

Template letter for government officials

[add your organisation's contact details]

[add the date]

Dear [add government official's name],

We, [add your organisation's name], are writing to you as we prepare for the thirteenth session of the UN Open-ended Working group on ageing, that will take place from 3-6 April 2023 at the UN Headquarters in New York.

During the thirteenth session, Member States, civil society, National Human Rights Institutions, and other stakeholders will come together to discuss the rights of older people in relation to two new areas: access to health and health services and social inclusion.

In our country, older people are confronted with significant barriers in their access to health and health services, caused by ageist bias and behaviours, lack of affordability, accessibility and availability. Older people are excluded from society as they have limited access to financial resources, public transport, and digital technologies.

As one older woman/man from [add place] told us, "[add a personal quote]."

Older women and men person have the right to be included in society, to be free from ageism and age discrimination and to enjoy all their human rights on an equal basis with others. They also have the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The lack of a dedicated convention, however, means that older people are invisible in global rights frameworks, leading to violations of their human rights in every area of life.

It doesn't have to be this way. As we shape our societies for the future we can choose to do so from a place of equality and dignity. A UN convention on the rights of older persons would provide the specific answers that governments and others need to make the right decisions and build the inclusive and age-friendly society we want.

The overwhelming evidence on the need for a convention was confirmed by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Report on Normative standards and obligations under international law in relation to the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons (A/HRC/49/70), and the Summary of the multi-stakeholder meeting on the human rights of older persons (A/HRC/52/49).

The Open-ended working group on ageing (OEWG) was established in 2011 and given the explicit mandate to present as early as possible to the General Assembly a proposal with the main elements of a UN Convention. More than a decade later, however, older people are still left behind and left out.

We therefore urge you to take a strong stance for older people worldwide, to actively participate in the thirteenth session of the OEWG and to support a legally binding convention on the rights of older people.

We also urge you to promote and actively implement the human rights principle of 'nothing about us without us' and to listen to older people's voices. As civil society, we are ready to play our part through constructive

1. Start by saying who you are and why you are writing.

2. Talk about the barriers older people face in your country and provide evidence.

3. Explain why we need a convention. You can use key messages from our OEWG reports.

4. Draw attention to developments in Geneva that should inform the OEWG.

5. Explain that the OEWG has still not fulfilled its mandate.

6. End with your requests.

dialogue and supporting older people's meaningful participation in the process.

Sincerely,

[add your name and position]

Copied to

Focal Point on Older Persons, Ministry of Social Affairs
Chief of UN and International Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs

Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New
York

**7. Copy other relevant
officials and the
permanent mission to
the UN in New York.**