

GAROP Steering Group Statement for Human Rights Day

Campaigners urge governments to start drafting a new UN convention to ensure that we can all fully enjoy our rights in older age

Today, on Human Rights Day and the 76th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we recognize and celebrate the tireless work by campaigners around the world to protect the rights of older persons and the ongoing collective advocacy to draft a new United Nations (UN) convention on the human rights of older persons.

From today and up to the next UN Human Rights Council session starting in February, we invite advocates for the human rights of older persons everywhere to join us in an online conversation about what we want our own older age to be like.

Years of gathering evidence and discussions at national and international levels have shown that the best solution to entrenched ageism, widespread age discrimination, and violations of older persons' rights around the world is a comprehensive international legally binding instrument (or UN convention) on the human rights of older persons.

Earlier this year, following 14 years of deliberations, governments in the UN reached a consensus about the possible gaps in the current international human rights framework and recommended, among other actions, a UN convention as a way to address these gaps.

We are at a critical juncture and governments must now decide on a concrete way forward together.

Rose Gahire, GAROP Steering Group co-chair, says "As an older woman I want to live in a society free from ageism and to be able to access services on an equal basis with others. A UN convention is not just an option but a necessary step and now it is time for governments to take decisive action. Let's stand united and together, we can make this vision a reality."

Ina Voelcker, GAROP Steering Group co-chair, says "As I get older, I want to enjoy my independence and to continue to participate fully in my local community. Join our conversation and call on governments at the Human Rights Council to commit to a future where our rights are fully protected as we age and to start drafting a UN convention without delay. Only then can we ensure a truly dignified life for today's older generations who have been fighting for our human rights for decades."

On behalf of all our members who have campaigned together for the human rights of older persons for many years, we stand united in urging Member States to start drafting a UN convention to provide the clarity and stronger legal protection necessary to ensure that older people everywhere can **age with rights**.
