

**Statement by Ms. Diene Keita, UN Assistant Secretary-General and
Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA
MIPAA+20 Ministerial Segment, Rome, Italy**

17 June 2022

Excellences'

Distinguish Delegates

Esteemed colleagues

all protocol duly observed

Signora e Signori Ministri

Vi ringrazio per aver organizzato questa conferenza su un tema così importante per l'Europa e per il mondo intero

e Grazie mille per la calorosa ospitalità italiana

It is a privilege to represent UNFPA at the United Nation Economic Commission for Europe Ministerial conference on Ageing.

Much progress has been made towards the goal of building societies for all ages,

The pandemic has challenged most of the progress made so far and has put a stark spotlight on the many older persons not benefiting from economic development, and who are often excluded from economic, social, cultural and political life.

COVID-19 has claimed the lives of many older persons not only because of their age, but also because of the circumstances in which they were living.

We need to stand up for their rights, fight age-based discrimination, and integrate them much better in our societies.

We simply need to not to leave them behind.

As we learn to live with COVID-19, and seek a way out of the pandemic, it is urgent that we unfold the MIPPA at 20 and celebrate the achievements.

I would like to congratulate all member states for their successes.

The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing is an important step in this direction, and UNFPA is lending its full support to advancing this agenda.

One key and important contribution is data, and the current round of censuses provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen the evidence base and to adapt policies to the demographic shifts.

The second key aspect is Changing the narrative about older people.

That is exactly one of the primary focus areas of the Joint Programme on Ageing that we launched with UNECE, OHCHR the office of the high commissioner for human right, WHO and HelpAge international.

Many countries are worried that population ageing will lead to unsustainable fiscal pressures on governments. will undermine innovation and productivity growth; and place a large burden, on younger persons.

With the right investment in people throughout the life course, including in their health and education, people can remain a strong asset for societies well into old age and contribute to second demographic dividend

The Ministerial Conference on Demographic Resilience held last year in Sofia, Bulgaria, is a landmark and I hope that its outcomes are integrated in the way forward for MIPPA

Excellences,

The Madrid Plan of Action remains relevant as a roadmap.

We have the right frameworks and tools and from what I have heard since yesterday from members' states, we do have the political will to accelerate implementation. The COVID-19 pandemic has served as a wake-up call. The demographic projections speak for themselves.

The time to act is now.

We are the older people of tomorrow – if we are lucky!

Let's ensure that the older people of today live the life we want to live ourselves when we get there.

Let's work towards Our common agenda to achieve the SDGs and co-create a world where every older people enjoy a decent healthy life,

contribute to the inter-generational equity and fulfill their potential

I thank you.