



## Oral Statement at United Nations Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on the Human Rights of Older Persons

Session 2 – Adequacy of existing human rights mechanisms in responding to the challenges

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, representatives of the United Nations and other stakeholders, dear Mr. Chair, dear panellists,

On behalf of BAGSO, the German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations, I would like to thank the High Commissioner's Office for this important session about the adequacy of existing human rights mechanisms and the insights provided by the panellists.

We are worried about possible ageist bias in the interpretation of the normative framework by treaty bodies and even more about possible implications of the failure to recognise that many rights are not covered by existing treaty body processes. What signal does this give? Are the human rights of older people not considered as important as those of other population groups which are protected by UN Conventions?

While we recognise the importance of mainstreaming ageing and integrating older persons' human rights in existing mechanisms as an important step towards a better protection of the human rights of older persons, we are deeply concerned because of practical limitations in doing so. Treaty bodies already have to deal with limited capacity and backlogs. How can significant new issues be added to their work plan? How can we be satisfied with the fragmented and inconsistent coverage when it comes to such an important question, the question about protecting the human rights of older people, that is the human rights of all of us, the rights of ourselves, our family members, friends and colleagues and of our future selves?

In a world where people have never been able to live that long, older age should not be a burden but rather an opportunity to enjoy life with dignity and equal rights. Member States can no longer ignore the evidence of existing gaps. We, once again, want to repeat our call for a comprehensive legal instrument on the human rights of older persons and ask you to speed up the process. Decisive steps must finally be taken towards a strong human-rights based approach and the drafting and adopting of a Convention.

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## **Contact**

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