist of taking up cases of racial assaults in Switzerland and, to analyze and document them objectively. The cases are then anonymously entered into the data bank DoSyRa, to carry out the basis of the prevention work in a joint venture between the Humanrights Schweiz and the Federal Commission Against Racism (EKR).

From our observations, the management of vast cases and our interdisciplinary staff, we have deduced that a major overlooked issue not only in Switzerland, but potentially in other parts of the world, is discrimination based on multiple factors. This means, for instance, other forms of discrimination could occur in conjunction with ageing. However, due to the sensitive nature of the cases and the various complicated elements associated, most of them are not taken into consideration. Below, we can see the different forms of discrimination that could occur simultaneously in multiple factors.

- **Age:** It occurs in many aspects of private life but more frequently in the workplace, such as when a person above 50 years of age cannot find employment or is fired without just cause.
- **Race/ethnicity/religion:** This is one of the most common forms of discrimination in Switzerland that can be a huge barrier to everyday life.
- **Sex:** This occurs more likely to women suffering from sexual harassment or gender discrimination not only in the workplace but also in family affairs.
- **Sexual orientation/identity:** LGBT persons are discriminated against in all aspects of life such as finding employment, housing and sound healthcare.
- **Disability:** This can namely occur by the non-accommodation of said person in the workplace or in other forms such as mocking or refusal of service. Our Federal Government is working out a special program to mitigate such impact in 2019.
- **Political opinion:** People with left ideology are the most victims.
- **Legal Status:** Based on what type of visa or permit the individual holds such as people with a temporary permit have a higher risk of suffering racist incidents in contrast to those holding a definite permit.

The Federal Constitution of Switzerland guarantees its citizens the right against age discrimination in Article 8 section 2. However, this only applies to employment dealings in the public sector and not in the private sector which falls under private law. Therefore, ageing or ageism is still an

ongoing issue in Switzerland, particularly concerning private sector employment, with many companies choosing to specify an age range in their recruitment process.

Regarding education and lifelong training, Switzerland was number 1 in Europe in 2017 with 31.2% of people aged 25 to 64 who participated in education and training in the four weeks preceding the survey (EUROSTAT, 2018). However, we could not find relevant statistics regarding older migrants, older women or older LGBT persons to be able to determine whether there are multiple discrimination cases regarding lifelong learning in Switzerland. There is however an 'Age and Migration' forum that was set up in 2003 to deal with older migrants and their integration in the Swiss society which includes education and training.

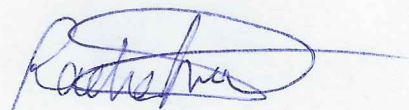
Coming back to the Multiple Discrimination mentioned above, it is very important to focus on any individual cases to realize if this is the fact. We have observed in our legal counselling that 30% of our racism cases are, in real, multiple discrimination cases. Thus, it should be relevant to train every government bodies and institutions directly involved in these issues to watch out carefully and bring them into statistics to improve quality of life in society.

We thank you for your service to this working group and we look forward to the issue of 'Multiple Factor Discriminations' being addressed in the near future.

Sincerely,



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Founding President Legal Affairs



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Legal Assistant to UN affairs