

***Mainstreaming Ageing:
Forging Links between the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and
the Millennium Development Goals***

Proceedings

**The 13th Annual Observance of the
International Day of Older Persons**

Thursday 2 October 2003

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in Collaboration with the UN Department of Public Information
and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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Mission Statement

International Day of Older Persons, October 2, 2003

Mainstreaming Ageing:

Forging Links between the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and the Millennium Development Goals

The International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) will continue the tradition of previous International Days by building on significant United Nations milestones that acknowledge older persons as an increasingly major segment of society.ⁱ It is our task, among others, to move forward the implementation of the action items found in the *Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002*, adopted by member states during the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

The mission of IDOP 2003 is to connect the priority directions of the *Madrid Plan of Action*: a) older persons and development; b) advancing health and well-being in old age; and c) ensuring enabling and supportive environments, with the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs).ⁱⁱ Although the *Millennium Development Goals* are the outgrowth of and summary statement for the multiple World Conferences held in the 1990s, several of which specifically addressed global ageing,ⁱⁱⁱ the UN Millennium documents fail to recognize this worldwide phenomenon and the potential contributions of this major group in achieving the *Millennium Development Goals*. Because the MDGs will serve as guidelines for future policy and programmes for the United Nations and civil society, the importance of linking the *Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002*, with the *Millennium Development Goals* cannot be stressed enough.

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Secretary-General Kofi Annan

UN Press Release, SG/SM/8903, OBV/376, October 2003

**“POWERFUL RESOURCE” OF OLDER PERSONS MUST BE TAPPED FOR DEVELOPMENT
SAYS SECRETARY-GENERAL IN MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL DAY**

Following is Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s message on the International Day of Older Persons, observed 1 October:

Over the next few decades, older persons will form an increasingly large and important presence in communities and societies everywhere. And yet, until recently, little attention had been paid to how we can best use the skills of older persons in development.

Then, last year, the Second World Assembly on Ageing adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action, which called for a fundamental shift in how we think about ageing and older persons. The Madrid Plan moved policy issues on ageing out of the narrow confines of the social welfare agenda, and into the mainstream of development policy debate. It acknowledged that older persons represent a powerful but untapped resource for society. It put forward recommendations on how we can adjust to an ageing world and build a society for all ages.

In my follow-up report to the current General Assembly, I proposed a practical framework for both national and international action to implement the Madrid Plan with two main focuses: national capacity-building, and mainstreaming of ageing into the developmental agenda.

During this first year of the implementation process, we have seen progress on a number of fronts. At the intergovernmental level, the modalities for review and appraisal of the implementation of the Plan have been agreed. During 2002, Member States in Europe and Asia developed strategies for implementation, while Latin America and the Caribbean should have a strategy in place by the end of this year. We expect that a process of implementation in the African region will follow.

Every one of us can help build bridges between generations by embracing the skills of older persons, whether in community or family affairs, agriculture or urban entrepreneurship, education, technology or the arts, poverty reduction or peace building. The challenge before us is to bring the invaluable attributes of older people out of obscurity and into step with other instruments of development -- including the work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, our blueprint for building a better world in the twenty-first century. On this International Day of Older Persons, let us vow to make the most of the powerful resource that older persons represent in the work for development.

H. E. Julian R. Hunte, President of the Fifty-Eighth Session of the General Assembly
UN Press Release, GA/SM/333, OBV/378, October 2003

OLDER PERSONS 'A MOST CHERISHED RESOURCE,' GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT SAYS IN INTERNATIONAL DAY MESSAGE

Following is the message of Julian R. Hunte, President of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, on the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons, 1 October:

It is important that we recognize the challenges facing our global community, but more importantly, that we go beyond these challenges to take effective action to address them. The dramatic increase in the number of people worldwide that are living longer is one such challenge, and has put issues concerning older persons squarely on the global agenda.

Today, as we join hands with people around the world in the thirteenth annual celebration of the International Day of Older Persons, we are reminded of the facts compelling our countries and our world to comprehensively address the issues of ageing. Last year, the number of persons aged 60 years or older was estimated to be 629 million representing one in every 10 persons. It is estimated that by the year 2050 that figure will rise to one in every five and by 2150, one in every 3 persons will be 60 years of age or older. The World Bank estimates that approximately 70 per cent of older persons now live in developing countries.

It is difficult to imagine how countries may progress if such a significant proportion of the population is not taken into account in the development process. Therefore, I consider the theme for The Thirteenth International Day, "Older People -- New Power for Development," to be both essential and timely. I wish especially to commend the Non-Governmental Committee on Ageing for taking up this essential approach to issues concerning older persons in its complementary theme, "Mainstreaming Ageing: Forging Links between the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and the Millennium Development Goals."

These themes focus not only on the positive contribution older persons have made, but also, on the development possibilities they represent. We are mindful, however, of the challenges that the ageing of populations present, particularly to countries in the developing world, many of which are grappling with serious issues such as debt, and poverty, and facing the uncertainties of globalization and trade liberalization. And even as we celebrate longevity, we are reminded that life expectancy in many parts of the world continues to be impacted by conflict, war and disease. Older persons, who are among the most vulnerable in society, are also among the first to fall victim to these devastating occurrences.

We have the international framework, which forms the basis for the integration of older persons into the development process, to ensure that issues of concern to older persons are comprehensively and continuously addressed. The 1999 Principles for Older Persons identifies: Independence, Participation, Care, Self-Fulfilment and Dignity as central features of our action in respect of older persons. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing recognizes the benefits that older persons can make to society, and seeks to mainstream ageing into development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies. The Plan of Action takes the approach that, as in the case of other groups in society, older people should be involved in decisions and action, both to promote development and to enjoy its benefits.

Let us now reaffirm our commitment to embrace older persons as a most cherished resource, with an essential contribution to make to social, economic and cultural development. Let us undertake to work with them to tap their wisdom, experience and skills in the building of our communities and societies. And let us recognize their contribution to the wider international community in meeting the objectives set out in the United Nations Charter.

This is also an opportune time to renew our commitments made to older persons, giving special emphasis to their health and well-being, mobilizing public support for issues of ageing, building strong partnerships between governments and international organizations as well as civil society and individuals to meet the goals and objectives we have set and providing adequate resources for action-oriented programmes in this area. Above all, let us give high priority to implementing the Madrid Plan of Action, as we work towards implementing the United Nations development agenda, particularly the Millennium Development Goals.

So on this day dedicated to honouring older persons, I salute my fellow older persons around the world.

Shashi Tharoor, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information

Shashi Tharoor is Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information and has led the Department of Public Information (DPI) since January 2001. In this capacity, he is in charge of the Organization's communications strategy, with particular responsibility for ensuring the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations' external message.

Prior to joining DPI, Mr. Tharoor served as Director of Communications and Special Projects in the Office of the Secretary-General and as Executive Assistant to the Secretary-General. As Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, he assisted two successive heads of United Nations peacekeeping operations in managing the challenges of unprecedented growth and evolution in peacekeeping at the end of the cold war. Mr. Tharoor is also the author of seven books, as well as numerous articles, op-eds and literary reviews in a wide range of publications. He is the recipient of several journalism and literary awards, including a Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Shashi Tharoor is a national of India. He holds a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, as well as two Masters' degrees and an honorary D.Litt.

Opening Remarks by Shashi Tharoor

International Day of Older Persons, 2 October 2003

Good morning and welcome to this morning's session on "Forging links between the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and the Millennium Development Goals". I am Shashi Tharoor and I have the pleasure of moderating this segment of the programme. As part of an ongoing tradition, we are pleased to have the International Day of Older Persons, formally observed on 1 October each year, be the highlight of our first DPI/NGO Briefing each fall. Today's programme is in two parts and as you can see from your programme, I will moderate the morning session until 11:25. If there is any time, we will take written questions from the floor at around 11:15. I will then turn the podium over to Johan Scholvinck to moderate the second part, which will end with a musical performance.

I want to welcome the many associated NGO representatives who have joined us today as well as over 200 guests who have been given special entry into UN Headquarters despite the security ban on guests during this period of high security. I am very pleased that the Department of Public Information has been working with NGO Committee on Ageing to make this event possible. In particular, I would like to commend the hard work of Judy Lear, Pete Walker and Helen Hamlin of the Committee for their careful attention to every detail.

Our event today will highlight efforts by the UN, governments and NGOs to mainstream older persons into policies and programmes mandated by the World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid in April 2002. We continue to look for ways to support the principles and guidelines that will contribute to building a society for all ages.

Another important plan of action, the Millennium Development Goals adopted by 149 Heads of State and Government at the Millennium Assembly in 2000, provide an opportunity to enable many individuals over the age of sixty to make substantial contributions in achieving these important goals. Older persons, often knowledgeable and skilled, are currently underutilized in the campaigns to improve the well being of citizens around the world. We hope that today's discussion will encourage the linking of the three priority directions set out by the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, which include older persons and development; advancing health and well-being in old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments, to the Millennium Development Goals.

Overlooking this rapidly growing population of older persons inhibits a substantial resource. In recent years, thanks to a concerted effort by the United Nations, Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations around the world, we have witnessed the emergence of a new awareness of the multifaceted roles that older persons can - and must - play in the complex effort to mainstream the MDG's.

We have wonderful speakers here with us this morning. We will hear from the newly elected President to the Fifty-Eighth Session of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Julian Robert Hunte as well as the Chair of the Committee on Ageing, Ms. Florence Denmark, Ms. Alejandra Marta Ayuso, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations, and Jan Vandermoortele from the Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme.

Florence Denmark, Chairperson, NGO Committee on Ageing, UN NY

Florence L. Denmark, Chair, NGO Committee on Ageing, UN NY, has represented both the International Council of Psychologists and the American Psychological Association at the United Nations since January 2000. Ms. Denmark was the Robert Scott Pace Distinguished Professor and Chair of the psychology department at Pace University for 13 years. Prior to that time, Ms. Denmark was the Thomas Hunter Professor of Psychology at Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She is currently the Robert Scott Pace Distinguished Research Professor at Pace University.

Ms. Denmark has served as President of the American Psychological Association, the International Council of Psychologists, and other regional and national organizations. At this time, she is a liaison to the American Psychological Association's Committee on Aging. She is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and has received many national and international awards and four honorary doctorates. Ms. Denmark has authored or edited 15 books and over 100 articles and book chapters. She has presented numerous papers and reports on ageing at local, regional, national, and international meetings.

Welcoming Remarks

Good morning. On behalf of the NGO Committee on Ageing, I'd like to welcome you to the 13th annual celebration of the International Day of Older Persons. As you may remember, last year's conference, "The Challenges of Ageing: Where do we go from here?" was held only a few months after the Second World Assembly on Ageing, which produced the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. This plan highlighted three areas of primary concern: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments. This document was intended as a resource for policymaking, suggesting ways in which societies look at and pay attention to the older generation. This time last year, the NGO Committee on Ageing was working to disseminate this Plan of Action as widely as possible. Now is the time to start exploring means of achieving these goals, particularly in regards to the Millennium Developmental Goals. These goals address poverty, health, education, and environmental issues around the world. Unfortunately, they do not expressly address ageing. Thus, the theme of this year's conference, "Mainstreaming Ageing: Forging Links between the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and the Millennium Development Goals" will specifically address the place of ageing in the Millennium Development Goals. As the Mission Statement for this day points out, "The Millennium Development Goals will serve as guidelines for policies and programs of the United Nations and civil society for years to come." Therefore, it is extremely important to connect the 2002 International Plan of Action for Ageing with the Millennium Development Goals.

