



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Memorandum

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**Ministry of Health and Social
Affairs
Sweden**

RK

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**Statement by Sweden in the closing session of the open
ended working group on ageing 20-24 August 2012**

Thank you Chair,

- Thank you all for the very interesting discussions in the last couple of days. I think this third meeting of the working group has been highly interesting and useful. Sweden believes that this working group has indeed been an important process to identify possible gaps in the international framework and how best to address them. The rights of our elderly are a key concern today and for the future.
- First of all we would like to align ourselves to what has been said by the EU in the opening of this session and also today. In addition Sweden would like to mention a few areas of particular interest and importance.
- We have with great interest read the report produced by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and agree with the outcome of the report as relates to the gaps in the implementation of the existing legal framework. This is indeed worrisome at local, national, regional and international level. Unfortunately there seems to be a gap between existing norms and

frameworks and the actual work on the ground. This means that we all have some homework to do and go back home with the mission to improve implementation of existing frameworks. I also want to thank Dr Gangadharan from India who spoke so clearly yesterday about the gaps in implementation and it was very useful to hear this from someone who deals with the issue on an everyday basis.

- Sweden is also actively participating in the follow up of the Madrid Action Plan, at this stage at regional level, and also here the work has resulted in identifying a number of gaps in implementation that needs to be addressed in order to ensure the dignity of the elderly and the rights of an ageing population. We are indeed looking forward to the international follow up of MIPAA which is scheduled to take place at the Commission on Social Development next year. The MIPAA follow up highly relates to the topic we have discussed this week.
- Sweden believes that several ongoing processes jointly have managed to highlight challenges in the implementation of the existing legal framework. This implementation gap must and should be addressed rapidly. But when it comes to how best to do that, we have heard during this week that there are diverging views and opinions.
- So how has the UN system managed to enhance cooperation and implementation in the past and on different topics?
- *First*, there is always a need for political commitment at a high level. I believe quite a few speakers have mentioned that this week. At this

point we have that commitment due to the MIPAA follow up. The mere fact that Ministers in Europe will sign a Ministerial Declaration in Vienna in September on challenges ahead and that the Commission on Social development will highlight this issue next year, shows a political interest and commitment that will strengthen the implementation. Regional bodies play a very important role in the work of dignity and rights for the elderly.

- *Secondly*, there are good experiences on how to encourage implementation within the UN system. There are processes such as the Universal Periodic Review and others where more priority could be given to the rights of the elderly. Mainstreaming the existing rights of the elderly into on-going processes is a big and important step for all actors within the UN system.
- *So to summarize*: Sweden believes that several gaps have been identified in this process but that there has not been enough support in the open ended working group or clarity that normative gaps exists and that a Convention is the best way forward. Instead the most urgent challenge seems to be the implementation of existing instruments and we support regional processes with this focus as well as making the most of existing mechanisms within the UN that could bring the rights and dignity of the elderly forward!
- *Thank you Chairperson!*