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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and  
Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

Bangkok and online, 29 June–1 July 2022

**Outcome document****Accelerating Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, to Build a Sustainable Society for All Ages in Asia and the Pacific**

1. *We, the representatives of members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific* assembled at the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, held in Bangkok and online from 29 June to 1 July 2022,
2. *Recalling* General Assembly resolution 57/167 of 18 December 2002 on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, in which the Assembly endorsed the Political Declaration and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002,<sup>1</sup>
3. *Recalling also* subsequent General Assembly resolutions on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, in particular resolution 76/138 of 16 December 2021, in which the Assembly noted that the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action would take place at the sixty-first session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2023,
4. *Recalling further* that, in the Madrid Plan of Action, the systematic review of its implementation by Member States was requested as being essential for its success in improving the quality of life of older persons, and that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2003/14 of 21 July 2003, invited Governments, the United Nations system and civil society, including organizations of older persons, to participate in a bottom-up approach to the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action,

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

5. *Bearing in mind* that the Commission for Social Development, in its resolution 42/1 of 13 February 2004, decided to undertake the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action every five years,<sup>2</sup> and that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2020/8 of 18 June 2020, endorsed the timeline for carrying out the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action at the global level in 2023, and invited Member States to identify actions they had taken since the third review and appraisal exercise, with the aim of presenting that information to the regional commissions during 2022, and recognizing that, with the fourth review and appraisal exercise, the Second World Assembly on Ageing approaches its 20-year anniversary,

6. *Noting* that the Economic and Social Council, also in its resolution 2020/8 of 18 June 2020, requested the regional commissions to continue to facilitate the review and appraisal exercise at the regional level, inter alia, by providing assistance to Member States, upon request and within existing resources, in the organization of their national review and appraisal exercises and by providing an analysis of the main findings, identifying key priority action areas and good practices and suggesting policy responses by 2022,

7. *Recalling* that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in its decision 74/26 of 16 May 2018, endorsed the report of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, in which member States expressed resolve to intensify efforts with a view to strengthening the full and effective participation by, and opportunities for, older persons in economic, social, cultural and political life in the Asia-Pacific region through a set of recommendations,<sup>3</sup>

8. *Recalling also* the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,<sup>4</sup> and stressing the need to ensure that issues of relevance to older persons are taken into account in its implementation in order to ensure that no one is left behind, including older persons,

9. *Recalling further* the World Health Assembly resolutions on ageing, specifically resolution 58.16 of 25 May 2005 on strengthening active and healthy ageing,<sup>5</sup> in which the Assembly stressed the important role of public health policies and programmes in the context of population ageing,

10. *Recalling* the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,<sup>6</sup> which highlighted the importance of policies to respond to issues related to quality of life, health care and social security of older persons, paying special attention to the needs of older women, where appropriate,

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<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 6 (E/2004/26)*, chap. I, sect. E.

<sup>3</sup> ESCAP/74/20, annex II, para. 18.

<sup>4</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

<sup>5</sup> See World Health Organization, document WHA58/2005/REC/1.

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

11. *Welcoming* the proclamation of the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) in General Assembly resolution 75/131 of 14 December 2020, and recognizing the synergies between the Madrid Plan of Action and the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing,
12. *Acknowledging* that population ageing is an irreversible global trend that will lead to profound economic and social changes, and recognizing the unprecedented pace of the demographic transition towards ageing and aged societies in the Asia-Pacific region, while also recognizing the essential contribution that older persons continue to make to the functioning of societies and towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,
13. *Recognizing* that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had a disproportionately heavy impact on older persons, in particular older women, and that responses to the COVID-19 pandemic need to respect their dignity, promote and protect their human rights and take into account all forms of violence, discrimination, stigmatization, exclusion, inequalities, as well as neglect, social isolation and loneliness,
14. *Welcoming* the progress achieved by the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action since 2002, and welcoming also the establishment of national coordinating bodies on population ageing and the designation of focal points on ageing in accordance with national procedures,
15. *Welcoming with appreciation* the role of civil society, including organizations of older persons, academia, research foundations, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, including caregivers, and the private sector, in supporting older persons and Governments in Asia and the Pacific on issues related to ageing, including in efforts to help build capacity on ageing issues,
16. *Recognizing* that there are numerous existing and newly emerging issues affecting older persons that make it necessary to accelerate the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in the region,
17. *Taking note* of the background documents prepared for the fourth review and appraisal in Asia and the Pacific, in particular the note by the secretariat entitled “Population ageing, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: synergies, indicators and data”,<sup>7</sup>
18. *Reaffirm* the Political Declaration and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002;
19. *Also reaffirm* Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific decision 74/26 of 16 May 2018, in which the Commission endorsed the report of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing;

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<sup>7</sup> ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.3/2022/2.

