

VIII. Report of the Conference¹⁴

Summary

In the first five-year cycle of the global review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), the United Nations Commission for Social Development agreed on the modalities for the review and appraisal of the MIPAA (E/CN.5/2006/2), which invited the United Nations regional commissions to organize regional conferences of review and appraisal. The 2007 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing took place from 6 to 8 November in León, Spain. Ministers and high-level officials from 45 UNECE member States and the European Commission, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders discussed progress achieved in the implementation of the Regional Implementation Strategy of MIPAA adopted at the 2002 Ministerial Conference in Berlin, future cooperation among member States and capacity development. The 2007 Ministerial Conference in León adopted the Ministerial Declaration “A Society for All Ages: Challenges and Opportunities”.

The proceedings of the conference are reflected in this report, which has three annexes.¹⁵ Annex I includes the Ministerial Declaration, annex II the Chairperson’s summary of the Conference and annex III the list of speakers.

Introduction

1. The 2007 Ministerial Conference on Ageing took place at the Parador de San Marcos, León, Spain, from 6 to 8 November 2007, with the Ministerial Segment being held on 8 November.
2. Ministers and representatives from 45 UNECE member States participated in the Conference. The following member States were represented : Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United States of America and Uzbekistan.
3. The European Commission was also represented.
4. Holy See participated as an observer State.
5. Representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations International Institute on Ageing, the Council of Europe, the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, the European Economic and Social Committee, the International Social Security Association and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) participated. In total, 11 intergovernmental organizations participated in the Conference.
6. Representatives of 39 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in the Conference. The total number of participants was 285. The full list is available on the Conference website at: http://www.unece.org/pau/age/ConferenceonAgeing_2007.

¹⁴ ECE/AC.30/2007/2

¹⁵ The annexes to the report are published in this volume as Part I: Ministerial Declaration, Part II: Chairperson’s Summary and Part IX List of Speakers.

Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda

7. Ms. A. Valcarce García (State Secretary for Social Services, Family and Disability, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Spain), Mr. K. Bärlund (Director, Environment, Housing and Land Management Division, UNECE) and Mr. F. Fernández (Mayor of León) opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. The Conference elected the State Secretary for Social Services, Family and Disability of Spain as Chairperson for the first two days of the Conference (the Chairperson for the Ministerial Segment was elected on the third day; see para. 11).

Overview of the ageing situation in the UNECE region

8. In the framework of preparations to the Conference, 31 member States submitted their country reports on the implementation of the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), based on the guidelines provided by the UNECE secretariat. The secretariat presented a summary of these country reports (ECE/AC.30/2007/4).

Panel discussions

9. Six panel discussions were held on a broad range of issues related to the topic of the Conference, “A Society for All Ages: Challenges and Opportunities”:

- (a) Creating integrated approaches to mainstream ageing;
- (b) Participation and social inclusion;
- (c) Towards a balanced care strategy;
- (d) Living longer – working longer: Challenges for education, labour market and social protection;
- (e) Intergenerational collaboration;
- (f) Focusing on opportunities: Active ageing.

The panel discussions are summarized in annex II,¹⁶ the composition of panels is provided in annex III.¹⁷

Opening of the Ministerial Segment and election of its Chairperson

10. The State Secretary for Social Services, Family and Disability of Spain and the Mayor of León opened the Ministerial Segment on 8 November. An introductory speech was given by the Executive Secretary of the UNECE, Mr. M. Belka. The Conference elected the State Secretary for Social Services, Family and Disability, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Spain as Chairperson of the Ministerial Segment, and Mr. E. Buchinger (Federal Minister of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Austria) and Ms. L. Glebova (Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development, Russian Federation) as Vice-Chairpersons.

Presentation of the NGO Declaration and of the Research Community Declaration

11. The NGO declaration was presented by Ms. G. Abdykalykova (HelpAge International, Kyrgyzstan) and Ms. A. Stuckelberger (University of Geneva, Switzerland).

Presentation and discussion of the draft Ministerial Declaration

12. The Chairperson summarized the main points of the declaration and the panel discussions of the first two days.

¹⁶ Part II: Chairperson’s Summary in this volume. See also Part V: Summary of Contributions

¹⁷ Part IX: List of Speakers in this volume.

Ministerial panels

13. The panel discussions are summarized in annex II;¹⁶ the composition of panels is provided in annex III.¹⁷

Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration

14. The Conference adopted the Ministerial Declaration given in annex I.¹⁸

Closing session of the Conference

15. Following the statements made by the Director of Environment, Housing and Land Management Division of the UNECE and by the Mayor of León, the closing session included interventions about the follow-up process to the Conference by Switzerland, Finland and Spain. After this, the Chairperson thanked the participants and closed the Conference.

¹⁸ Part I: Ministerial Declaration in this volume.