In keeping with this theme, there will be a plenary moderated by Mr. Shashi Tharoor, the Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information. This plenary will feature our two keynote speakers, Ms. Alejandra Marta Ayuso and Mr. Jan Vandemoortele. Ms. Ayuso is the First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations. Mr. Vandemoortele will speak instead of Eveline Herfkens, who was called to a meeting in Paris. He is the Principal Advisor and Group Leader on Socio-economic Development at UNDP in New York. Following a brief question and answer period, a panel discussion will take place moderated by Mr. Johan Scholvinck. The morning program will be brought to a close with a presentation by the String Section of the New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra. At four o'clock, the "Ageless" art exhibit will be opened by Mrs. Nana Annan. This exhibit features the work of older persons, and was developed by Ms. Annie Levy of Manhattan Plaza, New York.

Today's International Day of Older Persons could not have occurred without the United Nations Department of Public Information and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who are co-sponsoring the day. Many thanks are also due to this International Day Committee Co-Chairs, Judy Lear and Pete Walker, along with their committee, who have worked very hard to bring this day together with an excellent program.

Once again, welcome to the United Nations, the thirteenth annual commemoration of the International Day of Older Persons, and the first briefing of the season of the Department of Public Information. Remember, as the World Health Organization has noted, "A society for all ages is a society committed to development."

**Alejandra Marta Ayuso, Professional in international relations and recently First Secretary,
Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations**

Alejandra Ayuso is a professional in international relations, with fifteen-years of experience in both international organizations and national Foreign Service. She has held positions as professor at several Universities in Argentina, in international economics, international law and related fields. From 1999 to 2003, she served at the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the UN, participating as a Delegate to the Third Committee (Social Affairs and Human Rights). Ms. Ayuso was a negotiator of the International Plan of Action on Ageing at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, 2002. She was Vice President of the Commission for Social Development of the UN, 2002-2003, and a negotiator of the outcome documents of several General Assembly Special Sessions: on Children (2002), Social Development (2000), and Women (2000).

From 1997 to 1999, Ms. Ayuso was Chief of the Consular Section of the Embassy of Argentina to the Ukraine, responsible for the implementation of Argentina's Immigration Programme for Eastern European Citizens. She was an officer at the Directorate for South American Countries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, from 1994 to 1997, and Desk Officer for the Andean Countries (Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela). She has completed postgraduate courses in International Relations, and earned an M. A. in Linguistics and Literature from the School of Philosophy and Literature, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**MAINSTREAMING AGEING: FORGING LINKS BETWEEN MADRID PLAN OF ACTION AND THE
MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

It is a real privilege to be with you today and to share with you a few observations regarding the relationship between the Millennium Development Goals and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

When the Heads of State and Government met in New York in 2000, they put forward a new program for the Millennium, which is widely known as the **Millennium Declaration**. The Declaration intends to be a revisitiation of the purposes and principles of the Charter, with contemporary eyes. Therefore, it contains commitments as regards peace and security, development, human rights and dialogue within the multilateral system, typically within the United Nations.

In the development field, and with a view to put the Declaration in action, eight goals have been identified, which are currently known as the **Millennium Development Goals**: the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; the achievement of universal primary education; the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women; the reduction of child mortality; the improvement of maternal health; the combat against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; the sustainability of the environment and the realization of a global partnership for development.

However, the Millennium Declaration is silent as regards older persons. No doubt the commitments it contains can help create a positive environment for older persons, but while the Declaration makes specific references to women, children, migrants, population in emergency situations or under colonial or foreign occupation, there is **no mention** whatsoever to the particular situation of **older persons**.

This silence is really surprising, because since 1982, the international community had examined the question of population ageing and the situation of older persons. The **First World Assembly on Ageing**, held in Vienna in 1982; the adoption by the General Assembly of the **United Nations Principles for Older Persons** in 1991; the **International Year of Older Persons**, celebrated in 1999 and the preparations of the **Second World Assembly on Ageing**, already under way when the Millennium Summit took place, had cumulatively shed light on the question of ageing and its consequences on development, on employment and on the provision of social services.

In 1982, population ageing was still perceived as a “problem” or a “challenge” that the Governments and the international community would have to “face”, giving policy responses to a phenomenon of decreased productivity and increased demand for social services, particularly health care and income security. In the **Vienna Plan of Action**, older persons are still understood as “objects” of the assistance of the State –supported by international cooperation- and as “vulnerable” members of society. A concerned tone permeates the whole Plan, and there is certainly a call to Governments to be prepared for the challenges of an ageing population and to take into account the demands of the different sectors of the elderly: older women, poor older persons, rural older persons.

In 1991, the General Assembly adopted a set of principles that Governments were encouraged to take into account in their national programmes directed to older persons. **These five Principles were: independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity.** While the General Assembly still operated on the assumption that ageing was a “challenge” that had to be “targeted” in public policies and programmes, in these five Principles it is possible to perceive a different image of ageing: the international community not only recognized the dignity of the older persons, but also of their capacity to live independently, to participate and to have access to the recreational, educational, cultural and spiritual resources of their communities.

1999, the “**International Year of Older Persons**” was certainly a turning point for the consideration of the question of population ageing and particularly of the situation of older persons. Thanks to an initiative of the Dominican Republic, and to the tireless efforts of Ambassador Julia Alvarez -a most dear friend and a true example of “active ageing”- the United Nations had an opportunity to think again the question of ageing and to envisage the objective of building a “society for all ages.” At that point of time, older persons were not considered the “object” of public policies any more, but “subjects” of their own development and participants in full right in social life. Another concept that was emphasized during the International Year was “intergenerational solidarity,” which would later be included in the Madrid Plan of Action.

The decision to hold a **Second World Assembly on Ageing** was certainly the main result of the International Year. It was made possible through the generous offer of the Government of Spain to host the Assembly.

The **Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing** was the result of multiple consultations, within and among negotiating groups and Delegations, with a myriad of contributions from civil society, academia and older persons themselves. These consultations, that took place at the domestic and at the international level, began in 2000 and extended well into the Assembly itself. I have had the privilege of representing my country at those discussions, and I can assure you that they were truly a school for all of us who took part in them.

Certainly, the Second World Assembly has to be considered a milestone in the path from the goal of the protection of the elderly (typically expressed by the Vienna Plan) to the empowerment of older persons and the mainstreaming of an ageing perspective, which are the main features of the Madrid Plan of Action. Some of us even think that a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons might be in the foreseeable future.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is built around **three priority directions:** Older Persons and Development; Advancing Health and Well-Being into Old Age and Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environments. It responds to the reality that population ageing has been even more acute than what was foreseen in 1982, particularly in developing countries, but also to the conviction that population ageing is not a “challenge”, but an “achievement.” Population ageing is a result of the improvements in health care and nutrition and of the expanded provision of social services. Even more important is the realization that far from being a burden, the ageing population is an invaluable asset for development.

Older persons have traditionally had the role of educating the young, of transmitting the values and beliefs of the community to the younger generations. More recently, due to the increase in international migrations, children are left at the care of their grandparents, who in turn depend on the remittances of their children from abroad. And finally, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused older persons, particularly older women, to take care not only of their sick children, but also of their orphaned grandchildren, many times without enough income or support. These contributions, that mostly go unpaid, are a further sign of the potential of older persons for development.

The **first priority direction**, Older Persons and Development, responds to the reality of the increase of ageing population in developing countries. In the Plan, there is a mention of estimates done by the United Nations. By 2050, the world population aged 60 years or more will be 2 billion, 70% of them living in developing countries. The Plan calls upon Governments to consider the potential of older persons when designing policies and programmes for them.

In the article 10 of the Political Declaration, it is clearly stated that **older persons** should be considered as **an asset and not a liability:** “The potential of older persons is a powerful basis for future development. This enables society to rely increasingly on the skills, experience and wisdom of older persons, not only to take the lead in their own betterment but also to participate actively in that of society as a whole.”

In the Plan of Action itself, it is clearly spelled out the way in which this potential for development can be put into action: by participating actively in society and development; in the workplace; in rural areas, in situation of

migration and urbanization of the younger generations; by giving older persons access to knowledge, education and training; by ensuring income security, social protection and prevention of poverty among the elderly; and in emergency situations.

Just a note on this last topic: there existed a traditional view that in emergencies, children were the first entitled to receive humanitarian assistance, followed by women, adults and, in the end, the elderly. The Madrid Plan of Action came to change this view radically. Not only it safeguards the right of older persons to receive equal assistance in emergencies, but also emphasizes the potential of older persons in reconstruction and rehabilitation of their communities. To the stereotype of older persons as “useless”, the Plan opposes an image of older persons as active agents of care, reconstruction and reconciliation.

The second priority direction. Advancing health and well-being into old age, puts in place the right of older persons to the highest attainable standard of health, as defined by the World Health Organization, that is, a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. The articles included in this second priority direction are focused in the need of ensuring proper health care throughout life, in order to attain a healthy old age. In this regard, the universal and equal access to health services is essential. This second priority direction states also the need to further geriatric and gerontological research, particularly as regards Alzheimer and other diseases associated with old age.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has a multiple impact on older persons: in many cases it compromises their health –and therefore, provisions have to be made for ensuring their access to care and treatment- but much more frequently, HIV/AIDS calls upon older persons to take charge of the orphans of parents who have died of AIDS. The Madrid Plan of Action calls upon Governments to provide the necessary income and support to older persons in their role as caregivers.

The third priority direction. Ensuring enabling and supportive environments, refers basically to the general attitude of society towards older persons. The Madrid Plan of Action rebukes isolation and institutionalization of the elderly and promotes the principle of “ageing in place” in the community. It also calls for the elimination of elder abuse and violence and for the enhancement of the recognition of the value of older persons. In this regards, encourages the elimination of age discrimination and the frequent stereotypes of the elderly as useless, passive, “waiting-for-death” members of society.

While the Millennium Declaration was silence regarding older persons, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing makes several references to the Millennium Declaration. These references are basically reminders of the commitments made by the Heads of State and Governments as regards eradication of poverty, combating HIV/AIDS, promotion of gender equality and development of a global partnership for development.

The Millennium Declaration does not contain a clear reference to the situation of older persons. But it is sure that only in a world as the one envisaged by the Heads of State and Government at the beginning of the new Millennium, will older persons -- as well as children, women, migrants, indigenous peoples, disabled – be taken into account and respected.

May the commitments made at the Second World Assembly on Ageing be put into practice. We count on you to remind us every time we lose the right track.

Thank you.

Jan Vandemoortele is the Leader of the Poverty Group at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York.

