



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

15 July 2020

Dear Members of Civil Society Organizations,

I wish to thank you for your joint letter dated 2 June 2020 welcoming the United Nations Policy Brief on Older Persons and COVID-19.

The Policy Brief identifies the many risks faced by older persons in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and also highlights immediate and longer-term policy and programmatic responses that governments and other partners must advance to support the needs and rights of older persons. In this vein, efforts are ongoing to place more attention on such responses in the work of the United Nations system.

The Inter-Agency Group on Ageing is addressing this matter in line with the United Nations Framework for the Immediate Socioeconomic Response to COVID-19, and the United Nations COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan. The United Nations Country Teams are working to integrate older persons in the Leave No One Behind analysis for the United Nations socioeconomic impact assessments and responses to COVID-19. The leadership role of the United Nations Resident Coordinators is also being leveraged to create space for dialogue at the national level to address the impact of COVID-19 on older persons and other vulnerable groups.

In addition, the United Nations Secretariat continues to provide technical support to the General Assembly open-ended working group for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons. Indeed, the United Nations Policy Brief explicitly calls upon governments to build stronger legal frameworks at both the national and international levels to protect the human rights of older persons, including by accelerating the efforts of the General Assembly open-ended working group.

Moving forward, I have requested the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to identify ways to further strengthen the inclusion of older persons in the work of the United Nations system at all levels.

Members of Civil Society Organizations

I take this opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the United Nations to advancing the needs and human rights of older persons in our efforts to fight the pandemic and realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I thank you for your congruent efforts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'António Guterres', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

António Guterres