**Human Rights of older persons in the age of COVID-19 and beyond**

**Virtual debate with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the new Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons**

**Tuesday 12 May 14:00-15:00**

Event supported by members of the Groups of Friends of Older Persons both at UNHQ in New York

Older persons are at high risk of severe illness and death following infection from COVID-19. In order to curtail these grim outlooks, many countries resorted to adopt a variety of measures; from creating special time slots for older persons to do their grocery shopping, banning visits in retirement homes and caring facilities, to, in some cases, barring older persons from going outside at all.

While these measures were well intended and aimed at a greater protection, care and support for older persons, they have in many ways negatively impacted their rights and freedoms.

The new SG policy brief on the impact of COVID 19 on older persons, clearly calls to strengthen the legal frameworks to promote and protect the human rights and dignity of older persons[[1]](#footnote-1).

Older persons have the same rights as any other age group, and they should be protected equally during the pandemic. Special attention should be paid to the particular risks faced by older persons, including isolation and neglect resulting from physical distancing and age-based discrimination in access to medical treatment and other support. Protocols on triage should be based on scientific evidence and medical need.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Have some rush conceived COVID-19 measures impacted older persons to a larger degree than other groups? Have they taken into account views of older persons themselves? Have they highlighted the already existing ageism and age-based discrimination?

Join us in welcoming Ms Claudia Mahler, the new Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older personswho started her mandate on 1 May and engage in this timely debate on Older Persons in the age of COVID-19 and beyond.

In this virtual meeting we shall analyze the current situation with the intention of looking forward. How can we keep the conversation around the rights of older persons going during these challenging times and how we can move from debate to action?

The event to be moderated by Ms Silvia Perel-Levin, NGO Committee on Ageing, Geneva

Panelists:

* High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet
* Ms Claudia Mahler, new Independent Expert on the Rights of Older Persons,
* Chair of GoF NY (TBC)
* One of the co-chairs of GoF in Geneva

There will be time for comments from the “floor” and people can be invited to submit questions in advance so we can calculate time and moderate effectively and efficiently.

For questions, please contact Silvia Perel-Levin s.perel58@gmail.com

1. <http://webtv.un.org/watch/ant%C3%B3nio-guterres-un-secretary-general-on-the-launch-of-the-policy-brief-on-older-persons/6153268153001/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID19Guidance.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)