



**REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL**

REGIONAL COMMITTEE

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**STATEMENT BY MR TSUYOSHI SATO, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
WORLD FEDERATION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS**

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation for giving the World Federation of Occupational Therapists an opportunity to report WFOT functions to you. As First Vice-President, I act in behalf of the Asian Pacific region and the Pan American Health Organization. Perhaps I should explain what WFOT does.

WFOT was formed in 1953 to promote and maintain quality standards of OT practice and education in all regions of the world. We began with ten member countries and now we have 37 national memberships. There are approximately 100 000 practicing occupational therapists worldwide.

Within the Asian-Pacific region, WFOT membership is held by Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India and Japan. In order to achieve full national member status, one requirement is to have a WFOT approved OT school and more than seven qualified occupational therapists who are citizens and they themselves graduates of WFOT approved schools. For an associate membership, there should be at least four occupational therapists in the country before establishing an OT curriculum.

Within the WFOT organization, there are five broad areas of concerns addressed by committees formed in education, professional practice, publication, legislation, international relations, plus the executive board members. An ongoing vital concern WFOT undertakes is to monitor minimum standards of occupational therapy education. There is also a quarterly bulletin that features articles and committee reports and is the voice of organization.

Another important function is to network with global health organizations, such as WHO, Rehabilitation International, Maria Schwarz, our WFOT President, resides in Switzerland and is always available to respond to the latest WHO developments. Currently, WFOT is actively involved with the WHO CBR project and quality assurance. To serve individual regions, WFOT appoints OT representatives for immediate professional contact and support and who serve as vital links to other membership countries. And on occasion to participate in recently WFOT officers were able to have meaningful visits and exchanges with three African OT associations.

In closing, WFOT hopes that you will not hesitate to call on us. We hope for an even greater working relationship with WHO and other health professionals.