20. *Recommend* that members and associate members:

(a) Promote and protect the human rights of all older persons, giving priority to addressing gaps and mainstreaming the rights of older persons in legal and policy frameworks, as appropriate;

(b) Ensure coordinated multisectoral responses and the mainstreaming of ageing issues into national development policies and programmes, as appropriate;

(c) Increase national awareness, capacity and resources to prepare for and respond to the multisectoral implications of population ageing;

(d) Develop an inclusive, adaptive and rights-based approach to social protection systems, paying particular attention to older persons and their vulnerability to poverty and social exclusion;

(e) Accord priority to mainstreaming the perspective of older women into national responses;

(f) Optimize and invest in the use of digital technologies and innovative means and mechanisms to address the various challenges and opportunities of population ageing;

21. *Also recommend* that the following be done to accelerate the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in Asia and the Pacific and to realize a sustainable world for all ages through collaborative and multilateral partnerships:

#### **Older persons and development**

(a) To develop, strengthen and implement comprehensive and integrated policy frameworks that address and mainstream population ageing into national development strategies and plans, adopting a human rights-based and people-centred approach, in line with the Madrid Plan of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in that regard;

(b) To mainstream a gender and disability perspective into policies promoting societies for all ages, where applicable, taking into account the different needs and situations of all individuals over the life course, and to establish or strengthen programmes, policies and services that focus on gender equality and the empowerment of all women;

(c) To support the formation and strengthening of older persons' associations and civil society organizations to provide an effective community mechanism for strengthening the voices of older persons, and to promote the creation of age-friendly agencies, local communities and workplaces;

#### **Work, the labour force, poverty and social protection**

(d) To promote the right to work of older persons by providing them access to full and productive employment and decent work under healthy, flexible and age-friendly conditions, ensuring life-long learning through training, retraining and skills development, for as long as they want and are able, and to combat abuse, neglect, all forms of discrimination, inequalities and ageism directed at older persons in the workforce;

(e) To eradicate poverty among older persons, in particular older women and older persons with disabilities, by mainstreaming ageing issues into poverty eradication measures, women's empowerment strategies and

national development plans, and to enhance international cooperation to support national efforts to eradicate poverty;

(f) To provide and strengthen adequate and inclusive national social protection systems for workers that provide universal old-age income security through pensions, as appropriate;

(g) To expand, in accordance with domestic legislation and policies, the coverage of and access to sustainable pension schemes, including but not limited to strategies such as social pensions, non-contributory pension systems and a disability benefit system, and increasing their benefits, with a view to ensuring income security in old age, including for older women and older persons with disabilities;

### **Life-course perspective on population ageing and intergenerational solidarity**

(h) To promote policies and national action plans to prepare for and respond to population ageing throughout the life course, to strengthen intergenerational solidarity to build societies for all ages, to raise public awareness on the rights, issues and challenges of old age and ageing, and to recognize the contributions that older persons make to their families, local communities and nations;

### **Emergency situations**

(i) To protect older persons from all manner of emergencies, including disasters, armed conflict and climate change, and, when taking action to address these challenges, respect, promote and consider older persons' human rights, have older persons and their organizations meaningfully participate in the preparedness, response and recovery stages of emergencies, including through emergency preparedness and post-conflict rehabilitation and recovery plans and responses, while ensuring that emergency plans and responses are not discriminatory and do not include ageist stereotypes and biases, and recognize that older persons can play a positive role in climate action by sharing experiences in disaster risk reduction and management, post-conflict recovery, climate mitigation and adaptation;

### **Health and well-being into old age**

(j) To accelerate efforts towards the achievement of universal health coverage so that all older persons, without discrimination, enjoy their right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by having access to affordable and quality health care, and to ensure that the use of such services does not expose older persons and their families to financial hardship;

(k) To promote a regional response mechanism that is people-centred, with full respect for a multidimensional, coordinated, inclusive and innovative approach, based on unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation, and to ensure that older and ageing persons in all member States, in particular in developing and the least developed countries, have unhindered, timely, fair and equitable access to safe diagnostics, therapeutics, medicines, vaccines and essential health technologies and their components, as well as health equipment;

(l) To foster and strengthen active and healthy ageing among all age groups in Asia and the Pacific by investing in strategies and activities that focus on the life course, for example by encouraging and facilitating physical activity, healthy nutrition and preventive health interventions and by

strengthening mental health and well-being, social participation and intergenerational ties;

(m) To develop and implement high-quality, integrated and long-term care systems with public, private and community providers, and to further promote long-term care as a positive social and economic care and employment strategy, while recognizing the contributions and enhancing the capacity of formal and informal caregivers and volunteers, including family members;

(n) To take as a basis the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on older persons, in particular older women and older persons with disabilities, including the risks that they face in accessing social protection and health services to ensure that health-care decisions respect older persons' dignity and promote and protect their human rights, including the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and to ensure the availability of safe, quality, efficacious, effective, accessible and affordable health-care services;

(o) To support Member States to promote an enhanced response to future pandemics based on experience gained and the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies of international concern, including by building, strengthening and maintaining the capacities required under the International Health Regulations (2005)<sup>8</sup> and by supporting the ongoing efforts in the World Health Assembly to consider the benefits of developing a World Health Organization convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, while addressing all external and internal obstacles to socioeconomic development that impeded effective response to, and treatment of, pandemics and the need for all countries to have unhindered access to related medicines, vaccines and essential health products;

