

International Day of Older Persons 2020

Virtual interagency event and side event of the 45th session of the Human Rights Council

Thursday 1 October, 14:00-15:00 Geneva time.

Livestream: <https://who.zoom.us/j/92371571549>

Password: Meetus@99

The International Day of Older Persons, celebrated annually on October 1st, is an occasion to highlight the participation of older persons in society and raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges of ageing in today's world with a human rights-based approach. The theme for 2020 is "**Pandemics: Do They Change How We Address Age and Ageing?**"

Connected to this year's theme is preparations for the launch of the Decade of Healthy Ageing. The [proposal for a Decade of Healthy Ageing](#) was recently endorsed by the World Health Assembly on 3 August 2020 and referred to the UN Secretary General for consideration by the UNGA.

The COVID - 19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on older people. The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General stressed, in his Policy Brief of 1 May, that the fragility exposed by the virus is not limited to our health systems but affects all aspects of our world and hence requires that different stakeholders and different sectors work together. The Secretary-General also calls to strengthen the legal frameworks to promote and protect the human rights and dignity of older persons¹. The WHO Director-General on 28 July 2020 stressed that "Every life matter. We cannot allow the narrative that some lives are worth saving and others are not."

What are the implications for the Decade of Healthy Ageing?

This high-level event moderated by Monica Ferro, Director, Geneva Office, United Nations Population Fund will begin with statements by:

- Ms Michelle Bachelet, High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General WHO
- Dr Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UNFPA
- Prof. Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum (by video)

A panel will follow with the following speakers:

- Dr Claudia Mahler, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons
- HE Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari, Minister of Health, Qatar
- Ms Silvia Perel-Levin, Chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, Geneva

Closing remarks by:

- Dr Naoko Yamamoto, Assistant Director-General, Healthier Populations, WHO
- Ambassador Federico Villegas, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the UN in Geneva and co-chair of the Group of Friends of the Human Rights of Older Persons

The *Decade of Healthy Ageing* is a global collaboration that brings together diverse sectors and stakeholders including governments, civil society, international organizations, professionals, academic institutions, the media and the private sector to improve the lives of older people, their families and communities through action in four areas:

- Changing how we think, feel and act towards age and ageism;
- Developing communities in ways that foster the abilities of older people;
- Delivering person-centred integrated care and primary health services responsive to older people;
- Providing older people who need it with access to quality long-term care.

An interactive multilingual Platform is being developed to support implementation across the action areas and a baseline report for the Decade is forthcoming.

¹ <http://webtv.un.org/watch/ant%C3%B3nio-guterres-un-secretary-general-on-the-launch-of-the-policy-brief-on-older-persons/6153268153001/>