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# THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

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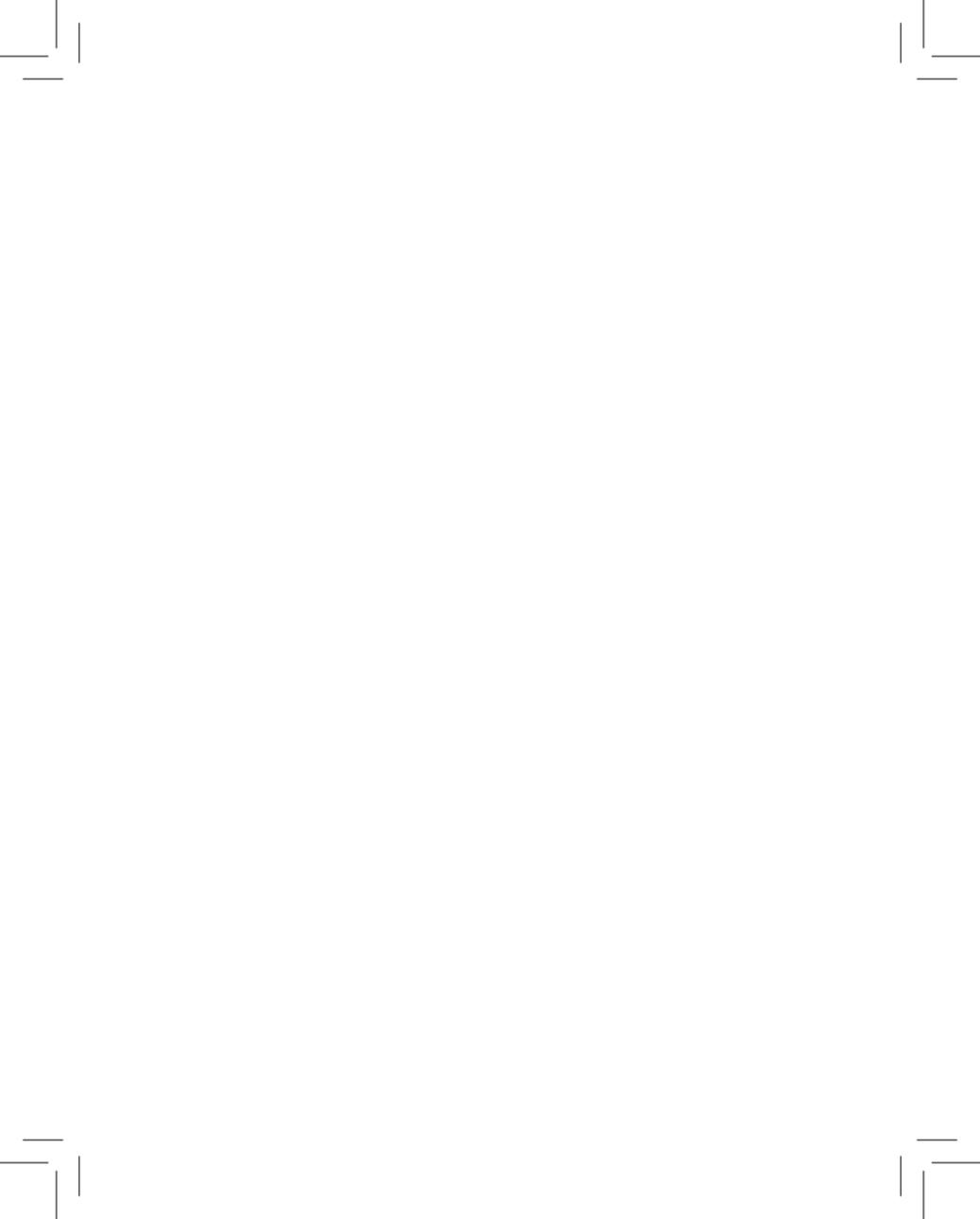


Pan American  
Health  
Organization



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REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Americas





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# **Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons**

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# INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, most people can anticipate living into their 60s and beyond. Today in the Region of the Americas, someone who is 60 can expect to live another 21 years; 81% of people born in the Americas will live to the age of 60, and 42% will live past 80 [1].

