

## **Concept Note**

### **Side-event to the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Open Ended Working Group on Ageing**

“Demonstrating the work of National Human Rights Institutions and the Rights of Older Persons in relation to ‘Autonomy and Independence’ and ‘Long-term care and Palliative care’”

**16:30-18:00, Monday 23 July, Conference Room E  
UN New York Headquarters**

### **Background**

At the eighth session of the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA) in 2017, national human rights institutions (NHRIs) contributed to the meeting via twenty one written submissions and oral statements. Eight A-status NHRIs attended with formal participation that was granted in 2016 by OEWGA.

In preparation for the ninth session of the OEWGA, twenty seven GANHRI members have submitted their reports in response to the guiding questions to the focus areas of this session: ‘Autonomy and Independence’ and ‘Long-term care and Palliative care.’

These contributions are based on NHRIs’ unique mandate and functions, including:

- researching,
- investigating and monitoring the human rights situation of older persons,
- receiving and handling complaints on the rights of older persons,
- providing legal and policy advice to the State, and
- reporting to and engaging at an international level, particularly the United Nations and the OEWGA, and following up on UN recommendations with a view to promote and support their implementation at the national level

Key findings and conclusions that NHRIs in all regions have identified include:

1. Older persons are usually not recognized as rights-holders, which lead to a lack of adequate legal provisions and policy framework to promote and protect human rights of older persons.
2. Although domestic legislations on the autonomy and independence of older persons exist, they are usually embedded in general provisions or included in certain acts that only cover health care or persons with disabilities.

3. There is only minimum legislation and policy regarding long-term care and palliative care. Moreover, the definitions of such care and its provisions including related rights and obligations are varying and inconsistent.
4. In addition to granting more autonomy and independence, States should formulate a targeted legislation for older persons that meet their unique needs and provide appropriate forms of assistance that highlight human dignity and enhance the human rights of older persons.
5. In order to provide adequate long-term care and palliative care, States should ensure their rights and secure resources to implement policies and legislation.
6. Palliative care needs to be addressed more in depth.

## **Objective**

The proposed side event will examine the findings and conclusions of NHRIs across all regions in relation to autonomy and independence, and long-term care and palliative care of older persons.

In particular, the event will:

- highlight the main elements identified by NHRIs as cross-regional concerns in regards to the rights of older persons with a special focus on autonomy and independence, and long-term care and palliative care; and
- share examples of experiences and good practices showcasing the role played by NHRIs and their regional networks in monitoring and promoting the rights of older persons, specifically in relation to autonomy and independence, long-term care and palliative care.

The event is co-hosted by the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK), the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF).

## **Format**

The side event will last 1 hour and 15 minutes and will include panelists from NHRIs from different regions who will answer questions and engage in interactive discussions.