

The OEWGA intersessional work

Each year, HelpAge International, our network members and partners participate in the session of the [UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing](#) (OEWGA) to advocate for the rights of older persons and the adoption of a UN Convention on the rights of older persons.

In this briefing note, we discuss the intersessional process that was created at the OEWGA's 13th session as well as important opportunities over the next few months to influence that process.

1. Intersessional work until the 14th session

The decision adopted by the OEWGA

At the 13th session of the OEWGA in April 2023, Chile presented a draft decision, which was co-sponsored by a long list of other Member States¹ and adopted by consensus ((A/AC.278/2023/L.1/Rev.1). It can be downloaded [here](#).

The decision creates an intersessional process between the 13th session (2023) and 14th session (2024) of the OEWGA.

It requests the OEWGA Chair to appoint two co-facilitators, who will facilitate the consideration of the existing human rights framework and identification of possible gaps and how to best address them.

What will this intersessional work look like?

The OEWGA Chair already appointed the two co-facilitators:

- H.E. Ms. Ana Paula Zacarias, Permanent Representative of Portugal, and
- H.E. Mr. Ronaldo Costa Filho, Permanent Representative of Brazil.

They are invited to conduct open, transparent and inclusive informal intergovernmental meetings with all UN Member States, specialized agencies and observers in the General Assembly. They will collaborate with national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations and the UN Independent Expert on the rights of older persons during the process.

Before the next OEWGA session in April 2024, they will submit proposed intergovernmental negotiated recommendations on the gaps in the human rights framework and how to fill them.

These recommendations will then be considered at the 14th OEWGA session and presented for consideration by the UN General Assembly in 2024.

You can find a complete timeline of the intersessional work [here](#) (English only).

Why is this intersessional work important?

We want the OEWGA to move to a negotiation phase. This inevitably requires Member States to come to an agreement about the gaps in the existing human rights framework and how best to address them. The intersessional work can pave the way for building consensus and formal agreement during the 14th OEWGA session.

¹ Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Philippines, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay.

2. How can we influence this intersessional work?

A. Briefing sessions

The co-facilitators will organise briefing sessions for Member States by various stakeholders. They aim to inform Member States of the gaps in the international human rights framework for the protection of the rights of older persons.

On **20 November 2023**, Member States will be briefed by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. We will share more information on the modalities and how to participate in this session as soon as possible.

B. Questionnaire

To inform their recommendations, the co-facilitators have shared a questionnaire with all Member States, NGOs, UN Specialised Agencies and other relevant stakeholders.

The Questionnaire is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#). The deadline to send responses to the questionnaire is **24 November 2023**. All responses will be posted online.

Through this questionnaire, we can highlight the main gaps in the existing human rights framework and what difference a Convention would make.

C. Support our call for a Convention at the Human Rights Council

The 54th session of the [Human Rights Council](#) will take place in Geneva from 11 September to 13 October 2023. On Friday 15 September in the morning there will be an Interactive Discussion with the UN Independent on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons. The Independent Expert will present her new thematic report on violence against and abuse and neglect of older persons.

NGOs with ECOSOC Status can submit written and oral statements to the Human Rights Council using this platform: <https://ngoreg.ohchr.org>

- The deadline for NGO written statements is Wednesday **23 August 2023**, at 12:00 pm, Geneva time.
- The online system to register for oral statements will open on Tuesday **5 September** at 14:00 (Geneva time - CEST).

More information about the registration process and deadlines will be posted in the following weeks [on this website](#). You can check whether your organisation has ECOSOC status [here](#).

For more information and support, please reach out to tanja.venisnik@helpage.org.

Let's work together!

As a member of the Steering Group of the Global Alliance on the Rights of Older People (GAROP), HelpAge International will participate in the preparation of GAROP events and tools, including a written information package and a webinar open to all NGOs. With these, we aim to support NGOs to influence the intersessional process and complete the questionnaire.

We will share more information as soon as possible. In the meantime, please consult the [GAROP website](#) for regular updates.