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## STATEMENT

### **GANHRI Statement at the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing**

*New York, 23 July 2018, UN New York HQ*

Honorable Chair,  
Representatives from governments and civil society organizations,  
Colleagues from national human rights institutions (NHRIs),

It is my honor to present a statement at the 9<sup>th</sup> UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (UN OEWGA) on behalf of A status NHRIs of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

NHRIs submitted their opinion to the questions distributed by the Working Group prior to the meeting. Their responses show that the rights to autonomy and independence of the elderly are recognized as the most essential and basic human rights, but there is no clear standard or definition of those rights under international law. This is also evidenced in the recent Project on the Human Rights of Older Persons in Long-term Care carried out by the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). Hence, in order to guarantee the rights to autonomy and independence, member states are required to make efforts to tackle prejudices against the elderly and ageism. This can be effectively realized through the creation of an international treaty on the human rights of older persons, as has already been done, for instance, at the regional level in the Americas.

In addition, in most cases the responsibility to care lies solely on family members as there are no related legislation or policies regarding public service to provide long-term and palliative care to older persons. Furthermore, even where public service exists, the quality and budget of the service varies by country. Accordingly, a new international instrument on human rights of older persons should include the right to long-term and palliative care for older persons as they are not covered by the existing treaties. This was also found by the ENNHRI Project to be a gap in human rights protection.

NHRIs from around the globe actively participate in the work of the UN OEWGA. They regularly contribute by submitting their responses to the questions distributed by the UN OEWGA and participate in the proceedings of this session. Furthermore, NHRIs also contribute to the promotion of human rights of older persons through the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the GANHRI Working Group on Ageing devised to support the UN OEWGA and garner international cooperation.

In particular, on 26 June, the ASEM Global Ageing Center was established in Seoul as an international institution specialized in human rights of older persons with the contribution of the National Human Rights Commission of Korea. The Center is expected to contribute to the promotion of human dignity and rights of older persons through close cooperation with the GANHRI Working Group on Ageing,

UN OEWGA, and international non-governmental organizations, and policy development, education and provision of information. In this regard, I would like to ask for support and attention for the Center.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude for allowing formal participation of A-status NHRIs in the UN OEWGA meeting. And I hope for further participation of GANHRI and regional networks of NHRIs to expand the scope of the UN OEWGA working for the promotion of human rights of older persons.

Thank you.