



**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AT THE UNITED
NATIONS**

Second Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

United Nations, August 1- 4, 2011

Comments by Mrs. Nathalie Maria, Minister, Executive Director of the National Council for the Elderly of the Dominican Republic

**THE ELDERLY POPULATION: FROM THE DECLARATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THEIR RIGHTS**

In the Dominican Republic we have understood that the sole declaration and repetition of the rights of the rights of the elderly does not imply its implementation.

Having evaluated the outcome of other Conventions and their declarations, we have developed an inverse strategy, that is: we have fostered the participation of the elderly citizens in public spaces and from this participation we have achieved an empowerment in the ageing adult about what the Convention is and their rights.

We are currently reviewing and updating our Law 352-98, in accordance with our new Constitution. Among the proposed modifications are: the right to employment of ageing citizens; the elimination of the retirement age, currently at 75 years old, to be included in organs such as the Central Electoral Board; the formulation of specific laws against domestic violence.

We believe that a participatory life is the guarantee of a happy ageing, which is why our task is to FACILITATE the access of the elderly to the political life, such as Public Consultations by Congress and the Social and Health Security Commissions; to the electoral process by the creation of a National Front of the Ageing Adult, where there are no political affiliations; in the demand to the candidates of a National Government Plan in regards to the ageing; the media and Neighborhood Organizations.

The participation is also fostered at the recreational level, through annual Artisan Fairs featuring products elaborated by the elderly; trips, visits to the National Palace, the museums and beaches, among other activities.

Furthermore, participation is fostered at the organizational level by a National Union of the Ageing Adult, ensuring the participation of all the institutions for the elderly that have been legally recognized by the CONAPE (National Council for the Elderly)

To ensure this participation we count with a Legal Department that offers free counseling to the institutions in their public spheres, and with the Non Governmental Organizations that have taken upon themselves training in health and other population issues.

This positioning is also achieved by the available means of communications such as the GRANDFATHER 911 and CONAPE INFORMS programs, where the ageing population is directly focused and is constantly informed about its rights and how to achieve them. Through these means, four walking marathons were organized on the subject of the rights of the ageing population, demanding, among other things, the creation of Geriatric Units in the hospitals country-wide.

Based on our focus, we support the creation of an International Instrument or Convention to protect the Rights of the Ageing Adult, proposed by Latin America and the Caribbean, and we suggest that in the working group formed by the OAS for these purposes, that each region has its own representative: Central America and the Caribbean, where we offer our candidature, not only as representatives of the Caribbean, but also as agents of training in a strategy of implementation of the rights of the ageing population, from the participation to the theory.