Ref. No: 11/25/67

Geneva, 21 March 2013

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and, in response to the request received from the Development and Economic and Social Issues Branch of OHCHR, has the honour to transmit herewith information concerning the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s endeavours to promote and protect the human rights of older persons.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosures: as mentioned

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 GENEVA 10
Endeavours of the Ministry of Social Affairs in the field of promotion and protection of the rights of older persons

1. Social care:

This Ministry shows the utmost respect for older persons, for whom it has established social welfare centres (for male and female older persons) in which the following types of care are provided:

(a) Full shelter, including accommodation, food, beverages and clothing.
(b) Social and occupational care, welfare and other services.
(c) Payment of a monthly allowance to cover the personal expenses of each older person.
(d) Encouragement of families and kin to visit their older relatives, and promotion of greater social awareness among members of society of the need to maintain contact with their parents in accordance with the teachings of Islam.
(e) Organization of symposia and meetings on social and religious issues, in such a way as to ensure that older persons enjoy tranquillity and peace of mind and do not suffer from boredom or loneliness, in addition to cultural and recreational programmes, excursions and leisure programmes and activities.

2. Social protection:

One of the outstanding characteristics of Saudi society is its spirit of mutual aid and solidarity by virtue of which older persons do not feel badly treated, isolated or marginalized since the Islamic religion advocates full care of the aged within their family environment. Consequently, cases of violence against categories of older persons are rarely found.

3. Health services provided by the Ministry for categories of older persons:

This Ministry has an obligation to make all the requisite specialized forms of preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative health care available to older persons at locations near to their places of residence and under the supervision of the Ministry's Directorate-General of Medical Services, through:

- The implementation of medical programmes under which full examinations are regularly carried out for the early detection of geriatric diseases (such as osteoporosis) and tumours, and nutritional supplements are provided to compensate for the deficiencies associated with the ageing process.
- The implementation of a variety of medical awareness programmes to help prevent geriatric diseases and mitigate and delay their complications.
- The organization of various recreational programmes and activities and the provision of appropriate premises therefor.
- The provision of various therapeutic services in all specialized medical fields.