

MRS. MARIA REGINA VASONE PRADO'S VIDEO SPEECH

My name is Regina Prado, president of the Arthritis Support Groups for both the States of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, the two largest Brazilian states, and also spokesperson for the Brazilian Osteoporosis Society.

Unfortunately, the osteoporosis itself - given that I am an osteoporosis patient - prevented me from participating in this important event in person.

I have been a rheumatoid arthritis patient for the last 25 years. The continuous use of corticoids ended up by weakening my bones and caused severe osteoporosis.

I had my first fracture 12 years ago. In total, I had 6 fractures altogether since then. My most recent one - a fracture of my left leg shank bone - forced me to be on a wheelchair for six long months before the bone knitted. I can no longer climb stairs or walk long stretches or, either, for longer periods of time. My difficulty in moving around, as well as the long and painful recovery process I have been going through, did not make my trip to Lisbon possible.

You may gather from my words that osteoporosis is an issue that is very close to my heart and mind in my daily battle against the effects of this disease.

Countries such as Brazil are not prepared to properly prevent, diagnose and treat osteoporosis. We have no drug refund scheme and the government drug subsidy plan does not include any osteoporosis medication.

Well, ladies and gentleman, our major endeavor is to provide access to diagnostic tests and proven therapies against osteoporosis. We have all tried very hard to change the current situation and I hope you will join us to develop similar campaigns in your countries.

I thank you for the opportunity I was offered and I hope each one of you will help in developing this important campaign.