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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the International Federation on Ageing, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 August 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Statement Submitted by the International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

27th Session of the Human Rights Council

8 September – 26 September, 2014

The International Federation on Ageing, a membership-based organization comprising non-governmental organisations, governments, business, academia, and individuals from 73 countries across the world is honoured to be a participant at the 27th Session of the Human Rights Council. The opportunity to make interventions on the content of these sessions is an immense privilege.

To begin, the IFA wishes to support the statement issued by HelpAge International on behalf of The Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP). IFA reiterates the warm welcome to Ms. Rosita Kornfeld-Matte, the *Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights of older person* and echoes the sentiment that this is an important step towards creating greater visibility of the impediments that prevent older people from enjoying their human rights. Additionally, IFA is in agreement with the suggestion for the Independent Expert to consider a broader range of human rights areas than those which were initially outlined in her first annual report to the Human Rights Council.

Within the last year, there have been many noteworthy developments related to the rights of older people. While there have been positive signs of progress like the aforementioned appointment of the Independent expert, there have also been several setbacks which must be acknowledged. These include: the slow progress of the discussions at the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, the inadequate Member State engagement at the Human Rights Council Social Forum on "*the rights of older persons, including best practices in this regard*," and the limited reference to older people within the initial draft of goals and targets created by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development.

These instances reaffirm the timely nature of the appointment of Ms. Kornfeld-Matte and further highlight the importance of this position as it exists to complement the work of the OEWG. As such, the IFA was pleased to see that, within the first annual report, there was specific reference made to the limitations of MIPAA and a formal acknowledgement of the rationale for a "comprehensive and integrated international legal instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of the elderly."

An integral part of the Independent Expert's mandate is to "to raise awareness of the challenges faced in the realization of all human rights by older persons, and to ensure that older persons receive information about these rights." Generating and translating this awareness into action is a complex process yet worth the investment. Moving forward, it will be vital that older people are given a platform to take ownership of the international discussions that most affect them and the IFA would like to encourage the Independent Expert to consider this in more detail within the next phase of the mandate.

The major focus of the report is a preliminary overview of deficiencies in human rights laws as these pertain to the insufficient protection of the rights of older people. The report does however tend to over-simplify complex issues by recommending high-level prescriptive measures such as the "promotion of intergenerational volunteering". Prescriptive measures like this, while aspirational, could well mask deeper issues such as poor labour market opportunities for older people or the lack of mentorship opportunities. The IFA trusts that the Independent Expert will have the opportunity to independently investigate whether laws are in place, implemented and evaluated.

Ms. Rosita Kornfeld-Matte has only recently commenced this important mandate and significant time and the essential resources are necessary before assessments can be substantive, and meaningful.

In closing, the International Federation on Ageing wishes to state that it looks forward to working with the Independent Expert throughout the course of the mandate so as to better promote the shared goal of ensuring that all people are able to enjoy their human rights, regardless of external factors, throughout the entirety of their life-course.

Thank you.