A normative framework focusing on the needs of older persons was developed because of the stigma of age and discrimination that most suffer at some point of their lives, the fact that they also tend to not have access to special health services, and their independence and autonomy are often not respected. The framework's purpose is to promote, protect, and ensure the recognition of the right to health and other related human rights [2].

In June 2011, experts, international organizations, and relevant stakeholders formed the Organization of American States (OAS) Working Group on the Human Rights of Older Persons. They began to negotiate and prepare a draft of a convention. The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) has served as a technical advisor to the OAS Working Group, contributing to the analysis of the situation of older persons in the Region and the drafting of the Convention. During the working group sessions, PAHO highlighted the need to create specific measures and develop regional and national initiatives to support Member States in achieving the right to health and other related human rights of older persons [3].

In June 2015, the General Assembly of the OAS adopted the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons. Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay were the first Member States to sign the Convention. Currently, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay have ratified the Convention. This is the first binding Convention on the rights of older persons that enters into force in the world.

International organizations like the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the OAS, and PAHO all call upon governments of the Region to adopt and implement the Convention in order to promote and protect the human rights and the wellbeing of older populations [3].

PAHO continues promoting the Convention by sharing information and good practices on active and healthy aging and developing strategies focused on improving health services in order to meet the needs of older persons. PAHO is also working with countries to deal with the new challenges that older populations face, especially so they are able to fully exercise their human rights.

[1] Pan American Health Organization. (2009). *Plan of Action on the Health of Older Persons, including Active and Healthy Aging CD49/8*.

[2] United Nations. *The right to the highest attainable standard of health*. New York: United Nations; 2000 (E/C.12/2000/4). Available from: [http://www.nesri.org/sites/default/files/Right\\_to\\_health\\_Comment\\_14.pdf](http://www.nesri.org/sites/default/files/Right_to_health_Comment_14.pdf).

[3] *Sesión de Diagnósticos sobre Derechos Humanos de las Personas Mayores (24 de octubre 2011) Comisión de Asuntos Jurídicos y Políticos Grupo de Trabajo sobre la Protección de los Derechos Humanos de Personas Mayores*

Older persons have the right to:

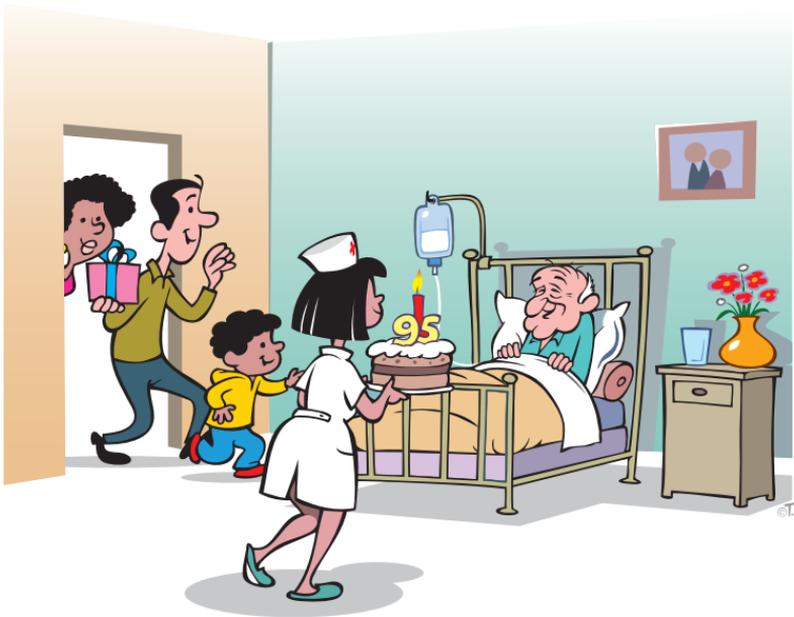
# Equality and non-discrimination for reasons of age

