

**Message from Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging
Celebrating the International Day of Older Persons 2010**

October 1, 2010 marks the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations International Day of Older Persons (IDOP). This year's IDOP, celebrated in countries across the globe, will build on significant UN milestones that acknowledge older persons as an increasingly major segment of society.

I was honored earlier this year to appear at the UN at the invitation of AARP to address the 2010 UN Briefing Series on Global Aging. What was clear from most of the presentations that day was that aging is a global issue, and that countries all over the world are grappling with the same issues we are - how to care for an increasing number of seniors and support their caregivers.

The number of persons aged 60 and over has been increasing at an unprecedented rate. In 1980, just prior to the convening of the First World Assembly on Ageing, there were 378 million people in the world aged 60 or above. Now 30 years later, that figure has doubled to 759 million, and it is projected to rise to 2 billion by 2050.

In my presentation, I shared information about the valuable work of the Administration on Aging's national aging network of state, tribal and community-based programs in providing home and community-based term care services to millions of seniors through the Older Americans Act. I also discussed how our work complements and supports the benefits provided through Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

I have been fortunate to have traveled across the world and across our great nation, and I believe that no matter where we come from, most of us share one common thread – we all want to live at home for as long as possible among our families and our friends and remain active, healthy and contributing members of our communities. That is the essential goal and the common element of community living.

In recognition of the International Day of Older Persons, the United Nations will hold a special all day program <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/documents/idop2010.pdf> to examine progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> from the perspective of empowerment of older persons. Special attention will be given to their inclusion, their participation in society and promotion of a positive image of aging. Please go to <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2010/sgsm13151.doc.htm> to read the UN Secretary-General's message for the International Day of Older Persons.

As the United Nations looks at the issues impacting older people worldwide, we in the United States should rededicate ourselves and continue to promote the well-being, community involvement, and independence of older Americans