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AGE Platform Europe Oral Statement

UN Intergovernmental Working Group on older persons

'State Obligations': 28 October 2026

Honourable Chair, dear delegates, colleagues,

I am speaking on behalf of AGE Platform Europe, Europe's largest network of organisations of and for older people. The position that I am sharing with you today is grounded in the contributions of our network of 105 members.

The convention should be based on a set of core principles that guide its development, interpretation, implementation and monitoring, and ensure accountability. These should include respect for inherent dignity, equality and non-discrimination, autonomy and independence, and the full and meaningful participation and inclusion of older persons in all their diversity.

The principle of participation must be reflected throughout the treaty negotiations, with the voices, aspirations and lived experiences of older persons guiding every stage. It must also underpin its implementation, enabling and guaranteeing the meaningful participation of older persons and their representative organisations in the monitoring of States' obligations.

Participation must be more than a box-ticking exercise; it is essential to ensuring that the treaty makes a real difference and effectively addresses the diversity of experiences in older age, including the cumulative and intersecting forms of discrimination across the life course.

While older people are right holders, States are the duty bearers under international law and undertake the obligation to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of human rights at all stages of life, including in old age. State's obligations of the forthcoming Convention must not regress from existing norms and protections under human rights law. Instead,

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the Convention should strengthen and build upon these norms to reflect the lived experiences of rights violations in old age.

The legally binding instrument should comprehensively address the full range of human rights and provide for state obligations to address the real-life barriers that older persons face. Among its general obligations, it should pay particular attention to ageism, as the root cause of human rights violations in older age. State obligations should encompass all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination on the basis of age. To this end, States should work towards eliminating ageism from all levels of society.

AGE Platform wishes to reiterate its commitment to this issue and stands ready to mobilise its members to help define states obligations that will enable us to fully enjoy our rights in old age.

Thank you.

For more information

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