14th session Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

Side event

**“*Violence, Abuse, Ageism – A major gap for Human Rights of older Persons*”**

**22 May 2024, 1.15 – 2.30 pm CR 08**

*Organized by Austria, Brazil INPEA*

**Background and Objective**

Violence, abuse, and neglect against older persons are widespread issues globally, manifesting in various forms across societies and contributing significantly to ageism. Often overlooked or not recognized as violence, these acts violate human rights, as emphasized in the WHO Declaration of Toronto, 2002. Elder abuse can result in injury, illness, lost productivity, isolation, and despair.

The WHO Declaration of Toronto, 2022, defines violence against older persons as any act or lack of action within a trusted relationship causing harm or distress. This can take many forms: physical, psychological, sexual, financial, or neglect. Violence against older persons, despite increasing numbers and sparse data, is not a national priority in many Member States. This oversight perpetuates the taboo nature of the issue, hindering the identification of risk factors and leaving gaps in protection for this vulnerable group. To address these challenges, Austria has proactively implemented measures aimed at raising awareness and dismantling the taboo surrounding the issue. The federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection has financed and cooperated in research projects to map and spotlight hidden areas of human rights violations.

At the ICHROP 2023 Conference last December, Austria presented – *for the first time* – its travelling exhibition “STOP. No Violence” to an international audience. Now we want to share this exhibition with you at the United Nations and discuss Human Rights Violations and exchange experiences and solutions to counter these challenges.

**Against this background, the side event aims at**

* discussing the necessary conditions for adequate intervention and prevention of violence against older persons
* presenting successful policies in various member states
* presenting ideas and initiatives for promising cooperation opportunities at an international level

**Target audience**

This side event will be of interest to government officials, delegations, national focal points on ageing, policymakers, civil society organizations, researchers and other stakeholders.

**Format and focus of discussion**

The side event will center on the traveling exhibition "STOP. No Violence," presented by Austria. This is followed by presentations highlighting exemplary policy measures and challenges faced by various Member States. Additionally, contributions from representatives of pertinent international organizations will enrich the dialogue. Subsequent to these presentations, an open discussion will invite all participants to share their perspectives and insights.

**This side event will be held in English – Lunch will be provided**

**Programme**

**Opening remarks** Moderation & Lunch Information Christoph Angster 5min

**Panellists**

* UNIE Setting the scene form HR perspective Claudia Mahler 8 min
* Austria Exhibition “Stop – No Violence!” Verena Schriebl 8 min
* Brazil Alexandre da Silva 8 min
* INPEA Silvia Perel-Levin 8 min
* WHO Yongjie Yon 8 min
* Red Cross Serbia Violence Against Older Women Natasa Todorovic 8 min

**Q&A**  15min

**Closing remarks** Christoph Angster 2min

**Time puffer 5min**