

September 11, 2017

## STATEMENT

**Statement to the 36<sup>rd</sup> session of the Human Rights Council**

**Report of Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons**

Presented by Sung-Ho Lee, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission of Korea

on behalf of GANHRI

Mr. President,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) in my capacity as Chairperson of the GANHRI Working Group on Ageing.

In her present annual report, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by Older Persons addresses the impact of assistive technology and robots on the rights of older persons.

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This is a new, emerging and complex issue and we thank the Independent Expert for bringing it to our attention.

As highlighted by the Independent Expert, the use of assistive technology and robots has great potential to increase the ability of older persons to live independently and autonomously, and to fully exercise their human rights on an equal basis with others.

As the use of these new technologies gains traction, however, we fully share the Independent Expert's call to ensure a human rights-based approach across the development, access and use of such technologies.

That is, there is a need to ensure that it is older persons themselves who make informed decision, whether they want to have this type of assistance or prefer to be cared by human beings.

In addition, a review of existing normative and policy frameworks is necessary to ensure that a human rights-based approach is being adopted to assistive technology.

Also, human rights impact assessments of assistive and robotics technology should be undertaken to address human rights concerns and ensure compliance with international standards.

Lastly, it is needed to further explore appropriate mechanisms of accountability and monitoring of assistive technology and in particular of robots, and ensure that such mechanisms adequately address the situation of older persons and are grounded on human rights standards.

Mr. President,

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its call to leave no one behind present a unique opportunity to ensure that the introduction of advanced assisted devices and robotics in older persons' care does not deepen inequalities between developed and developing countries.

As global network of NHRIs that work collectively in promoting and monitoring both the international human rights treaties and the SDGs, we join the Independent Expert's call, in implementing Goal 17, to enhance cross regional cooperation and access to science, technology, innovation and knowledge-sharing.

Finally, we trust that the Independent Expert's recommendations will serve as very useful foundation to deliberations of the United Nations' Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, as it embarks, in its next session, on autonomy and care of older persons.