



**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil,  
H.E. Regina Maria Cordeiro Dunlop**

**Open-ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening  
the protection of the human rights of older persons**

**Second Working Session**

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to address the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing. Please allow me, on behalf of the Brazilian Delegation, to congratulate your work, Ambassador Jorge Martin Aguello, as chairman of the Working Group. I am positive that under your leadership the current session will achieve constructive results. I also congratulate the work of all members of the Bureau in organizing such a relevant meeting.

The rapid growth of the world population of older persons constitutes a significant demographic trend of our days. Brazil is all too aware of the demographic challenges to come. Currently, above 20 million persons are aged 60 and over in the country. They account for around 11% of the Brazilian population. This percentage of older persons in Brazil is expected to rise to an impressive figure of 28% in 2040, which will sum 58 million people.

To meet these challenges Brazil has been implementing new legislation and putting into practice modern public policies. The Federal Constitution of 1988 secured fundamental rights to older persons. It ensured the right to pensions for millions of rural workers, established a universal public health system – which provides for the distribution of free

*po (older)*

medication and medical assistance – and has assured a minimum wage for every person over 65 who cannot provide for their own subsistence.

The Statute of Older Persons was adopted in 2003 and worked as a watershed to the rights of this group in Brazil. The bill, while reiterating all previous legislation, banned discrimination based on age, sped up judicial processes involving older people and enhanced the framework for good medical and insurance practices for individuals over 60. The Statute also created the National Council for Older Persons, which works within the Federal Government to oversee the implementation of these innovations. A similar institutional arrangement was implemented at the regional and local levels.

policies

Brazil has also adopted a bottom-up approach in order to evaluate progress made and also to meet remaining challenges. A nation-wide process of consultations took place and culminated in two National Conferences carried out in 2006 and 2009. The process included the participation of civil society and government bodies; involving, only in its second edition, over 60,000 older persons at local level. Its third version is due next November.

R+A

Mr. Chair,

In Brazil, since 2009, ageing issues are dealt with directly by the Presidency of the Republic – through its Secretariat of Human Rights – instead of other governmental assistance branches. This institutional framework highlights the condition of older people as subjects of rights rather than merely assisted citizens.

R+A

At the multilateral level, Brazil recognizes the importance of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Political Declaration adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in April 2002 as relevant steps towards "building a society for all ages".

Recent developments at the regional level are particularly encouraging. In 2007, Brazil hosted the Second Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing, during which countries from Latin America and the Caribbean discussed the implementation of the 2002 Madrid Plan on Ageing, five years after its adoption. The Brasilia Declaration, the Conference's outcome document, highlighted two important steps towards concrete advancement of the rights for older persons: to request the designation of a Special Rapporteur to monitor and promote the rights of older persons; and to initiate consultations with a view of elaborating a UN Convention on the matter.

Remarkable progress has also been made within the Organization of American States, especially through the creation of a Working Group on Ageing; and in Mercosur, where there is unanimous support for an international convention on the rights of older persons.

Despite all advances made, many challenges lay ahead of us. Brazilian older people are still victims of violence, including at home. Our cities are yet to be adapted to universally accessible patterns. Our health system and social assistance network shall as well be better regulated and improved in order to meet older people's special needs. These are certainly not exclusive Brazilian concerns.

In this context, the Open-ended Working Group plays a significant role in considering the international framework of the rights of older persons and promoting discussions on how to address gaps and ensure advancements. Brazil has enthusiastically participated in the First Working Session and firmly believes in the positive outcome from the current session. Hopefully our work will culminate in the recommendation for the appointment of a special rapporteur and the drafting of a convention on the rights of older persons.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.