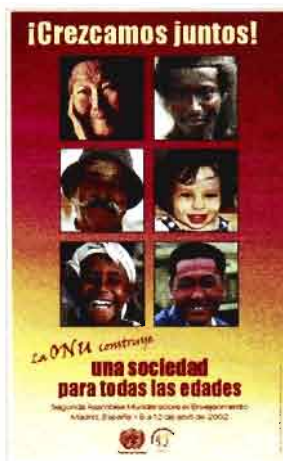


Second World Assembly on Ageing

No. 2 February 2002



"A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES"



International Plan of Action 2002 Progress in the negotiations in New York

The Preparatory Committee for the II WAA has been very active in the last few months in New York. As time is now urging, meetings and informal consultations have taken place in rapid succession in order to make progress in the negotiations of the document. Though final structure has not been definitively agreed on, a second reading has been implemented to advance into the debate of the proposals. The title has now been adopted, with a return to the original "INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING 2002", and an estimated 40% of the text has been agreed upon. A new draft for a Political Declaration has been submitted by the Chairman of the Committee, following the initiative of the Group of 77 in order to express the Governments' commitment to the policies and principles outlined in the Plan of Action. One specific issue to be discussed at the February Preparatory Committee meeting is abuse against older persons. Debate will be supported by a re-

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Spain holds the Presidency of the European Union

ESPAÑA 2002
Presidencia de la Unión Europea

Message from the President of the Spanish Government

In the second week of April the Second World Assembly on Ageing will take place in Madrid. It is for me a great satisfaction to see that Spain, as host country of this world event, is playing a leading role in the promotion of an issue which undoubtedly will be fundamental to decision-making in the coming years. Many factors are involved in the population ageing process. Increased life expectancy and reduced birth rates experienced by developed countries have seen dependency ratios rise considerably. Developing countries are showing the first signs of population ageing. The least developed countries are forced to confront problems of a different nature, though equally relevant to their populations. Although significant differences exist between countries, there are some common issues to be considered by any society to improve the well-being of its population. Families are the prime carers of older persons, and they constitute the social environment in which they prefer to live. Consequently, it is important to assist families and to recognise their role in society. Society is called upon to find the means to empower older people to participate actively in their communities, caring for their physical and mental health, according to their worth and dignity as human beings. Strengthening intergenerational relations will be helpful in the search for effective solutions to respond to social changes produced by population ageing. Governments cannot ignore the political, social and economic implications of the ageing phenomenon when they set their policy goals. Spain will not lose this historic oppor-

tunity. The main task of the World Assembly is to approve an International Plan of Action to determine the policies to be followed in relation to the global ageing process and to ensure the prosperous development of nations. Specifically, the implications of ageing within the global strategy towards poverty eradication and development will be reviewed. Advancing in health care and social protection systems in order to improve social well-being is another important goal.

As Presidency of the European Union, Spain wants to promote the debate about the older members of our societies and to make visible the strong commitment

Spain has adopted towards older persons. To generate a social dialogue on ageing and its impact on the family, society and the nation itself. To make the labour market more flexible and accessible to those who wish to remain active. And, in addition, to encourage the creation of new services as response to the demands and needs of our communities older population.



José María Aznar

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