

Centre for Human Rights oral intervention at the Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Older Persons

Madam President, the Centre for Human Rights draws the attention of the Human Rights Council to the need for encouraging African states to ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa to ensure its entry into force.

The Older Persons Protocol is an important regional complement to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Older Persons Protocol provides contextual guidance for African states by addressing vulnerabilities created by intersecting identities, such as protection from harmful practices like accusations of witchcraft. It also gives a supervisory role to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Although 49 African states have ratified the CRPD, only 2 African states have till date ratified the Older Persons Protocol. The Older Persons Protocol is still – four and a half years since its adoption in 2016 – not in force. We note that 17 African states have signed the Older Persons Protocol.

Madam President, the Centre for Human Rights urges the Human Rights Council to encourage these 17 African states, as well as other African states, to strengthen their obligations to protect the rights of older persons by ratifying the Older Persons Protocol as a regional continent-specific complement to the CRPD. Once they have ratified the Older Persons Protocol, African states should ensure that the instrument of ratification is deposited without delay.

Thank you