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AGE Platform Europe Oral Statement

UN Intergovernmental Working Group on older persons

'General Debate': 26-27 October 2026

Mister Chair, Excellencies, delegates and colleagues,

Good Morning to all of us. I am speaking on behalf of AGE Platform Europe, the largest network of older people, which represents 105 member organisations across Europe and whose contributions have helped shape AGE Platform's messages for this second session of the Intergovernmental Working Group.

Since yesterday, we have been listening carefully to the statements made by the national delegations and other stakeholders and to your commitments, many of which reflect our own recommendations. **Thank you for these important ambitions**. We see this as a good sign for the drafting process. Let me now to outline the key points from our perspective:

First of all, as regards older people and their representative organisations, I'd like to reiterate our longstanding call: **we, older people, must be meaningfully involved** in all steps of negotiations, with equal opportunities to share our lived experiences, expectations and aspirations during drafting sessions. **Older people are by far the best experts in ageing**. Our lived experience is exactly what can help anchor this convention in everyday people's reality. Therefore, upcoming consultations and meetings on the elements of the instrument and upcoming drafts should be open to representative organisations of older persons, **including through hybrid modalities,** to ensure our meaningful participation. This involvement **must also reflect the diversity of older people** in order to effectively remove the barriers for all older persons, leaving no one behind.

AGE Platform Europe welcomes the forthcoming regional meetings that will contribute to the zero draft of the convention and looks forward to engaging with regional actors in

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2027. We invite the Member States themselves to consult older people at national level when formulating their positions.

Content-wise, the legally binding instrument must have a broad scope to enable the full enjoyment of all human rights in old age. To that extent, it should recognize that ageism **is a cross-cultural phenomenon,** not just internalised and interpersonal, but that it is also **systemic and institutionalised**. In short, the instrument on the rights of older persons **must establish** a legal framework to tackle ageism and age discrimination at their very root.

Regarding the catalogue of rights, it must be comprehensive and reflect cross-cutting issues like intersectionality, as well as changing lived realities impacting the realisation of human rights, such as digitalisation and climate change.

Finally, all these elements and principles must be complemented by mechanisms to monitor implementation and ensure accountability at international and national levels, so that **the Convention can effectively safeguard older people's rights in practice.**

Members of AGE Platform Europe are confident that this week's discussions will be guided by all these principles. We are looking forward to continuing to engage in the process, alongside Member States, NHRIs, CSOs, and older persons, toward the fundamental goal of ensuring that we can all continue to enjoy all our human rights in old age.

Thank you Mister Chair.

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For more information

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