Draft Statement of the Group of Friends of Rights of Older Persons

Panel on Climate Change (30 June 2021)

Chair, panelists,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am speaking on behalf of *the Group of Friends of Human Rights of Older Persons*, a cross regional group of UN member states, advocating for greater attention to their rights.

We would like to begin our statement by thanking the core group of 44/7 for taking up the topic of *human rights impacts of climate change on older persons*.

The group of persons aged 65 and more is a growing population. In the report, we are reminded this age group is estimated to reach 1.5 billion persons or one sixth of the world’s population by 2050. A very real challenge is presented by climate change, which is already causing very concrete effects in the environment we are living in, and on populations, including on older persons.

We would like to use this opportunity to look into two instances which are especially remarkable when we are discussing older persons and climate change.

As a first one, we would like to stress the *wide variety of ways in which climate change affects older persons.* Older persons are a heterogenous group and the effects of climate change have disproportionate impacts on them, particularly those living in vulnerable situations.

Secondly, we are *very concerned over age based discrimination and ageism, which are leaving older persons neglected, ignored and marginalized in laws and policy.* One of the leading reasons is the exclusion of older persons from the processes of creation of these policies. Instead, they should be seen as a part of solution, among key contributors in global efforts to mitigate and adapt to the negative impacts of climate change.

Let me conclude this statement by stressing our group’s commitment to the promotion, protection and fulfillment of rights of older persons. *We welcome the work of the Open Ended Working Group on Rights of Older Persons in New York*, and we take note with appreciation of the OHCHR’s Update to the 2012 Analytical Outcome Study, which among other aspects states that the existing human rights international framework in regard to older persons could be strengthened.

Our group will therefore continue to *support ways in which we can further strengthen the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons. This could include a possible substantive resolution* on the rights of older persons within the Human Rights Council.