



Asia-Europe Meeting

ASEM Conference on Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons

(26–28 October, 2015, Seoul, Republic of Korea)

Concept Paper

I. Background :

The Republic of Korea is going to host the ASEM Conference on Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons on 26–28 October, 2015, in Seoul, Korea, which was approved at the 10th ASEM Summit in 2014.

Today, the world is becoming an ageing society due to rapid increase of the elderly population. In particular, Asia is a region of the largest number of older persons, and Europe is the most aged region. Accordingly, countries in Asia and Europe are making efforts to respond to population ageing and issues related to older persons by devising and carrying out international standards and related policies region by region or state by state.

However, despite increasing importance of the elderly population in Asia and Europe, the rights of older persons are not adequately considered. Older persons should be guaranteed independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity in their lives. However, in resolving issues

related to older persons, an approach where older persons are recognized only as an object for policy measures was mostly taken, rather than a rights-based approach.

For the improvement of human rights of older persons, the international community adopted 'international plans of action on ageing'* which set forth goals that the international community should push forward, including enhancing development, health and wellbeing of older persons, at the First and Second World Assembly on Ageing in 1982 and 2002, respectively. Since then, efforts have been made to implement the plans, but there has been a wide variation in the gap between the plans and their implementation according to situations of member states.

The United Nations, in December 2010, decided to establish the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing(A/RES/65/182), and in 2011, the UN Secretary General presented to the UN General Assembly the report that, for the first time, focuses on human rights situation of older persons around the world(A/66/173). In addition, in April 2012, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights clearly stated in the report on human rights situation of older persons that measures to strengthen international protection system for older persons cannot be delayed anymore(E/2012/51).

The 2015 ASEM Conference on Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons would like provide an opportunity to view issues related to older persons from the perspective of human rights. The Conference aims to share efforts and best practices of nations including legislations and policies for promotion and protection of the rights of older persons, review

* The UN adopted the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing at the World Assembly on Ageing held in Vienna, Austria in 1982, and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing was adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid, Spain, in 2002.

key elements of related legislations and policies, and consider measures for cooperation with government and civil society in Asia and Europe.

II. Objectives :

The objective of the Conference is to reaffirm universal value of the rights of older persons, share information in Asia and Europe, and pursue cooperation among ASEM member nations and international coordination for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

The Conference would like to focus on the following:

1. Share efforts and best practices of nations for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons
2. Review key elements of legislation and policy for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons
3. Review regional and international initiatives for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons
4. Consider role of government, civil society and international institutions for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons
5. Consider measures for cooperation between Asia and Europe for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons

III. Strategy and Conference Structure :

The Conference consists of four sessions, and each session focuses on the essential rights needed to be guaranteed for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons.

At each session, the following rights will be discussed; the right to social security, social protection and health for Session 1: non-discrimination on the ground of age and the right to work and employment for Session 2: social exclusion and the right to freedom from violence and abuse for Session 3: and tasks for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons for Session 4.

Each session will focus on the following;

1. At Session 1, the right to adequate standard of living of older persons will be discussed. In particular, the focus will be on the right to social security, social protection and health.
2. At Session 2, non-discrimination on the ground of age and the right to access will be discussed. Discussion on non-discrimination will focus on the right to work and employment, and in regards to the right to access, the right to access information and health care facilities will mainly be discussed.
3. At Session 3, social exclusion and the right to freedom from violence and abuse will be discussed.
4. At Session 4, the discussion will be on tasks lie ahead for promotion and protection of human rights of older persons in Asia and Europe and detailed cooperative measures to address such tasks.

At each session, current situation in Asia and Europe as well as international principles and standards will be overviewed: national

legislation/policy and experiences for promotion of human rights of older persons will be shared: key elements of legislation and policies to protect human rights of older persons will be discussed: and the role of government and international institutions to promote human rights of older persons will be considered.

IV. Organization of the Conference :

A) Host :

National Human Rights Commission of Korea
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea

B) Co-Sponsors :

ASEM members are invited to co-sponsor the Conference. Some co-sponsors are expected to give opening remarks at the opening ceremony of the Conference and may make presentations in sessions if they wish. Also, co-sponsors will be asked to make comments on a draft Chair's Summary which the NHRCK will prepare in advance.

C) Participants :

ASEM members, national human rights institutions, representatives from international institutions including the UN, academic experts, and international NGOs

D) Date and Venue :

Date: 26(Mon) - 28(Wed) October, 2015

Venue: The Westin Chosun Hotel

Address: 106, Sogong-ro, Jung-gu, Seoul, Korea

Tel: +82-2-771-0500

Fax: +82-2-752-1443

E) Costs :

The host will bear the costs of the venue, conference meals and conference-related expenses. Participants need to be responsible for their own travel and accommodation cost during their stay, while the host may cover travel in economy class and accommodation for a limited number of participants.

F) Languages :

The official language for the conference is English and Korean.

G) Contact :

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