

33rd session of the Human Rights Council - Item 3
Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on the enjoyment
of all human rights by older persons

**Statement by Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit
– COC Nederland. Joined by International Lesbian and Gay Association**

Delivered by Diana Carolina Prado Mosquera

Mr. President,

I am making this statement on behalf of COC Netherlands and ILGA. We welcome and support the work of the Independent Expert on the rights of older persons. Indeed, the rights of older persons are an understudied and often poorly understood subject area. We know that older persons in many countries lack of adequate living standards, have only limited access to healthcare, struggle with income security, and are faced with multiple forms of discrimination.

Mr. President,

Last year, we noticed that the report did not examine the distinctive challenges faced by LGBTI seniors. Challenges of specific and differing kind for intersex, transgender and LGB persons, depending oftentimes on the local context and traditions.

With a special focus on best practices and gaps in the implementation of existing laws this year, LGBTI organizations from around the world cooperated by sending in requested information to the Independent Expert. To our concern, references to the specific problems that LGBTI elders are facing, are very minimally addressed in one sentence of the report. No proper mention is made of law implementation gaps in this regard. We therefore perceive the report as an underestimation of the problems faced by LGBTI older persons.

Research has indicated that LGBTI older persons are far more likely to live alone, face elevated rates of disability and poor health, and suffer from higher levels of mental distress than their heterosexual or cisgender counterparts. They live in fear of discrimination, violence and bullying, and remain fearful and resistant to accessing health services, often out of concern for being treated unprofessionally. Many are also scared to move into assisted living institutions or elder care, fearing that their identities, as well as their chosen partners, will not be recognized or simply ignored.

Mr. President,

Resolution 24/20 on the human rights of older persons clearly and rightfully recognizes that the Independent Expert has the mandate on the enjoyment of *all* human rights by older persons. This *includes* the rights of LGBTI people.

Thank you Mr. President