

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

Multi-stakeholder meeting on the human rights of older persons

30 August 2022

PANEL 3 – Strengthening the coordinated actions for the protection of the human rights of older persons

Remarks by Austria

Thank you, Madame Moderator,

I would like to thank the panelists for their excellent presentations and insights. Austria strongly supports further coordination and cooperation among states, international organizations and civil society.

This is why Austria joined not only the Group of Friends of older persons in Geneva but also the cross-regional core group in New York, initiated by Argentina in April this year.

Austria actively participates in the work of the UNECE - Standing Working Group on Ageing in Geneva and cooperates closely with relevant UN Agencies and civil society organizations.

We agree with others who believe that if we want to achieve a suitable rights-based solutions for older persons, the time is now to intensify our efforts and coordinate future joint actions. The different work circles in New York and Geneva should be brought closer together. This will also be key if we think about the upcoming schedule of the OEWGA.

I am pleased to announce that Austria plans to organize an international conference on human rights of older persons in Vienna in 2023, to give – member states and civil society – a platform to meet, and discuss next steps. We will share more information about the conference in due time.

Despite all these positive developments, we believe it is important to acknowledge that some countries are still hesitant to engage. To make meaningful progress, it is essential that we also include them in our deliberations on the way forward.

It is with this in mind I would like to ask the panel, where they see opportunities on how to bring those countries to the table to achieve an increase in the support among member states in the long term.

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PANEL 4 – Towards strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons

Remarks by Austria

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador,

I would like to thank the panelists for the outstanding and informative presentations. It is out of question that older persons in many cases still lack adequate protection of their human rights. The evidence has been clearly documented in various scientific studies and reports, especially those published by the Independent Experts.

In Austria, the rights of older persons are considered high political priority. We have laws and institutions to represent the interest and protect the rights of older persons. The social success of this development is evident for us and one of the many reasons, why we support similar developments at the international level.

In this context, we also strongly support the mandate of the independent expert – and no, this is not because the current mandate holder is Austrian. Of course, she has our full support. Dr. Claudia Mahler and her predecessor Dr. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte have provided excellent expertise and shed light on new challenges of older persons in the context of human rights.

We would also like to particularly highlight the OHCHR's updated report on normative gaps, which provides us with important guidance in our efforts to improve the human rights situation for older persons globally. These reports need to be taken seriously. The OHCHR's normative gaps paper highlights for instance that none of the foundational human rights instruments, explicitly prohibits discrimination on the basis of age. This is a significant normative gap, which needs to be addressed.

It is the objective of the OEWSGA in New York to address these gaps and to offer suitable solutions.

I therefore would like to ask the panel for their recommendations in how we can achieve a wider support for a positive outcome at the OEWSGA.