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**Multi-stakeholder meeting on the human rights of older persons, 29-30 August 2022**

***Session 3: Strengthening coordinated actions for the protection of the human rights of older persons***

Oral statement delivered by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

*Check against delivery*

Good morning,

Pope Francis reminds us:” Each human person is an end in himself or herself, and never simply a means to be valued only for his or her usefulness. Persons are created to live together in families, communities, and societies, where all are equal in dignity. Human rights derive from this dignity, as do human duties, like the responsibility to welcome and assist the poor, the sick, the excluded, every one of our “neighbours, near or far in space and time”. ([[1]](#footnote-1))”

Society is fully human if it takes care of the weak, the sick, and the suffering and directs resources to those families who welcome the sick, the elderly, and sometimes even at the very end of their lives. There is a need for a change in culture, a change that brings back the centrality of a person no matter what this person can or cannot do.

There is a need for organized systems of healthy aging and care policies, including health promotion and prevention, healthy diets, and physical and mental exercise. There is a need to support older persons in cultivating emotional and social relationships because life does not end with aging.

We believe in an approach that can support a dignified and happy life for older people in their own homes or with their families, promoting home care and economic support, and in case this is not possible by developing family fostering to make the elderly persons become grandparents, recovering a role and the possibility of loving and feeling loved. (2)

We would like to conclude with the words of the former Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health, Dr. Puras, from his report to the Human Rights Council 44/48. When writing about excessive medicalization in the care facilities for the aged, he concluded: “most importantly, however, is the need to promote the conditions and social resources that foster healthy aging and to develop policies and allocate resources that allow older persons to remain integrated into their communities.”

Thank you!

1. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco\_20201208\_messaggio-54giornatamondiale-pace2021.html

   2 http://www.laityfamilylife.va/content/laityfamilylife/it/eventi/2020/la-ricchezza-degli-anni/gli-anziani--una-sfida-e-un-opportunita-per-la-famiglia.html [↑](#footnote-ref-1)