Ageing and the human rights of older persons
A Global Perspective

What can a retired ILO official do about it?

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Join the campaign against ageism
Dispelling some myths

✗ Ageing is an issue of developed countries
✓ Population ageing is a global issue

✗ Older persons do not contribute to society
✓ They contribute to family, community, the economy and society at large

✗ In our culture we respect our elders
✓ Discriminatory practices and elder abuse happen in all cultures

Population ageing

Source: www.helpage.org/global-agewatch/
from UNDESA Population division, World population prospects: the 2015 revision,
Disproving Beliefs About the Economy and Aging

Retiring
By CHRISTOPHER FARRELL  MAY 13, 2016

A Right Unfulfilled for half of the world - Only 51% Older Persons Receive a Pension

Population above retirement age receiving an old age pension (%) | 2010-2012

Source: ILO, 2014
It is time that older persons are seen as full citizens with full enjoyment of human rights and participation in society, community, own lives.

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**
  
  “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (Art. 1)

- UN principles of Older Persons
- Madrid International Plan of Action
- Human Rights Treaty Bodies
- Human Rights Council
- Universal Periodic Review
- Special Procedures
Older Persons Human Rights Include

The right to:

• Equal recognition before the law
• Autonomy and independence
• Housing
• Lifelong education and learning
• Work and employment
• Social protection
• Health and care
• Freedom from violence and abuse
• Personal liberty

Older Persons Human Rights Include

The right to:

• Leisure
• Full and effective participation
• Age in place of choice
• A safe environment
• Personal mobility
• Accessibility
• Freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment
• Information
• Justice
Why do we need a Convention on the Human Rights of Older Persons?

What would a Convention Do?

• Help to reduce age discrimination and ageism
• Oblige ratifying states to adopt non-discriminatory laws
• Draw attention to multiple and intersecting discrimination
• Provide basis for advocacy, public awareness and education
• Strengthen societies’ responses to the challenges of demographic changes
• Provide a reporting and accountability mechanism
What can Civil Society do?

• Interact with human rights mechanisms, through communications and reports

• Engage with the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and the Independent Expert

• Make oral or video statements at the Human Rights Council

• Lobby governments to include older persons in policies and to report to the HR mechanisms
What can Civil Society do?

International NGOs in Geneva advocate for many topics:

- Ageing
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Environment
- Women and Gender
- Children and Youth
- Business and Human Rights
- Human Rights Defenders

http://www.unog.ch

Concluding remarks

The challenge is how to better understand, shape and value this new old age. Older persons themselves should define this portion of their lives, and not passively allow the culture to do so.

Robert (Bob) Butler
founder of ILC US

In Achenbaum, Visionary of Healthy Aging
Thank you

NGO Committee on Ageing

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