GANHRI Statement

27 October 2026

Second session of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) on the Human Rights of Older Persons

Thank you, Chairperson,

On behalf of GANHRI, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, representing 119 NHRIs worldwide, I would like to thank you for your leadership at this crucial stage of the process, as we move from the initial discussions towards the substantive drafting of a new legally binding instrument on the rights of older persons.

GANHRI particularly appreciates the openness demonstrated during the first session and the attention given to the voices and perspectives of NHRIs, civil society and most importantly, older persons themselves.

As we enter this next phase, GANHRI hopes that the spirit of openness, inclusiveness and cooperation will guide the process of developing an instrument that should be coherent, effective and responsive to the lived realities and diverse experience of older persons.

At the outset of the second session, GANHRI reiterates the importance of ensuring that the future instrument explicitly addresses ageism and requires its elimination. It must affirm older persons as full and equal rights holders, recognising their diversity, and embed a universal, comprehensive and human rights-based approach to ageing. It must also establish clear obligations and accountability mechanisms for States to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of older persons.

We warmly welcome the appointment of facilitators for the thematic segments and look forward to engaging constructively with them and with the Core Group throughout the drafting process. We also hope that the agreed timeline will allow sufficient time and space for meaningful consultations, including at national and regional levels and for empowerment and participation of older persons.

NHRIs are uniquely placed to contribute to this process. Through their mandates to monitor human rights, receive and address complaints, advise public authorities and assess national legislation and policies, NHRIs can help bring national realities and the lived experiences of rights holders into the development of international standards.

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GANHRI, for its part, actively advances this agenda at the international level. GANHRI has a dedicated Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons. Furthermore, in April 2026, GANHRI published, on behalf of its member NHRIs, a contribution on the general framework, architecture, and guiding principles of a legally binding instrument (LBI) on the human rights of older persons.

In this regard, GANHRI calls for a continued recognition of NHRIs role and their structured participation in this process at all its stages, including on the drafting but also in the implementation, alongside Member States, older persons, civil society and other stakeholders including through thematic consultations and the work of the facilitators.

GANHRI also calls on States to engage more actively and constructively in these negotiations, to provide NHRIs with the necessary support and resources to contribute effectively, and to ensure that their voices are heard and duly taken into account.

GANHRI reaffirms its full commitment to working hand in hand with all stakeholders to the development and concretisation of a robust, effective and transformative international framework that fully protects the human rights and dignity of older persons.

Thank you.