



Statement by Group of Friends of Older Persons

United Nations Headquarters in New York
20th April 2020

1. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating across the world but even more so for older persons.
2. As Group of Friends of Older Persons, we express deep concern about older persons, especially those with underlying health conditions and those who are already socially excluded, living in poverty, homelessness, having limited access to health services or living in confined spaces such as prisons and residential care homes. We also have great concern for those older persons who, even in their own homes, face situations of isolation and loneliness.
3. We strongly support the call made by the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons to exercise solidarity and provide better protection, without any restraints and free from all forms of discrimination and violence, to older persons who are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. We stress the urgent need for a holistic human rights approach for every older person that ensures equal realization of all their rights to exert and enjoy their rights without discrimination and in equal conditions, including access to affordable healthcare.
5. We also recommend taking the appropriate measures to provide the necessary home medical services for those older persons who, due to their health conditions, face difficulties when trying to attend hospital centers.
6. We strongly believe that the decisions of allocation of the scarce resources and critical services should not be adopted taking into account solely or predominantly the age of the beneficiaries, since we would be denying the older people the right to health and life on equal terms with others
7. The voices of older persons need to be heard in order to ensure an appropriate, effective and comprehensive international response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Exclusion does not solve a crisis. Now is the time for a global response to the pandemic that builds on our humanity and brings together the global community, including particularly older persons.