



## Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos

Asociación Civil

ONG con status consultivo II ante el ECOSOC de Naciones Unidas

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Mr. Secretary General:

The APDH wishes to express its concern regarding the situation of the elderly, which is of great importance in the context of inclusion and nondiscrimination, as well as the safeguard of fundamental rights of the elderly.

The APDH notes with concern that during the second half of the twentieth century, the average life expectancy has increased by 20 years<sup>1</sup>. This prolongation of life has occurred at such a fast rate that it has not allowed for society to properly prepare for this phenomenon. This new scenario affects all areas of social life, from the definition of the roles that society imposes on each age to the orientation of social policies.

From this perspective, APDH proposes the creation of a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. Such a Convention would achieve justiciability for their rights and would fight, among other things, the stereotypes associated with aging and its consequences, including poverty, disease, disability and discrimination.

As background to this issue, we highlight the Declaration of Brazil, drafted in the inter-governmental regional conference on aging in Latin America and the Caribbean in December 2007, that proclaimed the need to create a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons in the global context<sup>2</sup>.

We would like to mention some topics that might be under discussion at such as the proposed Convention: 1) definition of the terms “older persons” and “discrimination”; 2) the fundamental right to health; 3) obligation of the family and the

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<sup>1</sup> Lic. Pochtar Pszemirower, Nora y Dr. Pszemirower, Santiago, “La tan temida ancianidad”, Documentos/14, Centro de documentación en políticas sociales, GCBA, Buenos Aires, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Pérez Díaz, J., “La demografía y el envejecimiento de las poblaciones”, incluido en A.S. Staab y L.C. Hodges, *Enfermería Gerontológica*, McGraw Hill, México D.F., 1998 (pp. 451-463).

State with regards to elderly care, assistance, and food (noting family composition and pension); 4) safeguard of goods; 5) state control of assisted living homes and residences; 6) the discussion of euthanasia on an as-needed basis, 7) domestic violence; 8) sexuality; and, 9) employment status.

Key to this discussion is the underlying premise that there is a major transformation occurring throughout societies, in diverse realms, and an urgent need to safeguard the rights of the elderly. The APDH asks the Member States of the OAS to begin a dialogue in the preparation of the proposed Convention, in a response to the needs of older persons in our society. We believe that the OAS has an opportunity to be a pioneer in the adoption of a Convention that addresses this current societal issue, of which we have no former protection at a global level.

Thank you.

APDH, Washington DC

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