Jan Vandemoortele is a Belgian national who holds a Ph.D. in Development Economics. He is the Leader of the Poverty Group at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York. Previously, he headed Social Policy at UNICEF, New York. Between 1991-94, he served with UNDP as Senior Economist in Malawi/Zambia as well as with the Regional Bureau for Africa in New York. Prior to 1991, he worked for 13 years with the International Labour Office (ILO), mostly in Africa.

His work has focused on social policy, poverty reduction, public finance, income distribution and labour issues. He has published numerous articles, reports and chapters in books. He is a regular speaker at international conferences and CSO forums, and a frequent lecturer at universities. He frequently gives radio and TV interviews around the world. He is fluent in English, French and Spanish

The Millennium Development Goals

Thank you for inviting me to speak on the topic of MDGs.

The MDGs do not stand for the Madrid Declaration of Gerontology. They stand for the Millennium Development Goals, and when somebody from UNICEF, because I still belong to UNICEF, speaks about the elderly, then something must be changing. It is either my age or it is the topic that is moving into the development framework. And I want to believe it is the latter that is taking place.

Elders and the MDGs

Normally when we talk about MDGs, and these days we talk a lot about MDGs, especially in this house, we seldom relate them to older persons, because we have infant mortality, child malnutrition, and maternal health as priorities, not things that normally lead us to the issue of the ageing. But ageing has now been brought onto the agenda, and some people are asking when it comes to developing countries, basically why bother. Because isn't an issue such as the baby boom generation only in the developed countries.

Of course, we know better. We know that, although the tradition of extended families still exists in many parts of the world, we also see evidence that poverty is often leading to a situation where the extended family is becoming overextended, and that has two effects on the elderly. They often become the heads of the households – again -- and, as Alejandra said, the reasons are HIV/AIDS or economic migration or war and conflict. Also, the elderly are being forced to live and survive alone, because the family cannot take on the well-being of their elderly. In both cases, the elderly find themselves in a very vulnerable situation, perhaps as vulnerable as the younger groups where UNICEF is being concerned.

The fact is also that the population in developing countries is ageing, and they are ageing faster than the population in developed countries has aged. This is true in both relative and absolute terms. In relative terms, although the proportion of the sixty-five “plussers” in the total population is much lower in developing countries than in developed countries, it is growing much faster there. Between now and 2050, the proportion of the sixty-five plussers will double in developed countries, but it will triple in developing countries.

Also, in absolute numbers, in terms of growth rates and millions of people, it is in developing countries that we will see the fastest growth in the elderly. In most developing countries the number of elderly, sixty-five plussers, will increase by 50% or more between now and 2015 -- the date we have set to reach those MDG goals and the targets that we have stated and agreed on in the Millennium Declaration.

Some figures: in Latin America the elderly population will grow by 60%, but, it is not only a Latin American country problem. The ageing population will grow in China, the increase between now and the year 2015 of those sixty-five and over will go up by 47%, in India by 52%, even in sub-Saharan Africa, where some people still think this not a problem yet, that it is way in the future, the proportion of the sixty-five plussers will go up by 48%. In OECD countries the number of sixty-five plussers will be 30% higher in 2015, than it is today. It is much lower than in developing countries.

These figure confirm very clearly, for those who are not yet convinced, that the issue of ageing is not just a humanitarian issue, it is a development issues. When we look at the countries where the increase will be 50% or

more, between now and 2015, there are 62 countries. Sixty-two developing countries will see the number of sixty-five plussers increase by more than the half.

Those countries are not ready. If you look at their social indicators, they are not starting from a privileged position. They are starting from a very worrisome position. If you look at indicators of malnutrition, at indicators of access to water, at indicators of the proportion of people struggling to survive on one dollar per day or less, you see that those countries are not ready to face that challenge. Therefore, the prospects are worrisome. And, as with the very young, the elderly are among the vulnerable, and they often face a double discrimination – age and gender. We are familiar with that double discrimination.

The elderly, because of the life cycle in the household, play a crucial roll for achieving the MDGs. The intergenerational impact on development, or the lack there of, is a factor for each and every family. And the elderly will influence, in a very major way, the outcome of the MDGs by 2015. We have clear evidence that the well-being of the mother determines to a very large extent, the well-being of the child. If a mother is educated and is in good health, all the indicators on the well-being of child are very closely correlated. The same is true – why shouldn't it be true – for the third generation in the family.

So we have clearly evidence that if we are going to ignore the well-being of the elderly, we will do so at the peril of the MDGs by 2015 – no doubt about it. MDGs and elderly are related, and maybe the MDGs also mean the Madrid Declaration for Gerontology.

Two Proposals

Now where do we move forward – two proposals? From where I am sitting now in the United Nations Development Programme, we are working within developing countries to produce “little reports” that paint a picture of how well the country is doing in terms of the MDGs. They are not meant to be the normal, rather long, technical, analytical, very solid reports that we are familiar with. No, here we want to produce a little report, that is accessible to many, that is easy to read, looks attractive in its layout, and that paints, in a few pages, a clear picture of how the country is doing in terms of achieving the MDGs. We have about forty of those country reports available. They are all on our UN web site. I know most of us do not belong to “clickaratie-generation,” we belong to other generations, but lets venture there. Those reports are really instruments for public advocacy. They are not meant for policy makers, or for technicians. They are meant for the general public, in order to help build a constituency for those goals and targets, so that when a budget is voted in parliament that somebody can raise his or her hand and say, “Mister minister what does this budget mean for the MDGs.”

So we build that coalition, and in those reports, we very much push for disaggregation, because national averages can be mystifying and deceiving. The data today that is available for most of the indicators on education, health, poverty, water, etc is much better than five or ten years ago and allows for a disaggregation. You break information into parts. It is not only like the country “Kenya,” but we break it down by region, by gender, by socio-economic status and by age. However, we don't see that yet. We still have a long way to go, and it can be done. We don't see in the mainstream analytical reports, which deal with development issues, a breakdown by age – we don't see that, and we have to bring it in. It can be done, and we are pushing for it. It will be key to bring to the attention of the policy makers and the general public, some of the stark data that is available in terms of discrimination by age.

The second issue, apart from this reporting and analysis, is advocacy. The existence of advocacy is not an issue in developed countries, or the so-called first world, but it is becoming a global issue, and more and more as we move towards 2015, it will be a development issue in the third world. Reaching across borders of age groups to lobby for changes in global policy, in changes of budgets, of pension reforms, of social security and other programmes for the elderly will be essential to force policy making to change faster in a pro-poor direction, because it is very clear that the elderly are disproportionately represented among the poor. Anything focused to improve their well-being will be pro-poor, almost by definition. So if we can build a stronger coalition across borders, among elderly lobbies, and build a stronger constituency for pro-poor advocacy, that would complement the work of disaggregated analysis.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

Johan Scholvinck, Director, Division of Social Policy and Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Johan Schölvinck is currently Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, a function he assumed in February 2002. Since joining the United Nations in 1980 at UNCTAD in Geneva, he has held various positions in the Secretariat, including Chief of the Population and Development section in the Population Division, Chief of the Policy Coordination Branch in the Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, and Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General for Development Research and Policy Analysis.

In his current function, his main responsibilities consist of guiding the various activities of the Division including technical cooperation, issues pertaining to ageing, persons with disabilities, youth, and the family, as well as providing substantive support to the Commission for Social Development. In this regard, the World Summit for Social Development, its five year review, the Millennium Declaration and the recently concluded Second World Assembly on Ageing form important guideposts, especially in connection with poverty eradication and social integration. Mr. Schölvinck holds an engineering degree from the Agricultural University of Wageningen, the Netherlands, and M.S and Ph.D. degrees in Agricultural Economics from Cornell University, USA. Mr. Schölvinck is a national of the Netherlands.

Panel Discussion: Opening Remarks

Although a moderator should speak with moderation, I find it nevertheless hard to resist making a few remarks before I turn the floor over to our distinguished panelists. I say, hard to resist, because I feel a close affinity to the Madrid Plan of Action not only because it entailed one of my first official tasks as the freshly minted Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development, but mainly because it placed older persons squarely in the development process. Indeed, the Madrid Plan signifies a move away from a “welfare approach” that tended to overemphasize the care and benefits needed to support older persons while excluding them from the development policy dialogue. It is now increasingly recognized that national development goals will not be reached when a fast growing segment of the population remains excluded from the process of development.

Furthermore, the Madrid Plan of Action underscores that a necessary first step in the successful implementation of the Plan is to mainstream ageing and the concerns of older persons into national development frameworks and poverty eradication strategies. However, mainstreaming ageing is not an attempt to make older persons another “new” beneficiary group or give them preferential treatment, but rather an attempt to ensure that people of all ages are involved in decisions and actions to promote development and can enjoy the benefits of development.

Mainstreaming ageing into global agendas is essential. Fostering a society for all ages means implementing the commitments made at major UN conferences and summits and their follow-up processes and in the Millennium Declaration with respect to the promotion of international and national enabling environments. The task is to link ageing to other frameworks for social and economic development and human rights.

The Millennium Summit affirmed the long-term imperative of eradicating poverty and fulfilling the social and humanitarian goals set up by the global conferences of the 1990s. The inclusion of all, and I stress all, population groups is one of the keys to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus the absence of older persons in the MDGs needs to be addressed and given consideration both in the Millennium goals and in their broader context as contributing to the eradication of poverty.

Thus far, the Millennium Development Goals are silent on the issue of ageing. An important move forward would be to undo this silence as was done last year in Johannesburg with respect to the issue of sanitation, which has now become part of the MDGs. Surely, ladies and gentlemen, if sanitation can find its way into the MDGS, then so should ageing. In this regard, I trust that this 13th anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons will provide a major contribution in that direction.

And now it is high time that I introduce our panelists, which I will do in the order in which they will speak.

[The biographical statements of the panelists and their comments follow.]

Alfredo Sfeir-Younis, Senior Advisor, Office of the Managing Director, World Bank

Alfredo Sfeir-Younis is Senior Advisor in the Office of the Managing Director of the World Bank. In this recently created post, Mr. Sfeir-Younis advises on the Bank's efforts to further the United Nations Millennium Development Goals of poverty eradication and sustainable development. Since joining the World Bank in 1976, Mr. Sfeir-Younis has held several positions in environmental and natural resource economics, agriculture and rural development in Africa and South Asia, and human rights. He has served as the World Bank's Special Representative to the United Nations as well as its Special Representative to the World Trade Organization.

Mr. Sfeir-Younis's career extends beyond traditional economics to advocacy and development work for world peace and human security. His efforts to incorporate spirituality, human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples, ethics and racial tolerance in economic development policies have earned him several international honours, including the Club Universelle de la Paix's 2002 Lifetime Ambassador of Peace Award. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis is a national of Chile.

IDOP Panel comments of Mr. Sfeir-Younis, taken from this presentation

“Elderly People In This Millennium: The Spiritual and Ethical Dilemmas of Globalization”

“The potential of older persons is a powerful basis for future development. This enables society to rely increasingly on the skills, experience and wisdom of older persons, not only to take the lead in their own betterment but also to participate actively in that of society as a whole”.

