

UN expert to assess human rights situation of older persons in Namibia

GENEVA (28 February 2017) – United Nations human rights expert Rosa Kornfeld-Matte will carry out her first official visit to Namibia from 2 to 13 March 2017 to assess the human rights situation of older persons in the country.

The Independent Expert noted that the upcoming visit to a member of the Group of Friends on the Human Rights of older persons will be an important opportunity to identify both best practices and gaps in the implementation of existing laws related to the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons.

“I am particularly interested in learning more about Namibia’s extensive social protection system, including the universal non-contributory pension, which helped to significantly reduce poverty levels as well as the advanced technology introduced in the mid-1990s to manage the payment system. This is crucial in a country with low population density and may have a lot of potential for other countries in similar situations,” the Independent Expert observed.

“I believe that this visit will prove extremely fruitful in assessing the implementation of existing international instruments with regard to older persons while identifying best practices related to my mandate. I would also like to learn more about Namibia’s policies and strategies of relevance to older persons such as the Government’s Prosperity Plan,” she added.

Ms. Kornfeld-Matte is the first Independent Expert tasked by the UN Human Rights Council with monitoring, reporting and advising on the promotion and protection of the rights by older persons in the world.

Ms. Kornfeld-Matte, who is visiting the country at the invitation of the Government, will also travel to the Kavango region to hold discussions with government representatives, non-governmental organizations and others, working with and on the issue of older persons.

A **press conference** will be held in Windhoek at the conclusion of the expert’s visit, on Monday, 13 March 2017 at 15h00 at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN House, 38 Stein St. Private Bag 13329 Klein Windhoek, Windhoek, Namibia, to share preliminary findings with the media.

The Independent Expert will present her findings and recommendations of her country visit in a report to the UN Human Rights Council in September 2017.

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Ms. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte (Chile) was appointed by Human Rights Council as the first Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons in May 2014. Ms. Kornfeld-Matte served as the National Director of the Chilean National Service of Ageing where she designed and implemented the National Policy of Ageing. She has a long career as an academic and is the founder of the programme for older persons at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Learn more, visit:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/OlderPersons/IE/Pages/IEOlderPersons.aspx>

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UN Human Rights, Country Page – Namibia:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/NAIndex.aspx>

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