



BANGLADESH

Statement by Mr. Shah Asif Rahman, Counsellor, Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN at the General Debate of the 10th Session of the Working Group on Ageing

Agenda item 5: Measures to enhance the promotion and protection of the human rights of Older Persons

CR4, UNHQs, New York, 15 April, 2019 [5 minutes]

Madam Chair,

Bangladesh delegation is pleased to attend the tenth session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing. We align ourselves with the statement made by State of Palestine on behalf of Group of 77 and China. We assure you and members of the Bureau of our full cooperation.

Madam Chair,

Bangladesh is a country of 162 million people. Elderly population (60 years or more) have been increasing in Bangladesh as is elsewhere in the world due mostly to increase in life-expectancy. In Bangladesh, the size of elderly population almost doubled in the last decade. As the country marches ahead in its development path it is going to experience the phenomenon of rapid ageing. The size of the elderly people was more than 12.8 million in 2015 which would increase to almost 14 million in 2020, and in 2025 is expected to be more than 17 million.

With this increase in number, there comes the need and demand for providing social protection measures in order to promote and protect the human rights of elderly persons. We identified the special need of the older persons quite early. Bangladesh government recognized the issue related to ageing in its 3rd Five Year Plan (1985-90) under the heading "Old and Infirm". Recognizing the need to provide support to the older persons under social safety net programmes, in 1996-2001 period, the government introduced **Old-age Allowance Programme** from the revenue budget to subsidize the poor and vulnerable older persons. The Ministry of Social Welfare is the concerned government agency and continues to deliver various programmes for the older persons keeping gender balance.

In Bangladesh, we have both Constitutional and legal framework such as National Social Welfare Policy 2006, National Policy on Ageing 2013, The Act of Maintenance the Parents 2013 and the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) 2015 which provides the bedrock for State's commitment to elderly persons. Especially keeping up with the changing realities, these provide a critical legal redress for the elderly especially the dependent parents, poor and lonely persons upholding their rights. The elderly persons are also provided with care in old homes, extended health care and medical services and Old age allowances by the government. There are also private sectors involvement in recent years. With limited resources government alone cannot solve all the emerging issues.

Madam Chair,

The government with all its right intentions to provide a dignified and safe life for the elderly persons, however, often struggles for financing in their implementation. The same is true even we update required legislations and try to enforce them. These, however, are as part of a continued process and we need to sustain our effort. We also should learn from our best practices. Over the time, it has been felt in absence of a global norm-setting document Member States struggle to converge on issues and challenges facing the elderly. In order to achieve that we need to have sustained discussions and more synergies in our work among OEWG on Ageing, CSocD and ECOSOC as well as at national, regional and global efforts. This is more so as we have committed ourselves to leave no one behind as we move along in implementing the Agenda 2030.

I thank you.