



Statement in the frame of interactive discussion with Chair of CRPD Committee

Thank you for making a very clear distinction between persons with disabilities and older people in need of long-term care. This is a question we often come across. In reality the two groups not only fall under different administrations but also across the EU, disability systems are overtly discriminatory on the grounds of age. Blunt age limits separate young and older people with disabilities resulting in fewer choices, services and benefits for older people.

To date the CRPD Committee has not acknowledged the structural discrimination faced by older people with disabilities, despite reviewing several EU countries where their differential treatment is the norm. So even if this Convention is particularly for older people with disabilities, its application falls short of the universality of the principles it aims to protect.

To us this is not surprising because the Committee was not established to detect and remedy structural ageism. And it has little prospect to do so, unless the prodding of a new binding instrument is added to the equation. Mainstreaming cannot work unless there is a duty for identifying the problem and a duty for eradicating it.

So I would like to ask the Chair of the CRPD Committee whether she thinks that a new UN Convention may also strengthen the implementation of the CRPD with regard to older and ageing people with disabilities, especially since the Convention does not include a provision for this group, like it does for women and children.

