**Message by the Minister for equal opportunities and family of Italy, Ms. Elena Bonetti**

The Italian Government is pleased to co-organize and host the next UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing which will be held on the 16 and the 17 June 2022 in Rome and will be focusing on “*MIPAA+20 – A Sustainable World for All Ages: Joining forces for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life”.*

As one of the countries with the oldest population in the world, ageing is a major challenge for Italy, which is shared with the whole UNECE area. A common vision on the future of ageing policies in our countries is therefore necessary, based on the creation of alliances between generations able to protect and advance the human rights of older people and empower our economies, societies and communities.

The Conference could not be more timely, marking the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS), and taking place in the aftermath of a pandemic that hit our older population the most.

Ministers from the UNECE member States, as well as representatives of European and international organizations, non-governmental organizations and leading experts and scientists from all across the UNECE region will work together to take stock of the implementation of the MIPAA/RIS since the last UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, held in Lisbon in 2017.With the aim of promoting a constructive and comprehensive dialogue among different stakeholders, exchanging good practices, and exploring innovative initiatives for the improvement of the wellbeing of older women and men, ministerial and expert panels during the Conference will deal with many comprehensive ageing issues, such as the promotion of active and healthy ageing throughout life, access to long-term care and support for carers and families, and the mainstreaming of ageing to advance a society for all ages. The Conference will complete the fourth review and appraisal cycle of the MIPAA/RIS and will be closed with the adoption of the 2022 Rome Ministerial Declaration stating the policy and action priorities for the next five years.

Strongly believing in the cooperation between governments and civil society organizations to promote older people’s rights, the Italian Government will also be pleased to host a Joint Forum of Civil Society and Scientific Research, which will precede the Ministerial Conference on 15 of June and will adopt a final declaration that will contribute to the Ministerial discussions of the following days.

Addressing ageing through a holistic approach will lead to better policies that will ultimately allow us to not only protect older people’s rights, but also value their enormous experience and potential contribution to our societies’ wellbeing. This is what we – all the stakeholders together – need to do to ensure that no one is left behind.

I look forward to welcoming you to Rome.

**Elena Bonetti**

Minister for equal opportunities and family of Italy