Mandate of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons

The mandate

The Human Rights Council, through resolution 24/20 decided to establish, for a period of three years, a new special procedure entitled “Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons”.

This is one of the various thematic mandates of special procedures established by the Human Rights Council.

All special procedures are assisted by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Who is the Independent Expert?

Rosa Kornfeld-Matte was appointed in May 2014 by the Human Rights Council as the first Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

Ms. Kornfeld-Matte served as the National Director of the Chilean National Service of Ageing where she designed and implemented the National Policy of Ageing. She has a long career as an academic and is the founder of the programme for older persons at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.
Functions of the Independent Expert

- To assess the implementation of existing international instruments with regard to older persons while identifying both best practices in the implementation of existing law related to the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons and gaps in the implementation of existing law;
- To take into account the views of stakeholders, including States, relevant regional human rights mechanisms, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations and academic institutions;
- To raise awareness of the challenges faced in the realization of all human rights by older persons, and to ensure that older persons receive information about those rights;
- To work in cooperation with States in order to foster the implementation of measures that contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons;
- To integrate a gender and disability perspective into her work and to pay particular attention to older women, persons with disabilities, persons of African descent, individuals belonging to indigenous peoples, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, rural persons, persons living on the streets, and refugees, among other groups;
- To assess the human rights implications of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing;
- To work in close coordination, while avoiding unnecessary duplication, with the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, other special procedures and subsidiary organs of the Human Rights Council, relevant United Nations bodies and the treaty bodies.

Activities of the Independent Expert

- **Country visits**
  The Independent Expert conducts official visits to countries, at the invitation of governments. The main objective of the country visit is to engage proactively with States and other stakeholders so as to identify good practices and gaps in the implementation of existing law and protect older persons on the ground.
- **Thematic reports**
  The Independent Expert presents annual thematic reports to the Human Rights Council on issues related to the mandate.
- **Communications**
  The Independent Expert received information submitted from all stakeholders. When appropriate, information received with regard to alleged cases of violations of the human rights of older persons may be exchanged with the concerned governments.
- **Other activities**
  The Independent Expert participates in conferences, seminars, and other events that are relevant to her mandate.

What is an Independent Expert?
Independent Experts are part of the mechanisms of Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. They are appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a thematic or country-specific perspective in all parts of the world. This position is honorary and they are not staff of the UN nor paid for their work.

How to send information to the Independent Expert?
All information relevant to the mandate may be brought to the attention of the Independent Expert. This includes good practices, thematic studies, as well as information on alleged violations of the rights of older persons. Any person or organization can send information. Information can be submitted to the address below: olderpersons@ohchr.org

What is the contact of the Independent Expert?
Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons
OHCHR-UNOG CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
olderpersons@ohchr.org
Fax: +41 22 917 9006

“The voices of older persons must be heard”