

Governing Council Plenary Statement on behalf of HelpAge International

Thank you chair

I speak on behalf of the General Assembly of Partners' Older Persons group and HelpAge International, a global network of organisations working to protect and promote our rights in older age.

There are more than 900 million people aged 60 years and older, 57% of whom already live in urban areas. As all of us are ageing, and this figure will increase significantly, particularly in low and middle income countries. Rapid urbanisation and global population ageing are century defining trends.

Cities present physical, social and economic barriers that prevent us from realising our right to live in dignity and safety in older age. Key challenges include recognising the disproportionate impact of air pollution on older people, providing accessible public transportation for older people, creating hospitable green and public spaces to tackle social isolation, and ensuring the inclusion of older people in responses to urban humanitarian crises.

The Older Persons GAP group worked hard to ensure that the New Urban Agenda takes into account our voices and protects and promotes our rights in older age.

And it does. The New Urban Agenda contains 27 substantive references to ageing. It gives us assurances that not only will our rights in older age be taken into account in urban planning and budgeting but more importantly, calls for all older people to be active participants in urban decision making, implementation, monitoring and accountability.

We encourage UN Habitat and other partners and stakeholders, national and local governments, to take an active role and engage with HelpAge and the members of the GAP Older Persons group to ensure our cities are respond appropriately to ageing urban populations.

Thank you.