

WHY WE NEED A LEGAL INSTRUMENT TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

- There are **gaps** in protection of older persons in existing human rights standards and laws.
- “Age” is not recognized as a category of **discrimination** – unlike gender, race, ethnicity, language, religion.
- Age discrimination and **ageism** are widely tolerated throughout the world.
- Older persons are often treated as subjects or objects of welfare instead of as **rights holders**
- Older persons are often **vulnerable to deprivation and exclusion**, disproportionately during times of crisis.
- Single most pressing challenge to the welfare of older persons is **poverty**, characterized by homelessness, malnutrition, unattended chronic diseases, lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation, unaffordable medicines and treatments, income insecurity.
- Older persons are at higher risk of **abuse and violence** – physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial – and the consequences are often more severe.
- Respect for older persons’ rights also **benefits society** as a whole.

Everyone should grow old and prosper with dignity !!

WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE OF A SPECIFIC CONVENTION TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS?

A new, legally binding instrument (a convention) would bring **clarity** to both the nature of older persons’ rights and the responsibilities necessary to protect them (think of specific conventions for children, women and persons with disabilities, which have made a HUGE difference to their lives and to society as a whole, around the world).

A convention on the rights of older persons would, among other things:

- **View older persons as rights-holders.**
- **Codify the rights** of older persons in one single document, recognizing the specific challenges related to ageing and serving as a tool for both empowerment and protection.
- **Establish** a common, global understanding of definitions and minimum standards of practice.
- **Act as an anti-discriminatory tool** to challenge prevailing negative stereotypes about old age.
- Require governments to **collect data, develop indicators, establish laws and policies, develop programmes** that take into account the rights and concerns of older persons.
- Improve **State accountability and transparency** with respect to actions taken for older persons, including with their active participation.
- **Raise public awareness** in respect of older persons’ rights.
- **Create societies and environments for all ages, where older persons are also able to contribute, prosper and enjoy their rights.**

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