Thank you for your invitation to speak.

Because of my engagement in this event, I had another opportunity to read and study carefully the Declaration and the Plan Of Action agreed in Madrid last year. While it is not my role to summarize them, or even repeat what they present to us, the fundamentals represent the canvas of this presentation.

Thus, upon reflection, I decided to focus today on what is not explicitly in those two important documents or do not have the same emphasis I would like to give to these issues. These are central to understand the nature and scope of the crises many elderly people face today and to provide the needed linkages to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). I hope that in the process of sharing my thoughts, you would not mind if I think *outside the box*.

Given the time allocated for the presentations, I decided to focus also on the ageing and the spiritual and ethical challenges created by globalization.

Population And Demography: Not A Pyramid Any Longer

When I was at school many years ago, they taught me that the world population organized by age could be represented by an almost perfect pyramid. At the top of the pyramid, *the elderly people*, representing a minority (in quantitative terms) --showing a rather low life expectancy—and, at the bottom, the wider part of the pyramid was represented by *the children and the youth*. The whole image conveyed the message that the whole demography was linear and smooth from one age bracket to the other.

This image does not really apply any longer. It is a fact that there are as many young people as there are elderly people in the world. The pyramid has been transformed into two large wheels with an axel at the center, uniting them! This axel at the center is representing those people who are at their working age: rather active in the creation of economic wealth and other valuable societal assets.

Thus, it is important to realize that the dynamics created by these two wheels with a central axes is completely different from that of a static pyramid. This new demographic configuration is now central to both developed as well as developing countries. The elderly people are not anymore a minority we may decide to disregard. Economic and social policies must, therefore, account for this reality and most societies should be prepared to face these major new challenges.

Disconnecting The Elderly People From Society's Valuable Assets

The elders of today were those who actually created many of the assets – or set the foundations for the creation of valuable assets -- that we see today as being our major source of human welfare, both in a material and spiritual welfare.

- They gave their lives for our education, health, housing, and more.
- They spent tireless nights side by side to take care when we were sick, when we needed company, when we felt lonely.
- They indeed financed the accumulation of human capital that exists today via direct expenses on education or via taxes.
- They created the institutional and political spaces for many things to happen, many of which we give for granted.

They have been the foundation, for example, of the internet, flying around the world, light and heat, drinking water and sanitation, food production and distribution, our legislative and judiciary systems, and most important of all, our constitutions.

Despite this evidence, we have created social and economic systems that have disconnected the elderly from those productive assets. They are at the merci of financial systems and salaries that are not even decent for their survival. Some of them are in a desperate situation. There are many of them who are dying alone, without even the company of someone to the cemeteries. There are many who I see in the lines of the soup kitchens in those cities where these exist. There are many scavenging from garbage cans in search for food. And, this is a phenomena that exist in both developed and developing countries -- a totally unacceptable situation.

This disconnection from the productive assets is not only unfair but it should not be acceptable no matter in which society this is happening.

I remember myself visiting many small fishing villages in Haiti several years ago. The boat landed lots of fish. The first thing they did was to give 5 fishes to each and every pregnant woman of the village. Then, they gave 10 fishes to the eldest who was with me at the beach observing the landing. I asked him why is it that he got those fishes, and he told me, “because I taught them how to fish”. A small part of that society that still connects the elderly with the productive assets they have at present.

I am not asking myself only about what is ethically right, but what makes sense from a social and economic point of view.

- It is not acceptable that we see our elderly people getting poorer and poorer as development and progress takes place.
- It is not acceptable that we see them without the proper access to health care in a holistic and comprehensive way.
- It is not acceptable that societies have a large segment of our societies suffering from an acute form of social and economic exclusions.

Elderly People Are Not A Burden; They Are An Engine Of Human Transformation

It is essential that our societies change their attitudes towards the actual and potential role of the elderly people in our societies. In the HIV prone areas, they have become once again heads of households and the real parents of their grandchildren. They have become the bread winners and the support system for families in crises.

For the moment, most people think that as a person gets older, their contribution diminishes and, thus, elderly people should be little by little disregarded or to be thought as a major burden. They may be a burden in those societies where we have destroyed the family unit and, thus, we can only see this phenomenon of ageing or our human connectivity only through the labor market. In other words, we see human identity –socially or otherwise— only via the mechanisms to the creation of material wealth. This social and economic breakdown is the reason for this concept of the elderly person as a burden.

Thus, it is essential that we change our lenses and begin to re-establish the foundation of a society that defines itself based on total inclusiveness. And, it will be the value of this inclusiveness the one that will make our elderly people to become part and parcel of all we do, and the co-beneficiary of all we create and benefit from.

It is important to note that the role of the elderly frequently changes through the development process. In a rural society, the elderly often contribute to the household through providing assets like land and livestock. They have unique knowledge of the land they farm that they can pass on to their children. They have knowledge of herbal medicine and child rearing. Up until death the elderly can contribute to the household chores. The onset of development often loosens family structures, diminishes the importance of the knowledge that the elderly have as new modern practices take hold, and leaves the elderly feeling abandoned and vulnerable.

The World Bank is working with countries to help establish social pension systems which cover the elderly poor. These systems provide the elderly with some means of subsistence and provide the family with a regular source of income which can be used to insure credit. A regular source of income is also becoming essential to the care of children and other family members as the elderly increasingly become caregivers in families stricken with AIDS. Childcare has often been the role of the elderly as younger adults work outside the home, but this role increases in importance with the disappearance of the younger adults.

At the same time, the World Bank tries to strengthen institutions which provide individuals safe and secure savings mechanisms so that individuals can save for their own old age and continue to live a life with dignity. Public institutions which provide pensions for the elderly are encouraged to index these pensions to maintain their value to protect the oldest of the old, who often find their pensions reduced to nothing. Governments are encouraged to strengthen and insure the financial sustainability of their pension systems as a means of reducing the risk to the elderly. Countries are encouraged to raise retirement ages to prevent the able elderly from being forced out of work. Studies show that allowing early retirement in an effort to reduce unemployment never works as unskilled young workers are not substitutes for the older, more experienced work force. As a result, productivity falls at the same time that older workers are forced to rely on the national pension system.

Older People – New Power for Development

The Second World Assembly on Ageing defined ageing as a global *developmental* phenomenon and called for its inclusion in international *development* agendas. This means that the ageing of society is recognized as an *opportunity* for societal development, and older persons as a *resource* for development. This developmental approach to individual and population ageing offers practical approaches for adjustment to the new – globalizing and ageing – world of the twenty-first century.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted by the World Assembly, is designed to guide policy formulation and implementation towards the specific goal of successful adjustment to an ageing world. The Madrid Plan recognizes that older persons needs, as well as the economic needs of society, necessitate participation of older persons in all spheres of societal development – economic, political, social and cultural.

We have to re-evaluate the role of older persons and their needs, especially in light of longevity and improving health conditions, so that they can participate and benefit equitably from economic growth and societal progress. We need to challenge conventional wisdom that ageing is a problem and recognize and promote the role of older persons as productive members of society.

Addressing Vulnerability And Social Protection Of Elderly People

Social Protection is back on the international agenda, and the recent re-affirmation of the Millennium Development Goals, to reduce poverty, emphasizes social protection's role in providing income security for vulnerable people. In this context, it is important also to look at how poor people live with risk and how governments should prepare for crises by having social safety nets and other means of protecting people before misadventure strikes.

This calls for three important considerations:

- ***Growth must be balanced by social policy measures***

The East Asia crisis, for example, showed that high growth rates, while necessary, are not enough to achieve lasting and broad-based growth. Progress made in reducing poverty may be lost quickly if appropriate social policy measures are not in place. Faced with a large economic shock, informal safety nets tend to break down, and existing public support measures, where available, are often inadequate.

- ***Social protection is an element of sustainable poverty reduction***

We know now that social protection is a primary element of “security” in reducing poverty, along with opportunity and empowerment. Social protection as security embraces both individual and macro-economic risks. This approach also mirrors our increasing understanding of *poverty dynamics and economic mobility* in developing countries. We have learned that the poor consist of two groups: those who are always poor, and those who move in and out of poverty. We are just now beginning to understand why some people remain poor, or why some move out of poverty while others move into poverty.

- ***We must account for the impact of globalization***

Last, but not least, we must address the actual or perceived increased risks resulting from globalization. Recent trends in trade, technology, and political systems have greatly improved the

welfare of many around the world. But these same trends have also increased vulnerability and insecurity for other groups. Thus, a Social Protection Sector Strategy must define security as *freedom from vulnerability to poverty*. This is both an end and a means to development: vulnerability to poverty causes ill-being, while reducing vulnerability to poverty leads to well-being. The poor are most exposed to diverse risks and have the fewest means of coping with these risks.

These perceptions have important consequences:

- The poor are the most vulnerable group in society as shocks are likely to have the strongest welfare consequences for them; they should have increased access to Social Risk Management (SRM) instruments.
- Their high vulnerability makes them risk-averse and thus unable or unwilling to engage in higher risk/higher return activities. Access to SRM instruments could help them become more risk-taking and gradually move out of poverty.

Protecting the vulnerable is important for all ages. For the elderly, vulnerability is high and rising.

As populations in all countries age because of better life expectancy and declining fertility, traditional family support is eroded by smaller family size and the effects of urbanization and globalization. With the advance of old age, limited access to decent work, and little or no access to formal pension schemes, the elderly become particularly vulnerable to any kind of shock.

The Bank’s involvement in the area of ageing has been important in its policy dimension, though limited because of the young age structure of most of our client countries. Besides social assessments, gender and health related issues of ageing, special emphasis has been given to formal and informal income support systems for the elderly.

We are assisting nearly 60 countries to reform their formal pension systems to deliver adequate, affordable and diversified pensions and not to default on its unsustainable promises. But coverage under the formal schemes is low and only slowly increasing in developing countries, if at all. This calls for introduction of non-contributory schemes, at least for the most vulnerable elderly – the widows and those without family.

Addressing these vulnerabilities is a major challenge for every government and the world community. Solutions require public/private partnerships, since governments will not have the financial means and capacity to provide all risk management instrument. Nevertheless, strong government is needed to regulate the private sector in such areas as providing pension benefits, running hospitals and schools, or forming apprentices. Workable solutions must also involve the family --as first defense line against many kinds of household-level risks -- and NGOs, trade unions and other civil society institutions.

Any enduring solution will also need close cooperation between rich and poor countries, and between international organizations such as the UN and the World Bank to prevent and mitigate risks or help people cope with them once they occur.

Final Thoughts

Let me end this presentation by thanking those elders who have been so important in our spiritual development. Those who have been the holders of that form of knowledge which serves us to understand life in its entirety and to respect the sacred dimensions of human transformation.

The 20th Century saw a revolution in longevity and it is possible that more than 2 billion elderly people will inhabit this Planet by the year 2050, with the greatest and most rapid expansion in developing countries. This implies that we must integrate this process of ageing with that of economic and social development. This means drastic changes in policies and practices and a major discussion on social inclusion and its sustainability over the longer term.

