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**STATEMENT BY DR NORIKO KATADA, REPRESENTATIVE,  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES (ICN)**

On behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), thank for the opportunity to speak on this important issue. ICN welcomes the WPRO initiatives in promotion of nutrition and physical activity and prevention of chronic diseases. ICN, as a federation of national nurses associations in 124 countries, is deeply concerned with the growing trend in sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy dietary patterns, alcohol abuse and tobacco use, especially among young people.

Reducing the growing burden of chronic diseases requires full utilization of the knowledge and skills of nurses and other health providers who come in close contact with individuals, families and communities in their daily work. However, their skills in health promotion and disease prevention remain largely untapped. These roles are intrinsic to today's nurses, who see themselves as active partners in risk reduction through programme planning, policy, practice and research.

Lifestyle diseases represent a global public health problem requiring the concerted efforts of all members of the health care team. ICN is therefore keen to ensure that nurses and national nurses associations are an integral part of national strategies in healthy diet, physical activity and positive health. And we see the contribution of all nurses, but particularly community health nurses, occupational health nurses, school health nurses and nurse practitioners as crucial.

For its part ICN will continue its advocacy for strengthening the health promotion and disease prevention elements of nursing education, research and practice. We are also committed to helping mobilize the millions of members of national nurses associations to participate in healthy lifestyle initiatives, including national nutrition and physical activity campaigns. In turn we look to WHO, governments and others to invite nurses and the other professionals to join activities for disease prevention and health promotion.

In conclusion ICN commends the WHO initiative on diet, physical activity and health and reiterate our support for promoting healthy lifestyles and healthier populations in the region.