

**Multi-stakeholder meeting on the human rights of older persons (29-30 August 2022)  
Session 2: Adequacy of existing human rights mechanisms in responding to the  
challenges (29 August 2022)**

**Oral Statement by the Association for the Prevention of Torture**

Excellencies,

The Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) welcomes the attention devoted by UN human rights mechanisms to the protection of the rights of older persons deprived of liberty, in particular the upcoming thematic report by the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and the latest annual report by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

We share the Working Group's views that the situations of vulnerability experienced by older persons are magnified in the context of deprivation of liberty, both within and outside the criminal justice system.

In this context, we draw your attention to the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering, also known as the Méndez Principles, which include specific provisions on older persons, while providing guidance for non-coercive interviewing and the implementation of associated safeguards.

We also stress the importance of independent monitoring to protect the rights of older persons deprived of liberty. In particular, National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs) established under the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture (OPCAT) observe first-hand the conditions and treatment of older persons deprived of liberty and make recommendations to change policies, regulatory frameworks and practices. They monitor the risks linked to ageing in prison and are increasingly monitoring social care homes and psychiatric institutions. They are also starting to address the need for alternative measures to detention and deinstitutionalisation.

We call on States to ratify the OPCAT and establish independent national preventive mechanisms with the resources and powers to monitor all places of deprivation of liberty, including psychiatric institutions and social care homes, and also engage in dialogue with these bodies on their recommendations, in particular on better protecting the rights of older persons deprived of liberty.

Thank you.

Statement delivered by Veronica Filippeschi, APT Senior Adviser, Vulnerabilities and Policy.  
Email: [vfilippeschi@apt.ch](mailto:vfilippeschi@apt.ch)