The concept of “a society for all ages” must not be just an allegoric proposition, but the moral and ethical foundation of all we do as regards human transformation and development. For this to happen we must espouse values that are humanistic in nature and fundamentally different from how we value progress at present. It is all a matter of security, opportunity and empowerment.

Ageing has been characterized by the progressive loss of these three key ingredients of successful development in our societies. Thus, this meeting should be principally organized to recover the loss of power and security and, at the same time, create the opportunities for everyone to flourish. We must value the crucial importance of intergenerational interdependence. Not as a matter of burden but as a matter of enriching our abilities to live in stable and peaceful societies. Societies must be civil, and part of this civility is to create the human, institutional and political spaces for the elderly people to reach full self-realization in all its dimensions.

The values of reciprocity and solidarity and the exaltation of our spiritual being as individuals and as communities must guide and dictate human behavior at all levels.

The time has come to re-establish this society for all ages. This demands to rebuild a new social fabric and establish and agree on a new Social Contract. This Contract must be inclusive, but in a meaningful way. It is not the numeric dimension of inclusion that should matter but also its wisdom and spiritual dimensions. A contract where violence of all forms –including physical, financial, economic, social must be eliminated.

Thank you very much.

Sonia F. Elliott, Liaison Officer, UNAIDS

Sonia Elliott was the former Charge d'Affaires a.i./Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Guyana to the United Nations and now works with the UNAIDS New York Office. She was Guyana's representative in the United Nations Third Committee, ECOSOC and its functional commissions from 1999 to 2002 and covered several UN conferences during that period, including the 2000 General Assembly Special Sessions on the Social Summit + 5, Beijing + 5, the 2001 Special Session on HIV/AIDS, as well as the Second World Assembly on Ageing and the Special Session on Children, which were held in 2002.

In 1999, she served on her country's delegation that presided over the Group of 77. In that capacity, she played a major role in negotiating and defending the position of developing countries on a number of critical social issues. She has also been extremely active in the preparations for the 2002 Second World Assembly on Ageing, when she served as the facilitator of the Group of 77. Ms. Elliott headed her country's delegation to the Second World Assembly.

Statement on the Occasion of the International Day of Older Persons

It is indeed an honour for me to take part in the activities organised for this 13th International Day of Older Persons and more specifically in this panel discussion.

I must admit that the preparatory process for the 2002 World Assembly on Ageing was one of my most humbling experiences here at the UN. I salute the millions of older men and women around the world who have laid and continue to lay the foundation for the world as we know it today. It was with humility and respect that I listened and learned as they and you voiced your aspirations, your concerns and your sense of belonging to society. In some small way, we who negotiated the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing became a medium for your collective voice and it is hoped that the recommendations, policies and strategies agreed upon in the Plan meet your expectations. Today, we build even further on the intergenerational links by focusing on the relationship between the MDGs and the Plan of Action on Ageing. It is inevitable that a life cycle approach to ageing will take into account the larger process of development. And in fact, the development implications of ageing are clearly articulated in the Madrid Plan. It was recognised that developing countries faced the challenge of simultaneous development and population ageing. On the one hand, most of these countries are still to achieve acceptable levels of economic and social development that will redound to the benefit of all their peoples. On the other hand, appropriate programmes and strategies needed to be put in place to respond to the quadrupling of the older population in the developing world over the next fifty years, with the majority of the population living in rural areas and intergenerational households.

The MDGs target the most serious development challenges facing the developing world, the achievement of these goals also has the potential of empowering men and women to reach old age in better health, of realising their full potential, of ensuring their full inclusion and participation in society and of improving care and support as they need it.

Today, I will focus my attention on health and well-being and links to the MDGs.

As we all now know, health as defined by the WHO is not merely the absence of disease and infirmity but a state of complete physical, mental and societal well-being. In the Madrid Plan, it is acknowledged that health is strongly influenced by environmental, economic and social determinants, including the physical environment, geography, education, occupation, income, social status, social support, culture and gender. It has therefore been determined that improvements in the economic and social situation of older persons will result in improvements in their health as well. Similarly, the provision of equal opportunities to women through the life course will have a cumulative effect on their social, economic, physical and psychological well being in later years.

It is these considerations as well as an emphasis on prevention activities that constitute the core recommendations relating to health promotion and well being throughout life in the Madrid Plan of Action. Health promotion and disease prevention measures are seen as alleviating the leading causes of disease, disability and mortality in older persons. In a similar vein, productivity and the quality of life of persons as they age are seen as being influenced by environmental pollution, malnutrition and poor nutrition.

The millennium development goal on eradicating poverty and hunger could therefore be seen in the context of health promotion and well being throughout life. The millions of people, including older persons who live on less

than \$1 a day are being deprived of basic necessities for a health and vibrant lifestyle. Malnutrition and poor nutrition are robbing millions of the energy that they need on a daily basis for fulfilling and productive lives.

Likewise, the millennium development goal on environmental sustainability provides for sustainable access to safe drinking water and improving the lives of slum dwellers. In the developing world, this goal is a constant challenge for both the young and the old. As noted earlier however, if a life cycle approach to ageing is adopted, the achievement of this development goal will have a far reaching impact on the lives of men and women as they age. For too many, inadequate access to safe water and sanitation has meant a life of misery and disease.

In terms of universal and equal access to health care services for older persons, the Madrid Plan has placed special emphasis on care and treatment, discrimination and gender equality. Attention has also been given to partnerships and the involvement of stakeholders such as the private sector and civil society in terms of the provision of services.

Let me begin with partnerships. Although the millennium development goal on partnership limits itself to global partnership, there are provisions relevant to older persons. For example, improving access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries can redound to the benefit of older persons if at the national level, arrangements are put in place for equitable access to these drugs, particularly by older persons and those living in rural areas. Likewise, the goal of making the benefits of new technologies available augur well for improved care and treatment in the health sector and general strengthening of the primary health care infrastructure. It would also be recalled that in the Madrid Plan, arrangements and incentives were encouraged to mobilise commercial enterprises, especially in pharmaceuticals, to invest in research aimed at finding remedies that can be provided at affordable prices for diseases that particularly afflict older persons in developing countries. In fact, WHO was invited to consider improving partnerships between the public and private sectors in the area of health research.

I can also add that I strongly believe that the millennium development goals on universal primary education, gender equality and improving maternal health are particularly relevant to the development of a continuum of health care to meet the needs of older persons. This continuum of care will be from childhood to old age and will without a doubt, empower men and women as they age to lead full and productive lives. Education and awareness building are key to prevention programmes. The goals that specifically relate to the situation of girls and women are relevant to reducing the vulnerability of older women who it is found generally live longer than men and face special challenges as they age. Similarly, the health of women during their child bearing years influences their well being in later life.

Older Persons and HIV/AIDS

As an employee of UNAIDS, you will forgive me if I dwell at some length on the issue of older persons and HIV/AIDS. As we are all too aware, in developing countries where HIV/AIDS has struck the hardest, it is the grandmothers and grandfathers who bear the brunt of its impact as care givers. At a more personal level, it is oftentimes overlooked that older persons are also vulnerable to the HIV virus when they engage in risky behaviour such as unprotected sex, multiple sexual partners and substance abuse. Added to this, age accelerates the progress of HIV to full-blown AIDS, blunts CD4 cell response to antiretroviral therapy and increases the risk of severe complications from age-related conditions such as osteoporosis.

It is now widely agreed that there is scope for providing older persons with the basic facts on HIV/AIDS and its prevention. Health care workers must be encouraged to discuss sexual behaviour and provide prevention information to older patients as routinely as they would with younger patients. Many early symptoms of HIV infection such as fatigue, poor memory, insomnia and weight loss tend to be misdiagnosed as signs of ageing. Too many older women who have experienced menopause do not insist on condom use since these are widely perceived as a contraceptive measure. And yet, older women are particularly vulnerable to trauma to the vaginal walls during sexual intercourse thus increasing their risk of contracting HIV.

The MDG on halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS must therefore take into account the special needs of older persons, especially older women. Indeed at the recent high level meetings on AIDS of the General Assembly on September 22nd, a recurrent theme of the statements by member States was prevention and access to care and treatment. Older persons must also be recognised as central resources in prevention and care.

While reaffirming the recommendations on support for the care giving role of older persons, I would also like to commend for your reading the 2002 WHO publication on the Impact of AIDS on older people in Africa – Zimbabwe case study. This study is aimed at enhancing knowledge on the complexities of AIDS and ageing in Africa and is no doubt a useful tool in advocacy efforts aimed at improving health systems' capacity to respond to

the problem. Research has borne out that the main factors that erode the care giving ability of older persons are the financial burden of care, the physical demands of care giving, a lack of knowledge about AIDS related care, lack of medicine, the mental and psychological stress of care giving, lack of food and other basic needs, poor access to health care for the sick as well as for older care givers, and socio cultural issues such as stigma, abuse, abandonment and neglect.

I personally look forward to more of these studies that provide important age and gender disaggregated data. Such data is equally relevant to efforts aimed at addressing the disability challenges of older persons. Although the links between the MDGs and disability are not clear, both the Millennium Declaration as well as the Madrid Plan on Action on Ageing have emphasized empowerment of the vulnerable and the weak. Such empowerment arises from targeted interventions to remove discrimination, promote equality and equity and encourage the full and equal participation of all members of society.

Human Rights Approach to Ageing

Mr. Chairman, an important element of the review process of the First World Assembly has in fact been the human rights approach to the debate on ageing. This approach upholds the freedom and dignity of all irrespective of age, the inalienable nature of all human rights and the essential nature of the right to development to provide an enabling environment at both the national and international levels. In an increasingly globalised economy where economic growth and modernisation are upheld as significant development achievements, the older generation which has always been important pillars in our society imparting wisdom, values, insight and advice, are increasingly seeing their role questioned as being irrelevant and outdated. Their identity as active contributors to society is undermined by a growing perception of them as passive recipients. Their contribution to the workplace, family and community is at best overlooked and their productivity, skills and experience are called into question.

Therefore, while recognising the positive impact of economic growth on the welfare of all persons, including older persons, we must also remember that it should not be at the expense of social inclusion. Isolation, disabilities and vulnerabilities provide a breeding ground for the social exclusion of older persons. All actors, including older persons, the media and academia have a role in ensuring that the ageing process is not seen as a path of dependency and victimisation but rather as a continuation of personal achievements and participation in daily life. For as acknowledged in Madrid, when ageing is embraced as an achievement, the reliance on human skills, experience and resources of the higher age groups is naturally recognised as an asset in the growth of mature, fully integrated, humane societies.

I thank you.

Prof. Naomi Woronov, Author, Director of Community Colleges in China Project

Professor Naomi Woronov taught English literature and language skills from 1961 to 1995. In 1975, she led a women's delegation to China, and was so intrigued that she returned to teach at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, from 1975-1981. While there, she wrote *Modern American English: Living and Learning in the West*, a speak/listen text that sold nearly two million copies in China. Her new text, *Get It? Got It!*, is in its fourth printing. When she returned from China, Professor Woronov wrote *China Through My Window*, a book that describes the experience of a Westerner walking into an unknown culture and society.

