

**The Islamic Republic of Iran Statement on Asian-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing
29 June 1 July 2022
Bangkok - Thailand**

The Islamic Republic of Iran is currently experiencing population ageing at a rapid pace, in over four decades the percentage of older people has increased from %5.2 in 1972 to %10 in 2022, and this rate will only increase in the coming decade. Population aging has a profound impact on societies. It affects educational institutions, labor, markets, social security, health care, long-term care and the relationship between generations. Population ageing may fuel opportunities for economic growth and spur countries to develop new fiscal approaches to accommodate a changing world. While some governments have begun to plan the pace of population aging to accelerate for the long term, most have not, and reform becomes more difficult. The I.R. Iran has created a cohesive infrastructure by planning based on demographic and economic evidence, to urge intersectional collaborations and form a long term strategy, with both national and community level implications. In this regard Iran has been an active member in conducting the elements of the Madrid International Plan of Action, and has reevaluated the implementation of said plan over time.

The Iran's National Document of Older People (NDOP) was officially announced and approved in 2021. The document consists of 6 major goals and several related strategies and actionable policies. Furthermore, the first draft of the National bill of rights of older people has been prepared by the Council for approval by the senate, in 2022, the first national survey on Iranian older population will provide a data pool related to the economic, social and health related aspects of quality of life.

On the local community level, we have a network of community peer groups of older people called the Fazanegan Foundation, over 120 nationwide, which operate under supervision of the State Welfare Organization. They can oversee and participate in the carrying out of action plans related to NDOP and get the opportunities for empowerment and participate actively in the development process.

Since 2019, the Age Friendly Cities program has been piloted in various major cities in the country, and the city of Isfahan has been included in the WHO "Age Friendly City Network" in 2021. Currently 6 other major cities have also started the process

of making their cities more age friendly. The Community Driven Development approach program was initiated in Iran in 2021, which is a peer group based local agenda for empowerment of older people and facilitating their participation at community level. This program has been introduced by the highly successful and award winning team of Help Age International. Recently 6 cities have started the pilot of this program under the supervision of the National Council for Older people.

The road forward towards creating the proper means for participation of older people in development and betterment of their quality of life is hopeful, but our country faces major unjust and tyrannical obstacles, "the Unilateral Coercive Measures(UCMs)" taken against innocent Iranian population have brought major limitations in resources. Coinciding with the UCMs, the illegal sudden immigration of Afghans also has created many difficulties of socioeconomic and health control nature. And of course the Covid-19 pandemic fallout is still being dealt with, causing a vacuum in manpower and technical resources. As a nation we have the will to strive on, the knowledge and experience to pave the way forward, and we embrace and all collaborations and resource sharing with countries and United Nation organizations, our main objective is the same: a meaningful and fruitful today, and a hopeful tomorrow , respecting the dignity of all older citizens everywhere , and promoting all aspects of social inclusion for older people to ensure their voices are heard, their rights respected, and their participation appreciated.

Thank you