

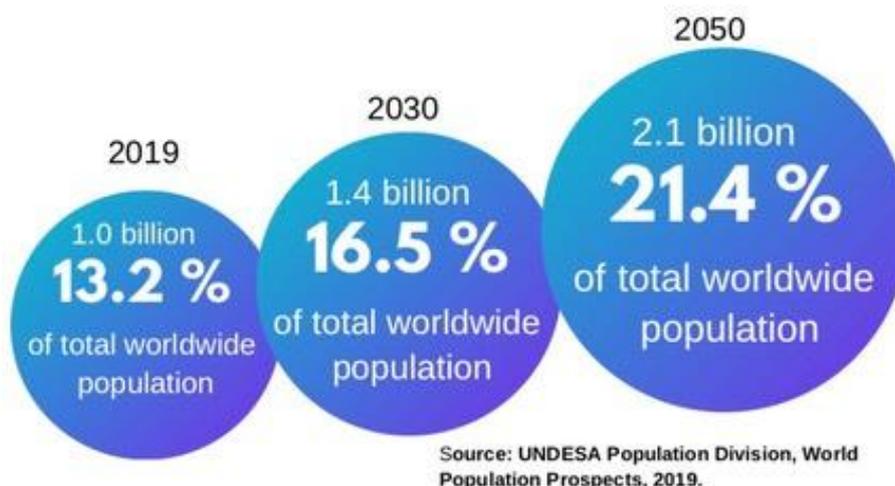
## 11th Open-Ended Working Group on Age

29 March- 1 April 2021, United Nations Headquarters, New York

The 11<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, mandated to strengthen the protection of older people(s human rights worldwide, took place from 29 March to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

The agenda included high level discussions on COVID-19, the right to work, access to justice, right to education and lifelong learning, as well as social protection. Sessions welcomed messages from the UN Secretary General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the participation of the UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, state officials, human rights experts and civil society.

On March 30, a side event on “access to Justice at the Intersection of Disability and Older Age “was organized by AGE. This event included a dynamic high-level moderated discussion between the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of all Human Rights by Older Persons, Ms Claudia Mahler, and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Mr. Gerard Quinn.



Access to justice is a basic principle of the rule of law: a guarantee for people to exercise their rights, and hold perpetrators and decision-makers accountable. However, both older persons with or without disabilities, and persons with disabilities regardless of their age, are disproportionately impacted by abuses to their right to access to justice.

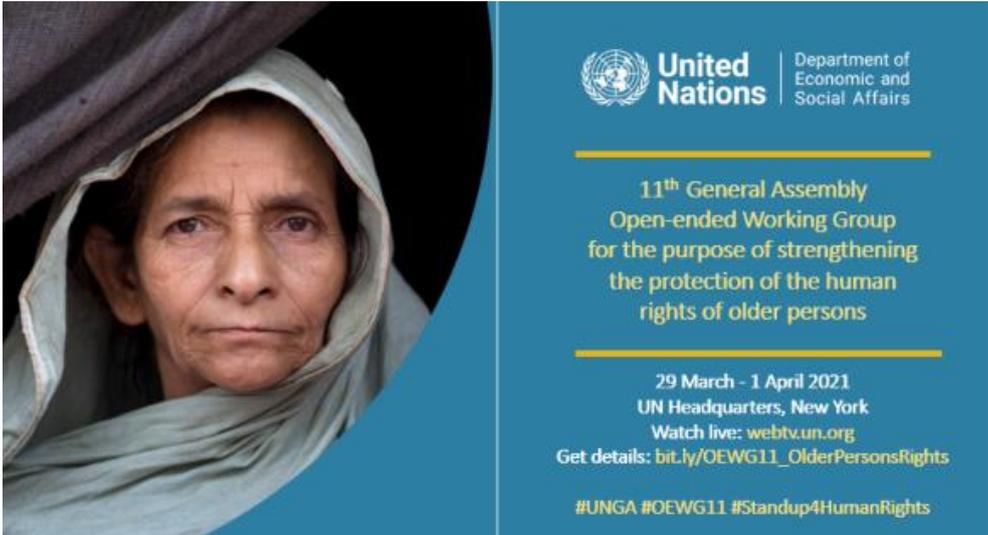
For older persons, direct and indirect discrimination in access to justice on the basis of older age remains invisible, and structural barriers go unquestioned. The international human rights framework lacks a comprehensive definition of older person’s access to justice, or an elaboration of the obligation of States to adopt legislation and policies to guarantee effective access to justice for older persons. As a result, it does not provide adequate support and remedies to for older persons.

For persons with disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities’ Article 13 articulates that all persons with disabilities have legal capacity and, therefore, no one shall be denied access to justice on the basis of disability. This was echoed in 2020 report International Principles and Guidelines on Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities sponsored by the Immediate past Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

On March 31, the side event on “Strengthening the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons in COVID-19 and Beyond” was organized by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The event presented key findings and preliminary recommendations from the updated OHCHR study on gaps in the equal enjoyment of human rights by older persons, and to discuss a roadmap for greater engagement and collaboration among all stakeholders to support the mandate of the Open-ended Working Group to strengthen the protection of the human rights of older persons.

Martine Gayon

UN Representative, New York



 **United Nations** | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
Open-ended Working Group  
for the purpose of strengthening  
the protection of the human  
rights of older persons

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Watch live: [webtv.un.org](http://webtv.un.org)  
Get details: [bit.ly/OEWG11\\_OlderPersonsRights](http://bit.ly/OEWG11_OlderPersonsRights)

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