She has participated in an ongoing City University of New York-Shanxi Higher Education Exchange program since 1985, and was one of the creators and directors of the Community Colleges in China Project, funded by the Ford Foundation in the late 90s. Professor Woronov also taught American Literature and language in Eastern Europe on a Fulbright from 1991-1993.

Bread and Roses for China's Older Population

Old Chinese saying: huo dao lao, xue dao lao: to live until you're old is to learn until you're old. But until recently, no one had any sort of formal education in mind.

From 1979-81 I was lucky enough to live at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, a city that Marco Polo called "paradise." Early every morning I took my little basket, and pushed through the crowds buying rice, whatever vegetable the peasants had pulled out the ground that morning, and the very popular loaves of bread baked with the steam emitted by the local fan factory. Fresh, yes, but a pretty limited diet.

On subsequent visits to the university in the '80s and '90s, I found not only huge supermarkets and numerous food stalls outside the university gates, but several busy flower shops. Ah, I thought, the focus is no longer on bread alone, but on bread and roses--a clear sign of economic and social flowering.

And that, I think, is what's happening in terms of educational opportunities for the elderly in China. The so-called "five guarantees" remain front and center: food, clothing, housing, medical care and burial services. But in many cities, especially on China's east coast where economic development has assured necessities to a good number of elderly people, universities of the third age--U3As--are flourishing.

And attitudes are changing. My first challenge in China in 1979 was the University's English teachers. With the exception of those who had been trained by missionaries before liberation in 1949, their English was abysmal. They were all recycled Russian teachers who repeated the mantra: "I'm too old to learn a new language." They were all very close to my age--and I was 40. But as retirees today, many of those same people are actively and enthusiastically involved in both learning and teaching in the U3As. In Hangzhou alone, some 25,000 people have completed courses since 1986.

There have long been popular radio and TV courses, online courses are growing, and there are numerous tapes and videos, mostly on health issues, available in book stores. But the U3As are the most popular form of education. Their purpose is not to produce college graduates, but a happier, healthier, more productive older population. Or, in the words of Zhang Wenfan, President of the China Assn. for the Elderly, "We must create a golden dusk for our older people."

One person told me that attending U3A classes is "something like therapy" -- a place to go and be with other people, to develop new interests and skills, and perhaps to find romance--R3As.

Courses may be short-term or run for years. Classes take place in schools, colleges, community centers -- even in parks where tai chi and ballroom dancing are great favorites. There are all sorts of practical courses: health care, psychology, grand parenting, how to use your snazzy new appliances, etc; there are skills courses--gardening, cooking, computers, personal finance; there are study courses: languages, literature, history, geography, politics; and there are the very popular arts and hobby courses: calligraphy, painting, music, choral singing, dance, travel, photography, coin and stamp collecting.

U3A funding comes from every level of government, though more and more comes from what China calls "social forces," i.e., the private sector and individuals. In Hangzhou, for example, where the median monthly income of older people is about 1,500Y, tuition runs between 60 and 180Y per course.

It's my view that more and more cities will grow their own roses as local governments have more money and come to understand the economic, social and political benefits of education for their older folks. It's in the countryside where active efforts must be made to fuse the concept of life-long learning with that of the five guarantees.

How does that happen? Here's an example: It's 1994. A group of better educated retirees in the rural village of Yang Hu, in Ming Shui township in Shandong Province sit around a table in a local tea shop. They are former political and military cadres, teachers, city workers who live in the village. They're aware that the first college for older persons was set up in their province in 1983. They read the 1994 National Planning Committee's seven-year development guidelines for work with the elderly. They decide to set up a village school. National guidelines in hand, they go to the town, provincial and federal authorities for funds. They hire technicians and teachers from the city, and then together create all the materials for six literacy and math courses for their first 76 students.

Today they offer a full range of courses from elder law to fish farming, and serve hundreds of students. They're one of more than 20,000 U3As in China, serving some 2M older people. Now 2M people is only 1% of the target population, but the movement is growing apace. In 2004, the China Association of Universities of the Third Age will host the International U3A Congress in Shanghai. This will certainly stimulate more and new forms of elder education. I believe the U3A movement will progress from flourishing cities into economically weaker cities and even rural areas. In time, it will act on the dialectical relationship between education and poverty alleviation, and between the twin needs of bread and roses.

Thank you.

Gaoussou Traore, Social Action Manager -- Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity and Older Persons, Mali

Gaoussou Traore carried out many senior responsibilities at the Mali Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity and Older Persons, as National Director of Social Action and National Director of Social Development, 1997-2003. He is now Inspector of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity and Older Persons. Mr. Traore is an initiator of gerontological work in Mali since 1982 and has contributed to the design and adoption of the government's national policy for elderly persons. He represented Mali at the African Region Preliminary Meeting for the World Assembly on Ageing in Adis Ababa and Vienna in 1982 and in Madrid in 2002.

He has taken part in many experts' meetings on ageing in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Caribbean Islands. Mr. Traore is the author of many publications for the public on the issue of ageing and older persons in Mali and books in collaboration with other scientific authors. Born in Bamako (Mali), he earned his Master's Degree in Educational Psychology from Ecole Normale Supérieure of Bamako, in 1976, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Social Anthropology and Ethnology from Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales of Paris in 1995.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGNITY

"We cannot possess a liturgical object worthier of respect than a father or grandfather, a mother or grandmother weight down by old age." (Plato, The laws).

In the preamble of the **1982 International Action Plan on Ageing** is stated: [The States assembled at the World Assembly on Ageing] solemnly reaffirm their conviction that the fundamental inalienable rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights fully apply to and with any restriction to elderly, solemnly acknowledge that the quality of life is not more important than its duration, and that elderly should, therefore, as much as possible, be able to live in their family and their community a life where they can blossom, be in good health, feel secure and content, and be appreciated as full members of the society.

In the **Principles of Older Persons** it is recalled that "the development process should promote man's dignity and assure an equal sharing of resources, rights and responsibilities of the society among the various age groups." In the **Millennium Declaration** in 2000, the heads of states and government committed themselves to "defend, worldwide, the principles of human dignity, equality and equity" and reasserted their "responsibilities as regard all the citizens of the world, particularly the most vulnerable ones, and especially children, to whom the future belongs." In 2002, the **Second World Assembly on Ageing** reaffirmed the United Nations Principles for elderly concerning human rights mainly in the fields of independence, participation, health care, personal blossoming and dignity. Thus, reviewing these two commitments of the international community to improve human conditions, one constant appears: respect of life lived and respect of life to live. This is, in our opinion, the first token of dignity.

Regarding **Human Rights**, the **Political Declaration** of the Second World Assembly on Ageing commits the signatories to "promote democracy and reinforce the rule of law, as well as the respect of all the human rights and fundamental liberties internationally recognized, including the right to development" while the 2002 International Plan of Action on Ageing contains major themes in relation to the goals and objectives of the commitment.

The **Plan of Action** admits that "welfare of the elderly depends, to a large extent, on progress made in three areas: promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development; promotion of health and welfare; and the establishment of a promising and favorable environment. These areas are determined in such a way as to guide the design and implementation of policies in order to adapt the society to an ageing world, the success of which is measured in terms of social development, improvement of the quality of the life of elderly and the sustainability of various systems – formal and informal – which determine the welfare all along life."

In most of the African countries South of the Sahara, the end of the last century was marked by the emergence of political parties based on political multiparty system, freedom of speech and a more and more dynamic civilian society. In very few cases did changes of regimes result in a change of status and rights of the elderly. States have adhered to all the international principles and declarations relating to the rights of elderly, but very few achievements have followed.

The reasons for this restraint, despite the will of the States to open new rights for elderly, are many, even though the official speech remains favorable to them. Faced with many priorities, problems of the elderly are often not fully understood. The elderly, characterized by a great poverty and mostly living in rural and suburban areas, do not have lobby groups powerful enough to draw attention to their case. Their needs are not well enough known to motivate decision making, and they are not involved in the poverty alleviation process. United Nations agencies, cooperation agencies and NGOs have attached less interest to national programs in favor of elderly, as opposed to children and women;

However, the **First World Assembly** in 1982, the **World Summit on Social Development** in 1995 and the **Millennium Declaration** in 2000, have impacted the social policy of the country, important progress has been made in Mali. Since 1992, there exists a Ministry in charge of Solidarity and Elderly, and the Government adopted a policy in favor of elderly in 1995. This department acknowledges their place and role in building the nation and invites them to participate more in the life of the city.

This accounts for the promotion of the organization of elderly everywhere in the country, which led to the creation of the National Council of Elderly in Mali, with consultative status with the Government, and member of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council. This Council is representative of elderly and gives its point of view to public powers at all levels on the important political decisions.

All the political parties possess a Council and a League of the Wise, that is a group of elderly who are in charge of "helping them act better because of their experience." Since 1995, the Government instituted, on the occasion of October 1st, the systematic courtesy visit of Ministers and High Commissioners accompanied by locally elected bodies to the eldest persons of each District. The elderly presently feel a second life.

In 2002, the President of the Republic visited the most senior members of Bamako. These visits give rise to great solidarity between generations and bear important pedagogical impact. They give a positive image and more value to elderly.

Statutory provisions have been made by the government to facilitate the access of elderly to health care, in the observance of African traditions. These measures, in addition to legal ones relating to obligations of young generations towards the elder, contribute to the respect and dignity of elderly in Mali. However, it must be noticed that in a context of general poverty which deeply affect the elderly, results remain lower than hoped for in the strategic plan to fight against poverty adopted by the government.

Ageing in Black Africa, in the context of rapid changes, leads to painful socio-cultural tensions and breaks within the African society. These tensions and breaks are particularly crystallized among the African elite torn between the concern of an authentic Africanity, respect of elderly, the worship of ancestors, and the necessity to adapt to new values based on personal value, competition, the search for profit, and which serves as base for their children's education.

In African traditions, the old tree symbolizes the prestigious positions of elderly in the clan, in the village and in the whole social and mythical universe. The old great tree is the symbol of stability, protection for individuals, for the village and for the whole community. For the traditional society, the tree is the best symbol of solidarity and personalization: every tree is different, but every tree fulfills particular functions; in addition to fruits, the leaves, roots and barks have preventive and curative virtues. The tree is immobile, but is constantly changing, and with age, it becomes unique among the others. Therefore, in the traditional African philosophy, "Ageing means growing, being respectful," and there is some kind of pride to be called "Old man."

