**UN-Habitat Submission to Open-ended Working Group on Ageing**

*1 February 2019*

UN-Habitat, as the UN Agency responsible for human settlements and urbanization, supports and advocates for improved city spatial planning and management to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of older persons in the city.

Access to services, education and social inclusion are often restricted by a lack of mobility and accessibility. Therefore, UN-Habitat in principle supports universal design through all urban development processes. The built environment must be appropriately designed to fulfil the rights for all people including for people in older age, to access urban services, urban life and housing. This must be complemented by appropriate transport systems, and adequate housing design that allow full physical access for older persons. Only once these conditions are met will older persons gain full dignity and enjoyment of their rights in cities, including the rights of older people to autonomy and independence.

UN-Habitat is proud to be a partner of The Global Compact on Inclusive and Accessible Cities. This Compact is centred on promoting diversity, inclusivity and dignity, in cities and at the community level. Fulfilling the rights of persons with disabilities and older persons is a priority for UN-Habitat. Through the Habitat III process, UN-Habitat engaged more than ever before, with new partners working with older persons and people living with disabilities among others, and are proud that the New Urban Agenda has ‘accessibility for all’ as a core principle.

Furthermore, UN-Habitat recognises the diverse identities of older persons, and therefore the different needs and specific priorities of older women, older migrants and older persons with disabilities, for example.

Finally and crucially, UN-Habitat uses participatory processes throughout its work. Older persons must always be included in decision processes that concern them, such as urban spatial planning and design, housing provision and livelihood, city management processes and urban governance. Only when older persons have equal voice will they enjoy equal outcomes and opportunities.