



social development

Department:
Social Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA ADVISORY

MINISTER DLAMINI CALLS ON ALL SOUTH AFRICANS TO OBSERVE NATIONAL OLDER PERSONS WEEK

The Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini urges all South Africans to observe the National Older Persons Week by celebrating the contribution of older persons to South African life.

"Our senior persons are the pillars of our families and communities as many households in South Africa are headed by grandparents. Also, many senior citizens provide care and support to orphans and vulnerable children in our country," said Minister Dlamini.

"The commemoration of the National Older Persons Week for the first time this year is, indeed, a welcome initiative. We South Africans have the collective responsibility to establish and sustain a caring society for all the vulnerable sections of our society, including our senior citizens. I therefore call on all our people to join us in this initiative by showing gratitude and respect to our senior citizens and by building a humane society in which our senior citizens can enjoy a life of dignity. Our cultures and values of Ubuntu enjoin us to respect and be of service to our elders", Minister Dlamini added.

The Global AgeWatch Index Report released on September 30 ranks South Africa second in Africa, behind Mauritius, on programmes implemented to secure the wellbeing of older persons. The Global AgeWatch Index is a global study conducted by the United Nations (UN) and an elder rights group, the Help Age.

The National Older Persons Week was officially launched by His Excellency, President Jacob Zuma on Sunday, 29th September 2013. The main aim of this national initiative is to promote respect of, and the promotion of the rights of older persons.

The national celebration of Grandparents Day which takes place on the first Sunday of October each year, will take place on 6 October 2013 in Piet Retief, Mpumalanga Province. Minister Dlamini and MEC, Mashego-Dlamini will join older persons and members of the community to mark the day.

The details are as follows:

Date: 6 October 2013, Sunday
Time: 10h00
Venue: Mandla Magudulela Stadium, Thandukukhanya Mkhondo Local Municipality

Since 1994, government has taken a number of pro-active steps to safeguard the interest of the rights of older persons. The enactment of the Older Persons Act (Act No 13 of 2006) was a very positive step in the right direction. The Act aims to maintain and protect the status, wellbeing, safety and rights of older persons. It also aims to promote their integration in the community by creating an enabling environment and promoting participation in activities with people of other ages and cultures.

Government has also made concerted efforts to ensure that older persons enjoy a better life. Currently 2 905 037 million older persons receive the Old Age Grant from government's social assistance programme while a further 531 receive the War Veterans Grant.

Members of the Media are invited to cover the aforementioned events.

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