

HUMAN RIGHTS AND AGED PERSONS

WHAT ARE THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF AGED PERSONS?

Human rights are universal, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights belonging to all human beings, including older people. The Human Rights of the Aged can be derived from:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Articles 2, 22, & 25
- International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, Articles 2, 7, 9, 11, & 12
- International Covenant of Civil and Political and Rights, Articles 2, 7, 10, & 17
- Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Articles 11, 12, & 14
- And other widely adhered to international human rights treaties and declarations.

However, despite the rising population and the fundamental rights at stake, no binding legal international document exists on old age. Furthermore, key U.N. documents, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the Millennium Development Goals, generally omit express references to the aged.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS AT ISSUE

The Human Rights of the Aged include the following rights to:

- An adequate standard of living, including adequate food, shelter, and clothing.
- Adequate social security, assistance, and protection.
- Freedom from discrimination based on age or any other status, in all aspects of life including employment and access to housing, health care, and social services.
- The highest possible standard of health.
- Be treated with dignity.
- Full and active participation in all aspects of political, economic, social, and cultural life of society.
- Full and effective participation in decision-making concerning their well-being.

GOVERNMENTS' COMMITMENTS TO ENSURING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF AGED PERSONS

What commitments have governments made to ensure the realization of the Human Rights of Aged Persons?

- Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing
- UN General Assembly Proclamation on Ageing, paragraph 2
- Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing
- Cairo Programme of Action, paragraphs 6.17, 6.19, & 6.20
- Copenhagen Declaration, paragraph 26 & Commitment 2
- Copenhagen Programme of Action, paragraphs 24, 25, & 40

- Beijing Platform for Action, paragraphs 101, 106, & 165
- Habitat Agenda, paragraphs 17 & 40

For More Information:

1. People's Movement for Human Rights Education – www.pdhre.org
2. HelpAge International – www.helpage.org
3. Global Action on Aging – www.globalaging.org

Source: People's Decade of Human Rights Education PDHRE International