

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE MADRID INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING AND THE SAN JOSE
CHARTER IN THE CARIBBEAN**

These recommendations were agreed at the Caribbean Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, and represent the contribution of Caribbean member States to the Regional Conference.

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 1-2 June 2017

Preamble

We, the participants of the Caribbean preparatory meeting,

Aware that there will be a rapid increase in the number of older persons which will take place in the Caribbean over the next two decades,

Concerned that age continues to be a basis for multiple forms of discrimination and abuse which restrict the full exercise and enjoyment of all human rights by older persons,

Convinced that there is a need for policymakers to pay greater attention to the issues of ageing and the rights of older persons, including through a gender perspective and human rights-based approach,

Reaffirming the commitment of Caribbean Governments to the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002; the Regional Strategy for the Implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2003; the Brasilia Declaration, 2007; the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2012; and follow-up reviews,

Recalling the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, subsequently extended beyond 2014 by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 65/234 of 2010; the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, 2013; and the Road Map for Population, Migration and Development Beyond 2014 agreed by Caribbean member States in 2013,

Recognizing recent developments in the global and regional human rights systems, including the newest regional convention, the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, which entered into force on 11 January 2017; the work conducted by the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; and the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing,

Recalling also the obligations assumed by States upon ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979, and its optional protocol; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006; the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará), 1994; the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance, 2013; the Montevideo Strategy for implementation of the regional gender agenda within the sustainable development framework by 2030, 2016; and other relevant treaties, covenants and agreements, which establish an international and regional legal framework to respect, protect, and promote all the human rights of older women in all their diversity, and to achieve gender equality,

Bearing in mind that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development serves as a road map for inclusive sustainable development that leaves no one behind and that policies to address ageing and protect and promote the rights of older persons will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realisation of human rights for all,

Having examined the report entitled ‘Caribbean synthesis report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin

America and the Caribbean' prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean subregional headquarters for the Caribbean and welcoming the recommendations contained in that report,

Emphasising the following key areas of action,

Legal, regulatory, policy and institutional frameworks

1. Urge the adoption of an up-to-date national policy on ageing, and strengthened related legislative frameworks, developed and monitored through an inclusive process which involves older persons and their representative organisations;
2. Consider signing and ratifying, as appropriate, the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons and other relevant international and regional agreements that apply to older persons, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and Members of their Families, among others, taking into account their provisions in national policies for older persons;
3. Encourage the designation of a specific body within government, adequately resourced, responsible for policies for older persons; advocating for the respect, protection and promotion of their rights and for the mainstreaming of the concerns of older persons across government; and responsible for coordinating and reporting on international and regional agreements concerning older persons in collaboration with other stakeholders;
4. Underscore the need for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of national policies on ageing, in order to have a comprehensive assessment of their impact on the wellbeing of older persons and on the enjoyment of their human rights;
5. Emphasise the importance of the availability of data and regular collection of disaggregated statistics, including through the conduct of time use surveys, to inform the development and implementation of policies and research, to identify challenges faced by older persons, in partnership with academia, international and regional organisations;

Equality, non-discrimination, accessibility and participation in all spheres of society

6. Include age as one of the proscribed grounds for discrimination in legal, policy and administrative frameworks; special attention should be given to discriminatory practices against older persons in the labour market; in relation to their access to, ownership, and control of land, property, possessions and natural resources; and access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial services; as well as to older persons subject to multiple forms of discrimination;
7. Raise public awareness of the positive contribution of older persons to society in order to change attitudes toward ageing; disseminate existing laws and policies for older persons, at all levels of government and to those providing public services to older persons, including health and social care professionals, public transport providers, law enforcement officials; and educate older persons themselves about their rights and policies that seek to guarantee those rights;
8. Adopt or amend current legal and policy frameworks on ageing to include specific references and actions that promote the autonomy and independence of older persons, addressing issues such as: the right of older persons to equal recognition before the law, legal capacity, and supported decision-making;
9. Strengthen existing mechanisms to facilitate the full inclusion, integration and participation of older persons in all phases of government decision-making on issues that have an impact on their lives, and promote new forms of participation, with networks of civil society organisations and associations, charity, faith-based organisations and community-based organisations;

