



UNITED STATES ADDRESSES IMPACT OF GLOBAL AGING

“Governments, businesses, schools, health systems, churches, non-governmental organizations, and many others will need to work together to tackle the challenges and seize the opportunities of an aging population.”

– Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

In many parts of the world, people are living longer and healthier lives. For the first time in history, people 65 years old and over will soon outnumber children under age five. But this enormous human achievement of the 20th century also poses significant challenges.

As the world’s population ages, the prevalence of chronic disease increases. Insurance, pensions and other social support systems are strained. Many governments, both in the developed and developing worlds, are beginning to recognize that global aging can affect economic growth, labor force, trade, migration, international relations, and national security.

To promote greater international dialogue on these challenges, the U.S. Department of State is hosting a half-day Summit on Global Aging, on March 15, 2007, in Washington, D.C., for experts and members of the international community.

THE FACTS ON GLOBAL AGING

- **People age 85 and over are the fastest growing part of many countries’ populations.**

Life expectancy is increasing. Those aged 85 and over have the highest burden of chronic disease and disability.

- **Chronic diseases are becoming a growing burden.**

Non-communicable diseases already account for 85% of the burden of disease in high-income countries and 44% in low- and middle-income countries. By 2030, the share in low- and middle-income countries is projected to rise to 54%, while the share of infectious diseases will decline to 32%.

- **Family structures are changing.**

As people live longer and have fewer children, family structures are transformed, increasing the ability to invest in the young, but leaving older people with fewer options for care.

- **New economic challenges are emerging.**

Aging will have dramatic effects on social entitlement programs, labor supply, trade, and savings around the globe. Shrinking ratios of workers to pensioners and people spending a larger portion of their lives in retirement increasingly strain existing health and pension systems. As social insurance expenditures escalate, more countries are evaluating the sustainability of these systems.

- **National militaries may change.**

The sectors from which countries draw people to fill and replace military ranks may shift.

- **Some populations will shrink in the next decades.**

While the world population is aging at an unprecedented rate, total population in some countries is simultaneously declining, amplifying the effects of an aging population.

U.S. EXPANDS DIALOGUE ON GLOBAL AGING

International cooperation will help countries plan and better address our common concern for worldwide aging. The United States is working to stimulate further dialogue about the health, economic, social, and security implications of global aging.