"Finally, to crown their old age, the elderly who lived a dignified experience, tastes, the highest pleasure of their prestige" (Cicéron, De Senectute)

Alexandre Sidorenko, Senior Social Affairs Officer and Focal Point on Ageing, UN
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Alexandre Sidorenko's major responsibilities have included the coordination of the United Nations activities in the area of ageing, including promotion and monitoring of international policy and programmes on ageing. In 2000-2002, he coordinated the substantive preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid, Spain, and acted as the coordinator of the International Year of Older Persons in 1999. Dr. Sidorenko has served as the United Nations Focal Point on Ageing and Chief of the United Nations Programme on Ageing from 1993-2002. He currently serves as Senior Social Affairs Officer and the UN Focal Point on Ageing.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, his early education was in the Ukraine. He completed graduate studies in medicine, earning a PhD in cellular immunology, and served as a Lecturer at the Kiev Medical University (1975-1978). He then spent ten years in experimental gerontology at the Kiev Institute of Gerontology (1978-1988). Dr Sidorenko joined the United Nations Secretariat in 1988, first in Vienna, Austria, and, since 1993, in New York.

Mainstreaming ageing

Definition of mainstreaming

These days the words "mainstream" and "mainstreaming" are among the most often used ones in the development discourse. One can, therefore, assume that there is universal understanding what these words mean, and even more important – what action they presuppose.

It would be useful, I thought, to quote a universally agreed definition of the central word of our to-day's theme. I started with more specific dictionaries of sociology. I found nothing – nothing at all – in both the Penguin Dictionary of Sociology and the Collins Dictionary of Sociology. I then broadened my search by including more general dictionaries and encyclopedias. Here are the results of my efforts. First, the *verb* "mainstream" does not exist in English language – neither English, nor American English. There are, however, a noun and an adjective.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary and the Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language both have three very close meanings of "mainstream". It is, the Dictionaries say, *a river having tributaries, or the principal current of the river*. This is nice, and opens many doors for possible extrapolations; some of them are rather paradoxical. For instance, if ageing is so to say a developmental tributary, then, by definition, it will reach the mainstream in any case, so why bother? And, if you force all the tributaries to join the mainstream at once, this may cause an overflow and flooding.

There is another interpretation, which sounds like this: The principal or dominant course, tendency, or trend (e.g., the mainstream of our nation history). This one does sound like a very close formulation, a very helpful one indeed. It does not, however, go as far as to hint at what it implies to bring a particular issue into mainstream. Too bad. At the same time, it seems like we are present at and even participate in the creation of a new meaning of the old word. And in fact it is upon us what this meaning will be – both in terms of definitions, and, more importantly, in terms of action.

Sights of action. Levels of mainstreaming.

If we accept the Oxford/Webster's definition of the word "mainstream", then, by extension, *mainstreaming* would mean bringing an issue – ageing, for instance – to the principal or dominant course of development.

Where is the process of mainstreaming to be undertaken and at what level? Apparently, it has to be done everywhere, in all parts of the world, as ageing has never been placed within the mainstream of development. Even in the most economically advanced countries ageing has always been treated as a welfare issue, and often as an obstacle to economic growth and development. Developing countries, and many nations in transition, simply can not afford such an approach: it is imperative that they address the ageing of their societies as both a challenge and opportunity.

Now, about the level of mainstreaming.

According to the Madrid Plan, there are two principal levels of its implementation and, therefore, mainstreaming action. These levels are national and international.

At the *national* level, as pointed out in The Madrid Plan, a necessary first step in the successful implementation of the Plan is to mainstream ageing and the concerns of older persons into national development frameworks and poverty eradication strategies. This is a pretty concrete recommendation. In many developing countries, the most prominent instrument for poverty eradication is the PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper). In formulating, implementing and assessing their national poverty reduction strategies governments should be able to simultaneously review implementation of the poverty, employment and human rights objectives and recommendations of the Madrid Plan. In a few weeks our office will be conducting in Tanzania a regional workshop on ageing and poverty. The principal task of this workshop is to explore how to incorporate an ageing-poverty focus in national poverty policies and strategies, such as PRSPs, and into the MDG action programme.

At the *international* level, mainstreaming ageing into global agendas is essential, -- notes the Madrid Plan. A concerted effort is required to move towards a wide and equitable approach to policy integration. The task is to link ageing to other frameworks for social and economic development and human rights. These internationally agreed frameworks are numerous, and many of them, including the most prominent one, the Millennium Development Goals, do not contain any reference to ageing issues.

The assessment of the degree to which ageing is mainstreamed into national and international developmental actions, such as achieving MDGs, does require specific efforts. However, and this is of principal importance, this can be done within the existing procedure of achieving and monitoring MDGs. Technically speaking, it can be done by adding an ageing dimension to the indicators for MDGs assessment. Of 48 MDGs indicators, at least 15 could be adjusted to reflect the extent of ageing integration, or mainstreaming, into national development efforts. Take for instance goal 2: achieve universal primary education. Indicator 8 related to this goal asks about literacy rate – but, as usually, the population group is 15 to 24 years old. What about literacy rate among older persons? Why not include them into consideration and information on them into the process of monitoring the MDGs. It would of course be an oversimplification to say that mainstreaming of ageing is just a technical issue: it is obviously an issue of policy and politics. And as such it requires a concerted advocacy campaign at different political levels: local, national, regional, global. Including of course the United Nations legislative and functional bodies. How is this supposed to be achieved? Let's turn again to the Madrid Plan, specifically to the chapter which addresses the implementation issues. The Plan states:

...commitment by United Nations funds and programmes to ensure integration of the question of ageing in their programmes and projects, including at country level, is important. Support by the international community and international development agencies for organizations that specifically promote training and capacity-building on ageing in developing countries is extremely important.

Our department was designated in the Madrid Plan as the UN focal point responsible for the implementation of the Plan. Within the UN system, we are coordinating the activities of its entities in the field of ageing. At the most recent inter-agency meeting in February 2003 we discussed approaches to the system wide implementation of the Madrid Plan, including efforts to assist developing countries in building their national capacity for action on ageing. In December 2003, we will be holding a special inter-regional meeting on this subject.

In conclusion, let me offer you one more definition of the word mainstream – again from the Webster dictionary – remember, I told you there were three definitions and I quoted only two. Here is the third one, slightly shortened: *Mainstream is a characteristic of jazz, specifically, swing music.* Well, we definitely do not want our mainstreaming efforts on ageing to be jazzy. However, the word "swing" sounds rather appealing – particularly here, in the New York city, which never sleeps and always on the move.

String Section, New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra, Director: Lorraine Marks

The New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra began in 1993 as an idea on the back of a napkin and developed over a pot of coffee. It has become world renowned and grown into one of New Jersey's shining stars. With over 90 volunteer musicians, age 5 to 91, the NJIO has successfully bridged the generation gap through a common love of performing music. Director Lorraine Marks will conduct the string section of the Orchestra at the International Day Celebration.

By bringing the youth and the elderly together, the Orchestra has promoted mutual growth and fostered understanding between generations. The genuine camaraderie prevalent at all of its rehearsals and concerts emanates from the perfect union of the ability to teach and the eagerness to learn, when the young and the young at heart share music stands and experiences throughout the season.

“Ageless” Art Exhibit Opened by Mrs. Nane Annan, Exhibit developer and photographer: Annie Levy, Manhattan Plaza, New York

The **AGELESS Exhibit** features the art of older persons. Accompanying each work of art is a photo portrait of the artist linking the person to the work and creating a “gallery of faces” of older persons

“Life is what we make it. Always has been, always will be.” Grandma Moses

Painter Grandma Moses first came to public attention in 1940, at the age of 80, having taken up painting only a few years prior to that. Her need to be productive and her love of beauty fueled her desire to create. The AGELESS exhibit honors that spirit of creativity and love of beauty among those who continue to find it and express it in later life.

With the assistance of exhibit developer and photographer, **Annie Levy**, AGELESS was first produced by the Manhattan Plaza, a diverse community of 3,500 residents, with over 700 being senior citizens. The artistic contributions, originally only from the community, have now expanded to include the works of retired United Nations employees from all over the world, fully reflecting the international aspect of creativity in later years.

UN Press Release, Note No. 5815, October 2003

AGELESS' EXHIBIT, SHOWCASING TALENTS, CREATIVITY OF OLDER PERSONS, TO OPEN AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS ON 2 OCTOBER

A demonstration of the valuable talents and creativity of “Older Persons” will be launched in the afternoon of Thursday, 2 October, with an exhibit of paintings accompanied by photographs of the contributing artists. The artists represent the global community and give proof that art is an international means of communication, a language that requires no translation. The exhibit, “AGELESS”, will be on display through the end of the month in the Visitors' Lobby of the United Nations Headquarters.

This exhibit is sponsored by the Manhattan Plaza Foundation of New York City, home to a diverse community of artists -- of all ages -- who benefit from the programmes it offers that enable them to live independently, productively and creatively. Added to the work of those artists is that of United Nations retirees from all over the world, fully reflecting the international aspect of creativity in later years.

The exhibit is part of the celebration of the International Day of Older Persons and is organized in cooperation with the NGO Committee on Ageing, the United Nations Department of Public Information, and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Remarks by Mrs. Nane Annan at the opening of the “Ageless” exhibit

Dear friends,

I am very happy to be here with you today to help launch this wonderful exhibition. It is always a special pleasure with which I come to your events because I firmly believe that we have to adopt the spirit of the Gray Panthers: “The best age is the age you are”. How can we judge people by age only when there are so many other more interesting qualities to note, like being caring, compassionate, fun, knowledgeable, full of interesting experiences or being an artist!

When people chide me for having given up my painting to support my husband, I listen but I also know that art will always be there as a true and trusted friend, providing me with a safe haven. In these tragic times I can tell you that I took up my brush again to finish a seven-year old portrait, which has been looking haplessly at me during all that time. I did it again last Sunday and it was a wonderful calm that befell me.

The theme of the exhibition, “Ageless”, is very appropriate because art is ageless. It is a form of expression that crosses generations and eras, and it bridges cultures.

It will speak to you about the celebration of the human spirit, about creativity and courage. It is those qualities that the artists are sharing with us today, and that will inspire us, as we all grow older. I would like to acknowledge the artists exhibited here today from around the world. Some of you are UN retirees but you are showing us that there is no retirement age for art. It can be done throughout one’s life. And Doris Krueger, who is here with us drawing, but who also sculpts and writes poetry. She is a living proof that the older you get, the more you can contribute to society. And that is the thing; growing old is not just a passive passing of time, but should be something active, and I think it is “curiosity” that makes the difference, that provides that spice.

And so I do want to thank all the participants for this exhibition, both as artists and, together with the organizers, as agents for change. Thank you to the NGO Committee on Ageing, and special thanks to the Manhattan Plaza Foundation of New York City for making this exhibition possible and for all that you are doing to support and encourage artists. I am very happy to see such a successful example of cooperation between the UN and civil society.

Congratulations to all of you and thank you very much.

Closing Remarks

Florence Denmark,

Chairperson, NGO Committee on Ageing, UN NY

This has been a wonderful day beginning with an outstanding program in the morning and finishing the day with an AGELESS art exhibit. Thank you Judy Lear, Pete Walker and your committee for organizing this excellent International Day of Older Persons. Additional thanks goes to Annie Levy for preparing this exceptional display of artwork by older artists. The artists include the diverse residents of Manhattan Plaza and retired United Nations employees from all over the world.

