



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Statement by Ms. Shoko Haruki
First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations
at the Third Working Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing
21 August 2012

Mr. Chairman,

We thank you for holding the Third Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing. We have been actively engaged in discussions with all delegations and participants, since the first session, in order to contribute to the protection of the rights of older persons.

It is necessary for Member States to implement existing frameworks, including UN human rights treaties, continuously and effectively; and to resolve gaps between these frameworks and the actual challenges faced by older persons. These efforts can realize the protection of human rights for older persons.

We would like to stress the importance that Member States should implement efforts and fulfill obligations to protect the human rights of older persons in accordance with the human rights treaties concluded by Member States, based on equality and non-discrimination.

Furthermore, the use of human rights treaty bodies to consider the progress made in the implementation of the treaties should be emphasized. We note that how the human rights treaty bodies should operate is now being discussed in the General Assembly. We expect that this discussion will contribute to effective use of these treaty body systems.

Special Rapporteurs of the UN examine, monitor and advise, as well as, publicly report on human rights issues from various perspectives in accordance with their mandates. These measures have encouraged discussion in the international community. It is important that existing Special Rapporteurs will be further engaged in the challenges faced by older persons. We would also like to emphasize the importance of mainstreaming aging through the use of the Universal Periodic Review in the Human Rights Council in conjunction with other initiatives.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing provides guidance for policy formulation and implementation with the specific goal of successful adjustment to an ageing world. We attach great importance to the second review of the Madrid Plan of Action. Preparing for the global review next year, we will participate in the discussion at the intergovernmental meeting organized by ESCAP in September.

The population of older persons is growing more rapidly in Japan than anywhere else in the world. Because of this, we have been engaged in implementing policies to effectively address the challenges of an ageing society based on "the Aged Society Basic Act" and "the General Principles Concerning Measures for the Aged Society". We have been reviewing our social systems to prepare for the rapid growth of the aged in our society. As part of our efforts, the General Principles is currently being reviewed based on recent changes in domestic economic and social situations.

We are now considering how we can change national awareness about how talented and motivated older persons actively contribute to their society, and that older persons should not uniformly be considered as persons who need to be supported.

Finally, we would like to point out that in addition to Member States, the community, the basis for life of older persons, is an important stakeholder and plays a vital role for older persons.

Japan looks forward to discussing ways to encourage the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by older persons, specifying their challenges and sharing good practices.

Thank you.