### **Enabling and supportive environments**

(p) To promote and protect the right to adequate housing for older persons, ageing in place and intergenerational housing options, to strengthen equitable and affordable access to sustainable basic physical and social infrastructure for all, without discrimination, and to ensure that these services are responsive to the rights and needs of older persons, integrated and interoperable to support their efficient delivery to ageing populations;

(q) To strengthen social policies that promote the development of community services for older persons, with a special focus on the specific rights of older women and older persons with disabilities, as well as to strengthen the institutional capacities and technical skills of government and non-government institutions, including older persons' associations and civil society organizations, to support the engagement of older persons as active agents of change in their own lives and the lives of their families and local communities;

(r) To promote literacy, numeracy and technological skills, as well as training and retraining, for older persons and the ageing work force, in particular as many societies transition from ageing to aged societies, and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies, are available to all, including older women and older persons with disabilities, and that the right to privacy is respected;

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<sup>8</sup> World Health Assembly resolution 58.3.

(s) To promote strategies to support women who take on the role of long-term caregivers of older persons to perform their roles while maintaining their livelihoods and not depriving them of opportunities for development into old age;

### **Discrimination, neglect, abuse, violence, ageism and public image**

(t) To combat violence against and neglect, abuse and ill-treatment of older persons, in particular older women, by designing and implementing prevention strategies and stronger laws, and to protect victims;

(u) To combat any form of age discrimination, to take effective measures against ageism, and to promote and support initiatives to advance a positive public image of older persons and their contributions to communities and societies;

### **Data and research**

(v) To enhance the capacity of members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to more effectively collect and analyse granular age-disaggregated data, statistics and qualitative information disaggregated also, when necessary, by other relevant factors, including sex and disability, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(w) To encourage the harnessing of scientific research and expertise through the realization of technology, and to build the evidence base by promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships for multidisciplinary and intergenerational research on ageing;

(x) To advocate for the quantifying of the caregiving contribution of older persons to the economy in national accounts, including recognition of unpaid care for family members, in particular women, and to ensure that research on national accounts informs policymaking;

(y) To promote skills and competencies development and continuous training of health and social care workers in geriatric skills and of home-based caregivers of older persons on skills on caregiving and gerontological skills, supporting/investing innovations and advanced technologies to obtain and maintain the highest standard of services and care for older persons;

### **Implementation and follow-up**

(z) To assess the situation of older persons on a regular basis through inclusive and participatory consultations with relevant stakeholders and social development partners, and, in this regard, to use the Sustainable Development Goals-based monitoring framework contained in the note by the secretariat entitled “Population ageing, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: synergies, indicators and data”,<sup>9</sup> as appropriate; to encourage member States to address the situation of older persons in the voluntary national reviews presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development; and to use the assessment as a starting point for developing effective policies that create national policy ownership and build consensus;

<sup>9</sup> ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.3/2022/2.

(aa) For Governments that have not done so, to designate focal points for handling the follow-up on multisectoral national plans of action on ageing, to strengthen existing networks of national focal points on ageing, and to provide information on the focal points for inclusion in the already existing list of focal points maintained by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific;

(bb) To involve older persons and their organizations in a meaningful and participatory way in law-making and policymaking processes, to recognize them as development actors, including in the follow-up and review of the Madrid Plan of Action, and to ensure that their needs, interests and agency are taken into account in policies, programmes and laws that affect them;

**Request to the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

(cc) To strengthen the role of the Commission in supporting its members and associate members in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the periodic midterm assessments of progress made in that regard;

(dd) To raise public awareness on ageing in partnership with stakeholder organizations, and to continue to facilitate the sharing of experiences and good practices on ageing;

(ee) To build the capacities of members and associate members of the Commission, upon their request, to gather, synthesize and analyse age-disaggregated data, statistics and qualitative information, disaggregated also, when necessary, by other relevant factors, including sex and disability, in order to develop evidence-based national policies on ageing;

(ff) To support members and associate members of the Commission, upon request, in formulating forward-looking policies and actions to prepare for and adjust to the social and economic implications of ageing, as well as to mainstream ageing into policies, plans and programmes, as appropriate;

(gg) To utilize the resources of the United Nations system and all other relevant stakeholders at the regional level, including the Asia-Pacific regional informal network of focal points on ageing, to support member States in the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action and any national follow-up, as appropriate;

(hh) To submit the report on the Meeting, the present outcome document and the pre-session documents prepared for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing,<sup>10</sup> through the Secretary-General, to the Commission for Social Development at its sixty-first session, to be held in 2023, for the fourth global review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, and to also submit the report on the Meeting and the present outcome document to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-ninth session, for information and consideration.

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<sup>10</sup> ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.3/2022/1, ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.3/2022/2, ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.3/2022/INF/1 and ESCAP/MIPAA/IGM.3/2022/INF/2.