



## Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC

Representing seniors in British Columbia since 1950

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November 23, 2025

The Honourable Anita Anand  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Minister Anand

***Subject: Approval of the budget for the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group to elaborate an international legally binding instrument on the human rights of older persons***

On behalf of the 85,000 members of the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO BC), I wish to draw your attention to the [United Nations \(UN\) Human Rights Council \(HRC\) resolution 58/13](#), which decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group (IGWG) with the mandate of elaborating and submitting to the HRC a draft international legally binding instrument on the human rights of older persons with the objective of promoting, protecting and ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by older persons.

This milestone is the culmination of 15 years of work by the UN General Assembly and the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OWEGA) and concerted advocacy and campaigning by older people, civil society and other advocates around the world. COSCO BC was honoured to sponsor a representative to participate in the May 2024 meeting of OWEGA who provided the perspective of older adults in British Columbia on the gaps in current human rights legislation. The evidence compiled over this time has demonstrated that the best solution to the deficiencies and fragmentation in the international human rights system is a dedicated legally binding instrument.

COSCO BC was pleased to welcome Secretary of State for Seniors, Stephanie McLean in a virtual presentation to our recent Conference, Human Rights and Ageing: Advocating for an Equitable Future. We were delighted when she affirmed Canada's support of the UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons.

In December 2025, Member States will meet to approve the budget for this new IGWG in the fifth committee of the UN General Assembly in New York.

**We urge you to liaise with your foreign ministry colleagues and your permanent mission in New York to ensure the Canadian government's full support for the budget for this crucial process.**

The approval of the budget will enable the HRC to meet its obligations in resolution 58/13 and continue to make concrete progress in strengthening the promotion and protection of the human rights of older people around the world. This is essential to ensure that all of the resources invested in this work to date are not wasted and that the new IGWG can commence its important work as mandated in a timely and effective manner.

We request your support and participation in these upcoming budget negotiations. We would also welcome your vocal support for the full, meaningful and effective participation of older people and civil society in the upcoming IGWG process.

We stand ready to assist your office and Mission throughout this process.

Sincerely

*Leslie Gaudette*

President, Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of British Columbia, Canada

*COSCO BC is an active member of the [Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People](#), a coalition of 400 civil society organisations worldwide working together to strengthen older people's rights globally.*

cc: David Lametti, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations,  
[RMNYCanadaUN@international.gc.ca](mailto:RMNYCanadaUN@international.gc.ca)  
The Hon. Stephanie McLean, Secretary of State for Seniors  
Dan Levitt, BC Seniors Advocate  
Susie Chant, BC Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors Services and Long-Term Care  
The Hon. David Eby, Premier of British Columbia  
The Hon. Michael Chong, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade & Development  
Anna Roberts, Shadow Minister for Seniors, Conservative Party of Canada  
Andréanne Larouche, Aînés, Bloc Québécois  
Don Davies, Leader of the New Democratic Party  
Elizabeth May, Leader, Green Party of Canada