



Statement by

His Excellency Mr. Charles P. Msosa

Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malawi to
the United Nations

**At the 5th Working Session of the Open-
ended working group on Ageing**

July, 30th 2014, New York

Check against delivery

Excellencies,

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of the Malawi delegation I wish to thank you for giving us this opportunity to address this Working Group. We are pleased to be here and hopeful that on-going discussions will serve to strengthen the protection of the rights of older persons. We are looking forward to engaging in a positive dialogue with all delegations and experts during this fifth session.

It is no secret that population ageing is happening in all countries around the world. It is one of the most significant demographic changes in the 21st century and a clear manifestation of unprecedented developments in medical sciences and social conditions.

With the number and proportion of older persons growing faster than any other age group, and in an increasing range of countries, there are indeed concerns about the capacities of societies including policy makers to address the challenges associated with this demographic shift.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi is no exception to this demographic reality. The government of Malawi has developed a National Policy for Older persons to provide a coherent and comprehensive overall framework for facilitating and promoting the social, economic and cultural integration of older persons into mainstream development processes.

In addition to this, the Malawi government within its limited resources is implementing a number of safety-net programmes for the vulnerable section of our society including older persons. There is universal access to free medical services in all public hospitals. Recently we have opened the first ever community clinic for older persons to provide specialized services to the elderly.

We are also establishing partnerships with NGOs and Civil Society Organisations to successfully address the challenges being brought about by population ageing.

Mr. Chairman

Violence and abuse against older people is wide spread in Malawi as it is in many parts of the world. It mainly occurs as a result of harmful traditional beliefs, changes in life patterns and family transformations brought about by the HIV/AIDS pandemic as well as socio-economic transformations that have taken place in recent times.

The general lack of an internationally legal binding framework for the protection and promotion of older peoples' rights has worsened their situation. Older men and women will continue to experience discriminatory attitudes and practices for as long as the identified gaps in existing frameworks are not taken into consideration.

There is already political consensus in the UN Principles on Older Persons (1991) and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) that ageing requires specific attention. We believe that a single instrument, a new international convention on the rights of older people, is necessary at this point in time.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi will actively participate in the discussions of the working group and at the UN on this important issue. Based on our focus, we support the establishment of a new International Legal Instrument or Convention to protect the rights of older persons. This is more urgent than ever in the context of unprecedented demographic ageing.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Malawi's full commitment to uphold the rights of older people and protect them against discrimination.

Thank you for your attention.