We are indeed fortunate to have Mrs. Nane Annan, an artist in her own right, open the exhibit. Before she cuts the ribbon, marking the official opening, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome her as an honorary member of the UN/NGO Committee on Ageing.

**Mainstreaming Ageing:
Forging Links Between the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and
the Millennium Development Goals**

PLENARY, 10:00 A.M. TO 11:30 A.M.

Opening Remarks from **Shashi Tharoor**, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information

Message from **Secretary-General Kofi Annan**, Read by Shashi Tharoor

Message from **H. E. Julian R. Hunte**, President of the Fifty-Eighth session of the General Assembly

Message from **Florence Denmark**, Chairperson, NGO Committee on Ageing, UN NY

FORGING LINKS

Moderator: **Shashi Tharoor**

The Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing: **Alejandra Marta Ayuso**, Professional in international relations and recently First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations

The Millennium Development Goals: **Jan Vandemoortele**, Leader of the Poverty Group at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York.

Brief question and answer period

PANEL DISCUSSION, 11:30 A.M. TO 12:35 P.M.

RELATING THE MADRID PLAN OF ACTION TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Moderator: **Johan Scholvinck**, Director, Division of Social Policy and Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Poverty Alleviation: **Alfredo Sfeir-Younis**, Senior Advisor, Office of the Managing Director, World Bank

Health and Well-being: **Sonia F. Elliott**, Liaison Officer, UNAIDS; in 2002 served as a Guyanan representative to the UN and facilitator for preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing

Education for All Ages: **Prof. Naomi Woronov**, Author, Director of Community Colleges in China Project

Human Rights and Dignity: **Gaoussou Traore**, Social Action Manager, Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity and Older Persons, Mali

Mainstreaming Ageing: **Alexandre Sidorenko**, Senior Social Affairs Officer and Focal Point on Ageing, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Brief Question and answer period

CULTURAL EVENTS

12:35 P.M. TO 12:50 P.M. **String Section, New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra**

Director: **Lorraine Marks**

4:00 P.M. **“Ageless”** Art Exhibit Opening, United Nations Visitors Lobby: **Mrs. Nane Annan** will open the exhibit

Exhibit developer and photographer: **Annie Levy**, Manhattan Plaza, New York

NGO Committee on Ageing, New York

Chair: Florence Denmark, International Council of Psychologists,
American Psychological Association
Vice-Chair: Nora O'Brien, International Longevity Center
Secretary: Patricia Day, League of Women Voters
Treasurer: Peter Walker, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues

Immediate

Past Chair: Helen Hamlin, International Federation on Ageing

Members at Large: Jessica Frank, AARP
Judy Lear, Gray Panthers
Mary Mayer, International Federation on Ageing
Dianne Davis, International Council for Caring Communities
Vernie Ellis, Iota Phi Lambda Sorority

NGO Committee on Ageing, UN, NY
P.O Box 307
Mail Boxes, Etc.
847a Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017
E-mail: nyaging@aol.com

International Day of Older Persons Committee, 2003

Co-chair: Judy Lear, Gray Panthers
Co-chair: Peter Walker, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Members:

Ruth Begun, National Women's Conference Center
Pat Brownell, International Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse
Mary Covington, International Federation for Home Economics
Denise Cummings, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority International
Florence Denmark, International Council of Psychologists,
American Psychological Association
Jessica Frank, AARP
Natalie Gordon, International Federation on Ageing
Helen E. Hamlin, International Federation on Ageing
Virginia Hazzard, AARP
H. E. Mrs. Irma E. Loemban Tobin-Klein, Advisor, Office of the President of the
Fifty-Eighth Session of the General Assembly
Valerie Levy, International Federation on Ageing
Nancy Lewis, AARP
Mary Mayer, International Federation on Ageing
Rajul Mehta, OutrEACH, India
Margot Nadien, International Council of Psychologists
Nora O'Brien, International Longevity Center
Ivy Pierre, Volunteer
Nancy Ross, United Health Network
Blanche Saia, Gray Panthers
K. Gnana Sekaran, International Longevity Center
Lani Sherman, Volunteer, Pace University
Douglas Stockwell, United Health Network
Caroline Themm, Soroptimists International
Mary Toumayan, Armenian International Women's Association
Bob Wesner, International Council of Psychologists

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS/NGO COA

All India Women's Conference
American Association of Family & Consumer Services
AARP International Affairs
All India Women's Conference
ALTRUSA International, Inc
American Assoc. of Family & Consumer Services
Armenian International Women's Assoc., Inc.
American Psychological Association
Baha'i International Community
Catholic Charities/Diocese of Brooklyn
Catholic International Education Office
Church Women United
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
Council of Senior Centers & Services
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Economists Allied for Arms Reduction
FIAPA
FAFICS/AFICS (NY)
Global Action on Aging
Global Education Association
Gray Panthers
IARF
Inst. for Medical Humanities U. of Texas
International Assoc. of Schools of Social Work/Case Western Reserve U.
International Association of Gerontology
International Council for Caring Communities
International Council of Jewish Women
International Council of Psychologists
International Council on Social Welfare
International Federation on Ageing
International Federation for Home Economics
International Federation of Social Workers
International Immigrants Foundation
International League for Human Rights
International Longevity Center
International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse
Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc.
League of Women Voters
Links International
Loretto Community
National Silver Haired Congress
National Women's Conference
New Humanity/Folkolare
NY Citizen's Committee on Aging
Northwestern U. School of Medicine
NOVA/Southeastern University
Penn. State U.
Ravazzin Center/Fordham Grad. School of Social Welfare
Rotary International
School of Social Work/Columbia University
Society for International Development
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
South County Senior Services, Inc
Sorooptimist International
Sundays at JASA
USA/UNA
U.S. Conference of Religions for Peace
United Health Network, Inc
United States Mission to the UN
World Council of Conservative Synagogues
WFUNA
World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations
World Union for Progressive Judaism
World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations
Zonta International

Recognition of organizations listed to attend IDOP 2003

Interest in the International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) has grown over the past years and broadened in terms of the diversity of the audience. This year's IDOP was on its way to having the largest attendance in the 13-year history of celebrating the International Day at UN Headquarters. Unfortunately, due to a last minute increase in security during the first two weeks of the 58th General Assembly Session, 289-registered guests were dropped from the final roster of attendees.

Representatives of offices and organizations attending fell in two groups. First were Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Representatives registered with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI, <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/index.html>), some of whom regularly attend DPI Briefings. This is a group of roughly 200 NGO Representatives, whose NGO affiliations were not recorded for IDOP 2003.

Also, at the time of the registration deadline for additional attendees, September 17, 2003, 489 individuals had applied to attend the IDOP Programme, including representatives of several UN Missions. Of the 200 additional representatives who finally attended, the majority came from New York City and the surrounding boroughs. The next largest group came from the northeast, including Washington, DC, greater New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Maine. Other states represented were Michigan, California, and South Carolina. Additionally, NGO Representatives from Canada, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Italy, Bulgaria, Australia, Peru and Nepal had registered.

Organizations and Missions

A. Phillip Randolph Senior Center
ABSW Senior Citizens Center
African American Islamic Institute
Aging in America Community Services
Alzheimer's Association, NYC Chapter
American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences
American Bar Association
Aquinas Housing Corp.
Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA)
Armenian General Benevolent Union
BFFY Catholic Charities
Beth Abraham Adult Day Health Center
Brooklyn Borough President's Office
Bronx Lebanon Hospital
C.S.C.S.
Carnegie East House
Catholic Charities Diocese of Brooklyn & Queens
Chesapeake Publishing Corp. – Prime Times
Church of St. Elizabeth
Columbia University
Community Food Resource Center
Congress of Senior Citizens
Corporation for National and Community Service
Cumberland Diagnostic and Treatment Center
DC 37 Retirees Association

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Economists Allied for Arms Reduction
Ernst & Young
Fordham University
General Chauncey Hooper Towers
HICA
Harlem Consumer Education Council, Inc.
Harris, Rothenberg International
Henry Street Settlement
I.A.R.F.
International Association of Homes & Services for the Ageing (IAHS)
Iota Phi Lambda Sorority Inc.
Isabella Geriatric Center
Hudson Guild Senior Service Action Committee
IAVE
International Association of Women in Radio & TV
International League for Human Rights
Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly
James Lenox House Association, Inc.
JASA
Jewish Home Hospital Day Care Program
John Paul II Senior Center
Lenox Hill Service Center
Literacy Volunteers
Long Island University

Manhattan Borough President's Office
 Maria Lawton Senior Center
 Mental Health Association of Nassau
 Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty
 MIFED-CONGO
 Monmouth University
 Morningside House Nursing Home
 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
 Murray Hill SRO
 Nassau University Medical Center
 National Caucus and Center on Black Aged
 Neo Education Social Awareness & Management
 Society
 New York City Housing Authority
 NY Citizens Committee on Aging
 NY State Board of Regents
 NYC Congress of Ageing
 NYC Community Board #9, Manhattan
 NYC Department for the Aging
 NYC Department of Health – EPIC Program
 NYU Medical Center
 Office of Congressman J. Nadler
 Office of Institutional Advancement
 Older Women's League
 Pace University
 PNC Bank
 Presbyterian Homes, Inc.
 Price Memorial AME Zion Church
 Retired School Supervisors & Administrators of
 NYC
 Roots and Branches
 Rural Initiatives in Sustainability & Empowerment
 (RISE)
 SBPC/HHOPD
 School Sisters of Notre Dame
 Sea View Hospital Rehabilitation Center and
 Home
 Selfhelp Community Services Inc.
 Senior Advisory Group – Municipal Building
 Seniors in Touch

Seton Federation – Daughters of Charity
 Sisters of St. Dominic
 Spanish Speaking Elderly Council – RAICES
 Spiritual Eldering Institute
 Spottsword AME Zion Church
 Sociedad de Gerontologi y Geriatria del Peru –
 COMLAT (IAG)
 St. Catherine Convent
 Stanley Isaacs Senior Center
 Teachers College
 Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center
 The Links, Inc. – Eastern Area
 The Links, Inc. – Long Island
 Thessalonian Baptist Church, Men's Ministry
 Thessalonian Baptist Church, Women's Abundant
 Life Ministry
 TIAA-CREF
 United Health Network, Inc.
 Universal Esperanto Association
 University of Michigan
 University of New England
 US Administration on Aging
 US Social Security Administration
 Veterans Administration
 Women and Environment Development
 Association
 Women's Association for Better Aging Society
 (WABAS)
 Women's International for Peace
 Woodhull Medical & Mental Health Center
 World Vision of Catholic Women
 Youthful Aging

The following **Permanent Missions to the United
 Nation** responded directly to the invitation
 although many more attended:
 Canada
 Gambia
 Guatemala
 Italy
 Republic of Moldova

NGO COMMITTEE ON AGEING

United Nations, New York

PO Box 307
847A Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017
Tel: 212-346-1551
Fax: 212-346-1618

The NGO Committee on Ageing works to raise awareness of the critical issues facing the global ageing population by encouraging United Nations bodies and agencies to include ageing in their planning and influencing member states to include ageing needs in social and economic policy considerations.