

Statement submitted by the International Federation on Ageing

Second Working Session

Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

2nd August 2011

The International Federation on Ageing is one of nine founding members of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons.

Following the Second World Assembly on Ageing, civil society has always expressed its wish to partner with Member States to assist in the tasks of ensuring that citizens of whatever age, throughout the world, be socially protected as well as safe and secure. With the expected dramatic increase in the numbers of elderly world-wide, the likelihood of those facing poverty, discrimination and abuse will also increase. We are urging that real partnerships be promoted and instituted in the quest for a document that addresses the human rights of older persons. The Global Alliance is committed to pursuing such a document. Based on the valuable information from all the sources we have been privileged to hear and the statements already existing in various UN documents and in national and regional instruments, we believe such a document will benefit those we heard about this week: the hundreds of millions who live in poverty, those who are abused, victimized, the disenfranchised widows, those accused of witchcraft and put to death without recourse to protection -- we believe that together we can forge a convention that will be a true force for good for older people everywhere. And such a document can benefit all in the communities by seeking more harmonious modes of living. As the panelist from Kenya noted, all generations can benefit from having the rights of older persons assured. The gaps in already existing documents can be addressed and remedied to meet the needs of all older persons, wherever in the world they live.

We believe that the 10 Year Review of MIPAA will reveal that many countries have adopted the "bottom up" approach recommended in the MIPAA, and has led many Member States to address the needs and issues of older persons. Furthermore, this process has been supported where the MIPAA has been publicized and translated into local languages.

We suggest that in building a new comprehensive, inclusive document that the framework for a new expression of concern, respect, admiration and affection for older people exists in the December 1991 (46/91) GA Resolution entitled UN Principles for Older Persons. We envision a convention for older persons' human rights developing out of this and the other documents referenced this week.

It is with great respect for the GA's purpose in convening these OEWG sessions that we appeal to all to consider making new, strong and substantive partnerships with civil society. Our common intent is to improve the lives of all older persons, those among us today and those of you who will join the ballooning ranks of the future populations of elders.

Can we begin to seriously build partnerships?

Thank you.