10. Adopt measures that will improve older persons' access to social, educational, political, recreational, sporting and cultural activities and other forms of community engagement, in particular activities which make a positive contribution to society or involve intergenerational interaction;
11. Adopt measures to ensure the accessibility of buildings and public spaces and the personal mobility and security of older persons, including by adaptation of public transport and other services; removing all kinds of barriers to physical access and to public information; enforcement of building codes and urban planning directives; rights-based training programmes for all professions involved in adaptation and retrofitting of public buildings; the inclusion of universal design standards; and continued efforts to broaden the scope of concessionary public transport for older persons;
12. Promote the inclusion and effective participation of older persons in the design, adoption and implementation of disaster management and mitigation plans and strategies with particular attention given to those living in remote areas; promote measures that provide specific assistance to older persons in risk assessment, preparedness, prevention, response, reconstruction, education and training programmes, and data collection activities;

Adequate standard of living, social protection, education, and the right to work

13. Encourage the adoption of measures to establish a social protection floor, including through non-contributory pension schemes, in order to reach those who have worked, or continue to work in the informal sector or as caregivers, with particular attention to older women and older migrants;
14. Promote measures which enable older persons to continue to work beyond the statutory retirement age if they wish to do so, with the adoption of flexible working hours and retirement arrangements; disseminate information on retirement and retirement planning, including the importance of remaining physically and socially active; and provide options for participation in either voluntary or income generating activities;
15. Make every effort to ensure that older persons enjoy adequate housing and are given high priority in the assignment of housing or land, particularly in situations of disasters, emergencies or evictions;
16. Promote access to lifelong learning through education and training programmes, including in information and communications technology;

Provision of care

17. Promote the universalization of the right of older persons to health by providing a continuum of care, including mental and physical health promotion and preventive care, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care, paying particular attention to the situation of those living on the streets, in remote areas, those belonging to ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities and other groups of older persons including those deprived of their liberty;
18. Implement programmes for the prevention, care, treatment and management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia; promote healthy ageing throughout the lifespan in order to reduce the burden of NCDs on the population, the economy, the health services and health systems;
19. Continue implementing specific programmes to address the situation of older persons with HIV/AIDS and emerging diseases such as chikungunya, dengue and zika, including prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and training for care providers and health professionals;
20. Further develop gerontological and geriatric care across health and social care systems in order to meet the needs of older persons; include geriatrics and gerontology in curricula at all levels and in

nursing and caregivers training programmes; integrate palliative care into medical and nursing curricula; encourage men to consider careers in the caring professions;

21. Improve existing measures to facilitate the access of older persons living in rural, remote, and deprived areas to health care, as well as access to medicines, equipment, assistive devices and comprehensive rehabilitation services;
22. Enhance access to home care services for all older persons that need it; promote the adoption of measures to support family carers who have to balance care with other commitments, including through the provision of respite care, and measures which promote the equal sharing of care responsibilities between men and women;
23. Promote regulations to ensure an adequate standard of care in public and private long term care settings and home care;
24. Expand the coverage of existing rehabilitation programmes aimed at helping older persons with disabilities, or age-related functional decline, including the adaptation of their homes, as well as the promotion of alternative types of housing for those in need of care, with the provision of grants, loans or other forms of financing without discrimination;

Dignity, integrity and access to justice and redress

25. Raise awareness of all forms of financial, physical, sexual and psychological abuse, violence, abandonment, and neglect, with particular focus on abuse within family settings and in long-term care institutions, sensitising key stakeholders including those involved in the justice system and law enforcement, as well as health and social care providers;
26. Urge the adoption or review of existing legal and policy frameworks to prevent, investigate, punish and eradicate abuse, abandonment, negligence, and all forms of violence against older persons as well as practices that infantilise older persons or that jeopardize their safety and integrity;
27. Urge the development of human rights standards and codes in care settings, in addition to training programmes for those working with older persons in public and private institutions, in order to minimise the incidence of abuse; facilitate the development of coordinated monitoring and reporting mechanisms for the registration of cases, and the provision of assistance to those who are victims of abuse, in collaboration with civil society organisations and the private sector;
28. Promote measures that will improve older persons' access to justice through legal aid and counselling, alternative dispute settlement mechanisms and mediation processes; and raise awareness of the rights of older persons throughout the justice and law enforcement systems as well as among older persons themselves.