GANHRI Statement

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Item 3

Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights of Older Persons

A/HRC/63/35

M. President, Independent Expert,

The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), representing 119 independent NHRIs across all regions, congratulates the Independent Expert on his appointment and looks forward to further cooperation on his mandate.

We welcome the report's recognition that cognitive impairment must not undermine the dignity, autonomy or equal enjoyment of human rights of older persons, and its emphasis on enabling them to express their will and preferences and participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their lives.

Importantly, the report also highlights States' responsibility to ensure that these rights are effectively realised in law, policy and practice. NHRIs can support States in this regard by providing independent advice, identifying implementation gaps and helping ensure that responses are informed by the experiences of older persons.

This work is particularly timely as it coincides with the elaboration of a new legally binding instrument (LBI) on the rights of older persons, and we welcome the active participation of the independent expert on this process. The future instrument must address existing protection gaps and place equality and non-discrimination, autonomy, dignity, participation and access to justice at its core.

Its development must also be informed by the lived experience of older persons themselves, with the meaningful participation of their representative organizations. The LBI must recognise the role of NHRIs in protecting and promoting older persons' rights and call on States to provide them with the support to accomplish their mission. NHRIs, through their independent monitoring, complaints-handling, advice to public authorities and engagement with rights-holders, can help ensure that emerging international standards respond to realities on the ground.

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GANHRI and its members thank the Independent Expert for his report and engagement with NHRIs. We remain committed to contributing actively to the intergovernmental process and to supporting the Independent Expert's mandate, notably through our Working Group on ageing and the human rights of older persons.

Thank you.