



**The Statement of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of
the Republic of Armenia
Mr. Artem Asatryan**

UNECE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON AGEING

Ensuring Ageing with Dignity

Lisbon

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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It's a great honor for me to address this session of the Conference.

First of all let me extend my gratitude to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of Portugal for excellent organization of the Conference and warm welcome.

The Ministerial Conferences held within the context of review and appraisal of implementation of RIS/MIPAA have a unique role for promotion and reinforcement of affirmed ideology and principles and provides an important platform to review the achievements, identify and address the gaps towards ensuring a sustainable society for all ages.

The current demographic trends present challenges for policymaking and a more comprehensive and multilayer approach is required to better address emerging needs in ageing society, to promote and ensure ageing with dignity.

The Government of Armenia is committed to the consistent reforms in compliance with international standards to ensure the protection of older person's rights, participation in society and combat discrimination, to promote the realization of United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level.

The Armenian Development Strategy for 2014-2025 defines the growth of employment, elimination of poverty, enhancement of social protection system as priorities for perspective development of the country.

In line with the current trends and challenges of ageing society, this year the Government of Armenia has adopted new Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Social Protection of Older Persons for 2017-2021. The main principles and targets of the Action Plan are the improvement of care and social services system, promoting healthy and active life, ensuring economic safety and social inclusion, participation in community life and

decision making processes.

The other important component is the relevant support to the families which will enable the older persons to stay in a family environment.

The Interagency Committee, including non-governmental and international organizations, for ensuring the implementation of the Action Plan on Ageing has been established by the Decree of the Prime Minister of Armenia.

New standards of care in the institutions and of home-services for older persons are developed in compliance with best international practices.

Last year in cooperation with international organizations we have carried out survey in the country to assess and identify the needs of older persons related to required services. The main goal of the survey was to clarify the framework and models of services necessary to be provided to older persons throughout the country in order to ensure more accessible and targeted community-based services, to promote their autonomy and participation in society. The results of survey have been used for further policy development.

The Government of Armenia has initiated large-scale reforms to introduce the system of integrated social services system in the country. Eighteen integrated centers are already functioning in capital and certain regions of the country. The works are in the process to establish more than fifty such centers throughout the country. The core achievement in this context is the development of social workers institute which ensures targeted work with older persons and their families to promote provision of community services based on real individual needs.

High importance is given to training of social workers and care givers on a continuous basis.

Realizing the importance of joining efforts of state and non-state actors, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia in 2016 has come forward with an initiative for unification of partners around the National Agreement on Social

Cooperation. It is a new model of cooperation which will give an opportunity to put the traditional relationships of social partnership on the new institutional dimension and expand the scope of partners including state governing bodies, communities, non-governmental organizations, all service providers in order to have better coordination of works and to achieve more targeted results in addressing social needs and risks. The core objectives of this mechanism include, inter alia, ensuring participatory approach in the development, implementation and monitoring of public policy in social protection field. Up to date, 47 organisations have joined the Agreement which membership is open to all those concerned.

In 2015 the network on ageing issues was established which includes state bodies, civil society and international organizations. Regular meetings are conducted within this framework to discuss the legislative changes, reform packages, existing issues and gaps, to introduce suggestions and recommendations for further developments in the sphere, to implement joint projects targeted to the needs of older persons.

The priorities in our agenda are to take necessary measures to promote longer working life, provide efficient and accessible health services, create basis for active ageing. These are issues which have been broadly discussed during this Conference and the views, ideas, good practices shared by different countries and organizations are very useful from the further reforms perspective.

To foster the efficient implementation of RIS/MIPAA targets there is a need for continuous coordinated work in all levels by consolidating the efforts and resources of state, civil society, international community and older persons.

The priorities and directions defined by the Ministerial Declaration are essential guidance for all of us to continue our work in line with current challenges and to ensure ageing with dignity.

Thank you for your attention.