

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Event

June 14th, 2013



GOVERNMENT AND UN PERSPECTIVES

*UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK CITY, NY.*

**Elizabeth Podnieks,
Founder of WEAAD**

Appreciation To



- Mr. Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary – General, Economic and Social Affairs
- Mr. Guillermo Rishinyanski, Canadian Ambassador to the UN
- Ms. Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary on Aging, USA
- Ms. Alice Wong, Minister of State (Seniors)
- Mr. Charles Msosa, Ambassador to the UN Malawi
- Ms. Charlotta Schlyter, Counsellor for Human Rights and Social Affairs
- Ms. Rosemary Lane, Focal Point on Aging, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

***Thank you for hosting this 8th anniversary of
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day!***

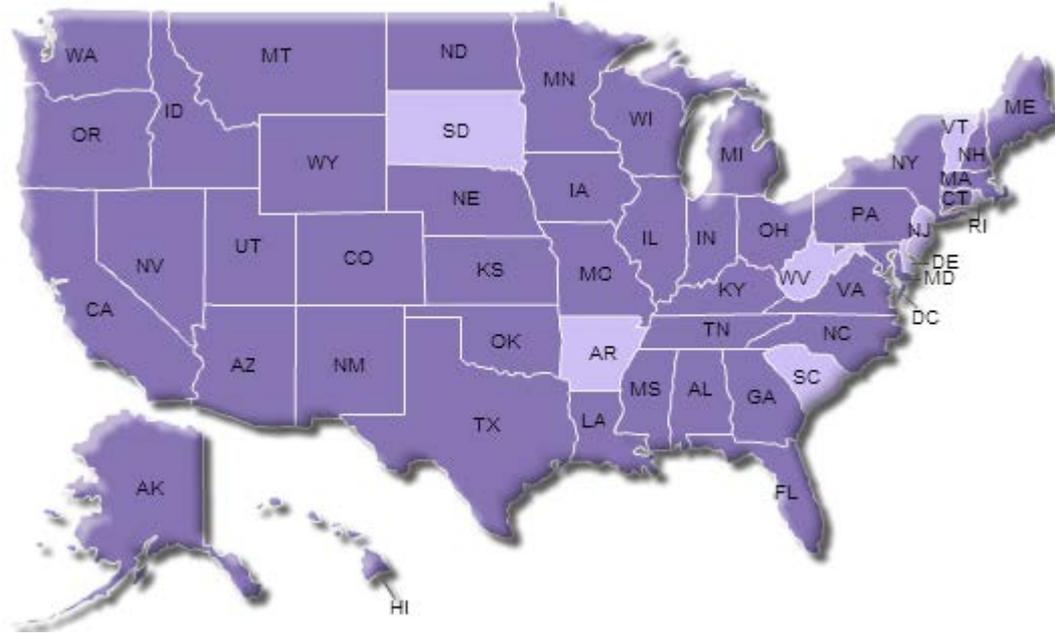


Greetings



Memories abound from that glorious day in June 2006. The anticipation, the excitement of one hundred and seventy people representing many countries and cultures reflecting on a global concern for elder abuse was indescribable. Governments, organizations, communities, professionals, NGOs and older people had been exploring and promoting elder abuse awareness through projects and events: education, social, health and legal, arts and much more. At the end of the day there was no doubt in our minds: **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day** was indeed the magical moment we had been waiting for.





- ❖ Each state does their part on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- ❖ Each Canadian province/ territory celebrates World Day

Education, Education, Education



- The cornerstone of elder abuse awareness and prevention
- Included in the formal curricula of the caring professions
- Older persons must be engaged in educational activities
- Unimagined benefits of intergenerational solidarity



Social Inclusion



- Everyone longs to belong
- Addresses social and economic and political exclusion
- Marginalized elderly minority and the disabled are especially vulnerable
- Social isolation is linked to elder abuse and low self-esteem



The Power of Social Media

- **WEAAD in Cyberspace** launched the first ever global Tweet
- Brings people and communities together
- Provides a platform for voices to be heard, listened to, acted on.
- Older people desperately want to be connected to the world of technology
- **GeoMapping** will develop and deploy an online mapping and information tool to share information and exchange knowledge



Critical Need for Mental Health Services



- Mental health services must be available in the community and in long-term care facilities
- Mental health services needed for victims, perpetrators and families
- Enhance older persons psychological resources



Developing a Conceptual Framework for Elder Abuse



- Elder abuse has drawn from theoretical models: ecological, social learning, life course, etc.
- Time to articulate our own conceptual framework
- Form a global work party
- Describe our own reality, values, our own view of complexity of the issues surrounding elder abuse
- How can we teach students to be change agents without a roadmap, without guidelines?



Evaluation of WEAAD



- Need to measure outcomes and activities
- What is working and why? What is not working?
- Celebrate success and learn from valuable mistakes



Showing Leadership



- Enhancing the protection of elder persons through existing human rights mechanisms
- Continue to nurture and support international collaboration
- Think about making everyday awareness day; it could become a habit
- World Day began with a dream...**never stop dreaming**



Thank You



Thank you again to the UN, the United States, Canada and other governments for organizing this historic day of collaboration and knowledge exchange on elder abuse awareness. I thank Minister Wong for inviting me here and for her ongoing encouragement and support of my work. Both Secretary Greenlee and Minister Wong are recognized for their commitment to the issue and today is further testimony to their passion and concern.