1



Older persons have the right to:

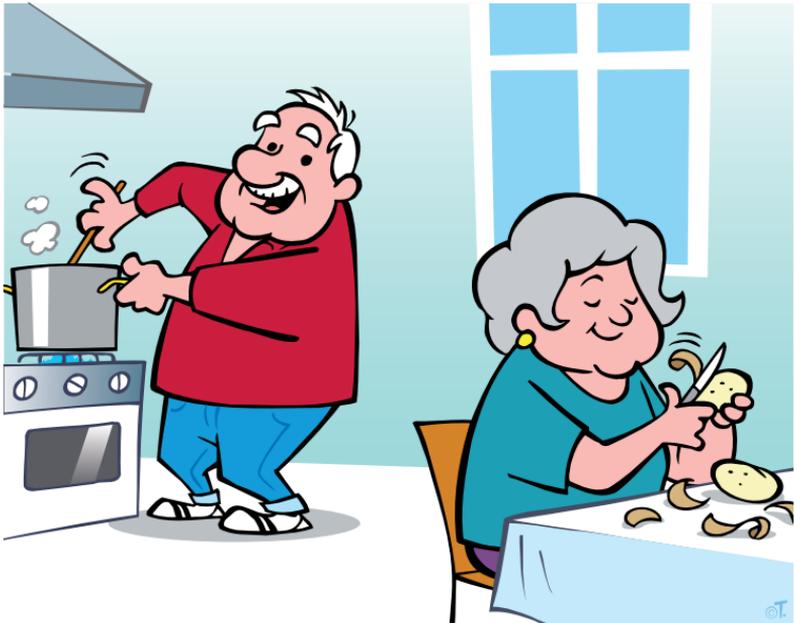
## 2 Life and dignity in old age



Older persons have the right to:

## Independence and autonomy

3



Older persons have the right to:

4

## Participation and community integration



Older persons have the right to:

## Safety and a life free of violence of any kind

5



Older persons have the right to:

**6 Not be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment**



Older persons have the right to:

**Give free and informed consent on health matters**

7



Older persons have the right to:

8

## Personal liberty



Older persons have the right to:

## Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

9



Older persons have the right to:

10

## Nationality and freedom of movement



Older persons have the right to:

## Privacy and intimacy

11



Older persons have the right to:

12

## Social Security



Older persons have the right to:

Work

13



Older persons have the right to:

14

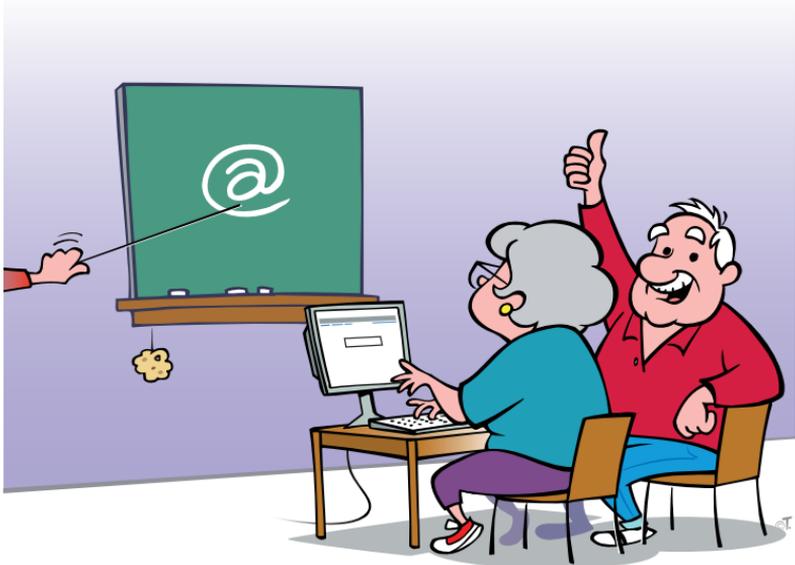
## Health



Older persons have the right to:

