



**Fondation pour un Centre pour le Développement Socio-Eco-Nomique
(Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development, CSEND), Geneva**

**Position for the 9th Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing
23rd – 26th July 2018, New York.**

This statement is made on behalf of CSEND and the members of the World Healthy Ageing Consortium, an international multi-stakeholder group united to strengthen the economic, social and cultural rights of older persons. We have organised different international events with policy makers, researchers and scholars on social, cultural and economic issues related to ageing. A UN Library Talk on “Ageing with Dignity” was organised with large participation of Chinese and Japanese delegates in Geneva in 2017. What follows is based on the discussions and insights that followed this event.

Human societies have seen an unprecedented age bonus because of the extended life expectancy now reaching 80 years or higher in many developed economies. The number of people who are older than 60 years of age reached 901 million in 2015 representing 12.3% of the total world population. By 2050, it is forecasted that this number will reach 2.09 billion worldwide. This development has changed the demographic distribution of populations and the demand patterns for public services and resource allocation.

The distribution of the senior population across the world is uneven and correlates with the wealth of individual countries. Presently, most of the advanced economies have 20-29% of the population older than 60 years of age. By contrast, by 2050 African countries are expected to be the only ones to enjoy a youth bonus while the rest of the world is fast joining the silver society (UNDESA, 2015).

In the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the SDGs clearly identify older people as an integral part of social development for instance in Goal 3 - "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages".

SDG Goal 3 for instance demands an integrated approach to policy making and a range of interventions spanning from rethinking the physical environment, infrastructure and public financing, institutional design, housing and a rethinking of the policies of solidarity, welfare and social insurance.

The 9th session of the Working Group must recognise the importance of the life course approach for the attainment of economic, social and cultural rights of the older persons. This requires the following:

Firstly, opportunities must be created for lifelong learning and gainful participation in the labour market and in enterprise development during different stages of the life course. Both opportunities are needed to guarantee economic and social sustainability which in turn safeguards the independence, autonomy and dignity of every older person.

Secondly, countries should provide older people access to opportunities for continued participation in different spheres of life including the world of work which provides meaning and productive engagement for older persons throughout their life course.

Thirdly, the Open Working Group must acknowledge the diverse challenges facing all countries and must provide a policy framework in the form of a legally binding international convention of human rights for older persons to protect their economic, social and cultural rights and dignity everywhere.

I thank you Madame la Présidente!

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