WWW.AGE-PLATFORM.EU

AGE Platform Europe Oral Statement

UN Intergovernmental Working Group on older persons

'Preamble': 27 October 2026

Honorable Chair, dear delegates, colleagues,

I am speaking on behalf of the 100+ member organisations of AGE Platform Europe, the largest European network of organisations of and for older people.

We align to the opening statement by the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People and its Discussion Paper on this topic.

The Preamble is a core element of the future LBI, establishing the context, rationale and transformative purpose of the Convention, while also guiding its interpretation and application as a coherent whole.

The Preamble must reaffirm the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights, and the need to ensure their full and equal enjoyment in older age, without discrimination of any kind. It should clearly affirm that the central purpose of the treaty is to guarantee the rights of older persons, as equal and autonomous rights-holders.

Population ageing is one of humanity's greatest achievements. The Convention should therefore not be framed as a response to ageing or demographic change itself, but to the structural barriers, including ageism, that prevent all of us from enjoying our human rights in old age.

The Preamble should articulate the human rights rationale for the treaty by recognising the historical and ongoing discrimination experienced by older persons, the impact of ageism on individuals and societies, and the fact that ageing is a natural part of the life course throughout which all human rights continue to apply equally.

Check against delivery

Av de Tervueren, Tervurenlaan 168, box 2
1150 Brussels, Belgium, Tel: +32.2.280.14.70
info@age-platform.eu

Contemporary challenges, including among others, digitalisation and climate change, should be acknowledged where they create new forms of exclusion and inequality requiring human rights responses—not because they constitute the raison d'être of the Convention, but because the Convention must remain relevant to the realities of older persons' lives.

Importantly, the Preamble must recognise that older persons are not a homogeneous group. It should reflect the diversity of their experiences and the intersectional, multiple and cumulative nature of discrimination, including how inequalities across the life course shape the enjoyment of human rights in older age.

It should also recognise the valuable contributions of older persons and their representative organisations to society and their communities, including to the promotion, protection and monitoring of human rights. It should articulate the overarching vision of the Convention and its role in strengthening the overall international human rights framework.

Ultimately, the Preamble should lay the foundation for a LBI that not only protects older persons against rights violations, but also challenges and transforms the ageist structures, attitudes and norms that prevent the full and equal enjoyment of their human rights in practice.

Check against delivery

For more information

Nena Georgantzi, Head of Advocacy: nena.georgantzi@age-platform.eu

Apolline Parel, Human Rights Officer: apolline.parel@age-platform.eu

Co-funded by the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Transparency Register ID: 16549972091-86

Check against delivery