



**Statement of Gray Panthers**  
**Authored by Gray Panthers Summer Interns**  
**Ninth Session of the Open Ended Working Group on Ageing United Nations**  
**Headquarters**  
*New York, New York*  
*July 23-25, 2018*

Good afternoon everyone, and thank you for being here today. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to introduce ourselves to you as this year's class of Gray Panthers summer interns.

Many of you may wonder why younger persons like us are concerned with ageing issues. As younger people, we have come to understand the importance of intergenerational action in combating ageism. We have come to understand that ageing is not simply limited to older people. Rather, it is a commonality that unites us all and makes the intergenerational component a necessity in addressing ageism. Ageism is a prejudice against our future selves.

Over the course of our internship, we have had a variety of experiences that have truly shown us the pertinent issue of ageism. Such an issue is not often spoken about in our everyday lives, and yet it has become increasingly important on both a local and global scale.

We are well aware of conventions targeted at the rights of the child, women, and persons with disabilities, but have noted a significant gap in those that specifically address issues related to ageing due to various stigmas and systemic barriers.

Through the opportunities that Gray Panthers has offered us, we have connected with older persons on an individual level--seeing first hand the institutions, policies, and values that impact life locally and internationally.

In particular, elder abuse in nursing homes is one of the most prevalent and alarming issues regarding older persons, and in reality it's an important issue for all of us. If we do not take any action now to prevent elder abuse, soon enough we will be the ones suffering in these homes looking back wishing we had done something. We acknowledge the deplorable instances of elder abuse and torture through the administration of antipsychotic medication as a medical response to individuals experiencing symptoms of dementia. There is a governmental responsibility to condemn actions like this, and there must be sustainable and effective monitoring in place to provide agency to those suffering.

We hope that the education and discussion on these issues spreads beyond the confines of the Gray Panthers interns, and beyond the confines of the Open Ended Working

Group on Ageing. We hope that the education and discussion on ageism spreads globally to all generations of people. If this dream becomes a reality, all generations will become effective agents of change in issues of ageism.

In summary, this is why we need an international, legally binding, instrument to protect the rights of older persons. Ageing is something we should look forward to, and be proud of. Thank you, and we wish nothing but success for the Open Ended Working Group on Ageing.

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