

United National International Day of Older Persons #UNIDOP2023 #OlderPersonsDay

Fulfilling the Promises of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Older Persons: Across Generations

New York Commemoration
2 October 2023, 10am to 1pm
ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQ

Mission Statement

Seventy-five years ago, this year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, a monumental document in the history of human rights. Written by representatives from around the world with different legal, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, it is the first document articulating the fundamental human rights that are meant to be universally protected.¹ In recognition of this milestone, and looking to a future that delivers on the promise to ensure that all persons, including all older persons, fully enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, the 33rd commemoration of the United Nations International Day of Older Persons will focus on the theme of **“Fulfilling the Promises of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Older Persons: Across Generations”**. The event will put a spotlight on the specificity of older persons around the world, for the enjoyment of their rights and in addressing violations, and how the strengthening of solidarity through equity and reciprocity between generations offers sustainable solutions to deliver on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals.

According to the outcomes of the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), age-based discrimination in institutions, attitudes and practices continues to be rampant, highlighting deficiencies in the implementation of international and national frameworks for older persons. Systemic and structural barriers often exist for older persons in the context of work, standards of living, learning opportunities and access to services and resources because of ageist attitudes, discriminatory laws and policies, underfunding, and lack of accessibility and affordability, among others.¹ This can lead to increased vulnerability of older persons to neglect, abuse and serious health issues. There are and have been numerous interventions designed to prevent and mitigate these threats to older persons which, while helpful, have not necessarily been based on a coherent and holistic approach to the human rights of older persons that is more broadly sustained. According to the outcomes of the Fourth Review and Appraisal of MIPAA, in the

¹ OHCHR (2023) 75 Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Key Messages. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/get-involved/campaign/udhr-75>

absence of human rights norms and standards, particularly to the situation of older persons at the international level, the ability to unpack the complexities and changing nature of discrimination and intersecting forms of inequality across the life course is limited.

The work of the International Community around intergenerational solidarity has demonstrated, time and again, through various fora that intergenerational solutions, which are guided by the human rights principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality, empowerment and legality, can contribute to rekindle the legacy, relevance and activism of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by empowering both youth and older persons to shift the needle of political will towards fulfilling the promises of the Declaration for all people across generations.

The Event

The United Nations International Day of Older Persons 2023 is a call to action and opportunity, with globally representative experts offering a multi-stakeholder dialogue on a range of human rights of older persons and as well as on examples of policies that facilitate intergenerational solutions, taking into account a life course approach to equality, freedom and justice for all.

Objectives of UNIDOP 2023:

- To increase global knowledge and awareness of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and generate commitments among all stakeholders to strengthen the protection of the human rights of current and future generations of older persons around the world;
- To share and learn from intergenerational models for the protection of human rights around the world; and
- To call on Governments and UN entities to review their current practices with a view to better integrate a life course approach to human rights in their work, and to ensure the active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including civil society, national human rights institutions and older persons themselves, in the work on strengthening solidarity among generations and intergenerational partnerships.