

Message from

H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly

On the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons

6 October 2011

Ladies and gentlemen,

The world is currently undergoing a major demographic transition. Older populations are expected globally by 2050.

We, the international community, therefore have before us both a challenge and an opportunity: to ensure that the development potential of older persons is fully harnessed. And to uphold the basic human rights of older persons, including for independence, care and dignity.

The General Assembly has long been engaged in addressing issues related to older persons. In 1982, the General Assembly convened the first World Assembly on Ageing. In the resulting "Vienna International Plan of Action", Member States called for action on issues such as health and nutrition, income security and employment, and education.

In 1991 - 20 years ago- the "United Nations Principles for Older Persons" was adopted by the Assembly. Member States reaffirmed their faith in the fundamental rights of the human person, and encouraged governments to incorporate certain principles into their national programmes, whenever possible.

In 2002, the Second World Assembly adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. The General Assembly recently reaffirmed its commitment to this Plan of Action, and encouraged Member States to strengthen their efforts to develop national capacity to address related priorities.

And last session, the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing was established by the General Assembly. This Working Group is mandated to consider the existing international framework of human rights of

older persons and identify possible gaps and how best to address them.

Ladies and gentlemen, in commemorating the International Day of Older Persons, let us take the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the principles of the Madrid Platform of Action. Older persons are vital contributors to our communities. It is our joint responsibility to ensure action at all levels and to promote the development of a society for all ages.

Thank you.