

Preparing Together: NGO Briefing 2026 Intergovernmental Meeting (IGWG) on the Human Rights of Older Persons

Date and time:	Tuesday 17 th February 2026 10:00-12:00 – Closed meeting for NGOs and NHRIs 14:00-16:00 – Multi-stakeholder meeting for NGOs, NHRIs, Member States, UN agencies 16:30-18:00 – Cocktail Reception – Hall 14, in front of the assembly room
Location:	UN Palais des Nations, Geneva – Room IX (Register here: https://indico.un.org/event/1021070/)
Participants:	This in-person preparatory briefing is for members of GAROP and the NGO Committee on Ageing Geneva (NGO COA Geneva), as well as any NGO interested in following proceedings and/or participating in the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG). We also welcome the active participation of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs).
Join the conversation on social media:	#AgeWithRights #GlobalRally2026 #EqualVoicesEqualRights

Background

The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva has been doing more work specifically on older people's rights in recent years. Most significantly, on 3 April 2025, UN Member States in the 58th Human Rights Council session in Geneva adopted a landmark resolution to create a new intergovernmental working group (IGWG) to draft an international legally binding instrument (UN convention) on the human rights of older persons. This milestone is the culmination of many years of

advocacy and campaigning by older persons, civil society and other advocates around the world. The evidence compiled over this period has demonstrated that the best solution to the deficiencies and fragmentation in the international human rights system is a dedicated convention.

[Click here to read the full text of resolution A/HRC/RES/58/13](#), which was proposed by a core group of Member States comprising Argentina, Brazil, the Gambia, the Philippines and Slovenia, and co-sponsored by over 80 Member States.

This IGWG will hold its first meeting over three days from 18th-20th February 2026. This will be an organisational meeting where it is expected that Member States will agree on a chair and determine the ways of working and procedures that the IGWG will adopt going forward. There are further substantive meetings scheduled to take place in July and October 2026 where the discussion will focus more on the content of the UN convention. From then onward, the IGWG will meet twice a year

GAROP and the NGO Committees on Ageing (NGO COAs) have a proven track record of convening civil society in partnership with our colleagues from National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), including over many years in New York at the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and in recent years in Geneva. We aim to support wider civil society engagement (beyond our own membership) in an inclusive and transparent way in the interest of facilitating coordination and credibility of civil society in this space. [Read more here](#).

Objectives of the morning meeting, closed for NGOs and NHRIs:

1. To strengthen relationships across NGOs and NHRIs active in this space
2. To build a shared understanding of our advocacy goals
3. To support effective NGO and NHRI in-person participation in the session, including how we self-organise to nominate speakers if time is short
4. To nurture NGO and NHRI collaboration around the content of a UN convention

Objectives of the afternoon multi-stakeholder meeting:

1. To secure recognition from key stakeholders for civil society's self-organising structures
2. To strengthen relationships with Permanent Missions in Geneva and other stakeholders, including OHCHR and NHRIs
3. To stimulate discussion on the conceptual basis and scope of a UN convention

Working language: The workshop will be in English.

Co-sponsors: This preparatory briefing is jointly organised by the International Federation on Ageing (IFA), Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP), the NGO Committee on Ageing in Geneva (NGO COA GVA), INPEA, HelpAge International, Age International, HelpAge Canada, AARP AND BAGSO

Cocktail Reception: We would like to warmly thank HelpAge International, Age International, HelpAge Canada and AARP for their generosity in making this event possible.

Contact:

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DRAFT PROGRAMME - Morning

Moderation: Elijah Mwega, GAROP Steering Group (TBC)

Time (CET)	SESSION	LEAD
10:00	Welcome, housekeeping and introductions Brief words of welcome from Rose Gahire (Co-chair of GAROP) and Alejandro Bonilla Garcia (Chair of the NGO COA GVA) <i>'Who is in the room?'</i> icebreaker	Moderator
10:15	Our journey so far UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing / role of GAROP and NGO COAs	Silvia Perel-Levin, Vice-Chair, NGO COA Geneva
10:25	Civil society advocacy goals and messages <i>Proposals from GAROP Steering Group and reaching consensus on crucial messages.</i>	Bethany Brown, GAROP Steering Group
10:45	Caucus and self-organising Whatsapp community and Daily Bulletins through this week. Ideas on how we can self-organise as a wide caucus and make collective decisions before and during sessions	Ellen Graham, GAROP Coordinator (TBC)
11:15	Developing proposals for the content of a UN convention <i>GAROP discussion paper on the conceptual basis of a convention</i> Discussion: How we can consult, collaborate and build consensus on content in the intersessional period Update from NHRIs about their work on content.	Nena Georgantzi, Chair of GAROP Content Working Group Anna Chabiera, Polish NHRI (TBC)
11:45	Wrap-up and announcements	Moderator

DRAFT PROGRAMME - Afternoon

Moderation: Alejandro Bonilla Garcia (IFA Representative & Chair of the NGO COA GVA)

Time (CET)	SESSION	LEAD
14:00	Welcome and introductions	Moderator
14:05	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Commissioner for Human Rights – Mr Volker Türk (TBC) • H.E Ambassador Foradori - Permanent Mission of Argentina • H.E Ambassador Pipan - Permanent Mission of Slovenia • Rose Gahire, Co-chair of GAROP 	Introduced by the Moderator
14:30	Discussion on conceptual basis of a convention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the Stage. Claudia Mahler. UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of all Human Rights by Older Persons • Presentation of new discussion paper by GAROP (15 mins) • Discussant (5 mins). A representative of GANHRI (TBC) Open moderated discussion (30 mins)	Nena Georgantzi / Andrew Byrnes, GAROP Content Working Group (TBC)
15:30	Civil society participation in the IGWG meeting Share our plans and key advocacy messages for this organisational meeting	GAROP Steering Group member(s)/ Coordinator
16:00	Networking time	
16:30	Cocktail Reception - Hall 14, in front of the assembly room	