Education

15



Older persons have the right to:

16

## Culture



Older persons have the right to:

## Recreation, leisure, and sports

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Older persons have the right to:

18

## Housing



Older persons have the right to:

# Property

19



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Older persons have the right to:

20

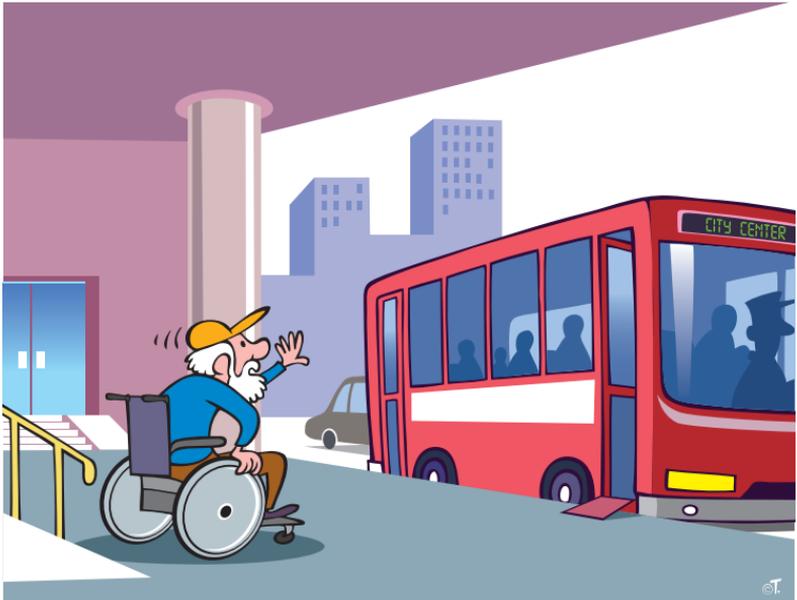
## A healthy environment



Older persons have the right to:

# Accessibility and personal mobility

21



Older persons have the right to:

22

## Political rights



Older persons have the right to:

**Equal recognition before  
the law**

23



Older persons have the right to:

## 24 Access to justice



Older persons have the right to:

## Freedom of association and assembly

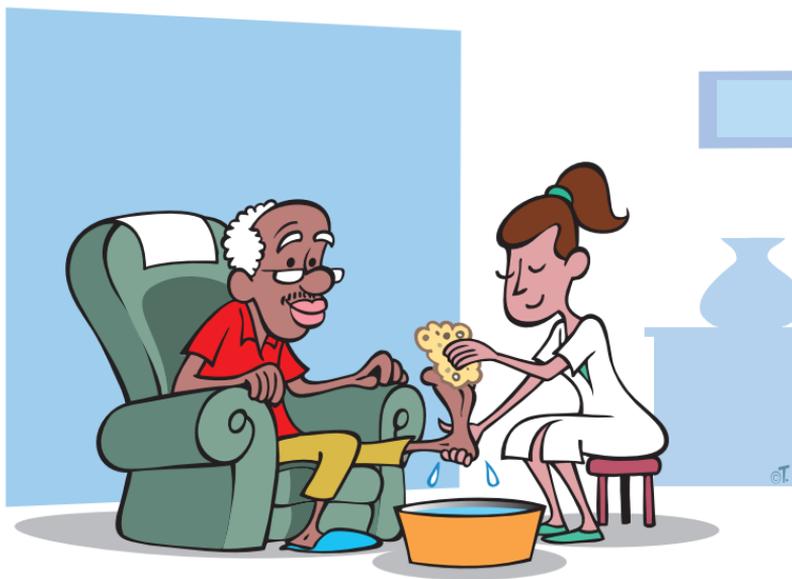
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The Convention ensures the rights of older persons:

26

## Receiving long-term care



The Convention ensures the rights of older persons:

## In situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies

27



# Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons



[www.paho.org](http://www.paho.org)



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