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STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR DAVID C. CAPLE

**REPRESENTATIVE, INTERNATIONAL ERGONOMICS
ASSOCIATION (IEA)**

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates:

The International Ergonomics Association (IEA) is a Federation of 42 countries that respectively have membership of Ergonomists around the world.

It is estimated there are approximately 18,000 members of these Federated Societies who belong to the IEA.

Originally, the IEA was formed 50 years ago by eminent researchers and educators who were interested in the theme of "fitting the task to the worker". Their research primarily was directed towards the re-establishment of infrastructure in Europe and the USA after World War 2. However, it derived fundamentals of research from physiology, biomechanics, psychology, engineering and work organisation and developed these into the multidisciplinary science of ergonomics.

With a strong interest in psychology and the cognitive demands of work the parallel development of Human Factors occurred particularly in North America. Consequently, in 2006 the combined science is often referred to as Ergonomics or Human Factors, however the principles of the domain remain unchanged.

The structure of the IEA enables a range of programs to be conducted at both local and international levels. From a professional development perspective, we have 19 Technical Committees each focusing on a specific application and research area of ergonomics. These range from industry based programs such as agriculture, building and construction and healthcare, through to specific research areas such as musculo skeletal disorders, auditory ergonomics and aging.

Each of these Technical Committees arrange their own conferences and journal publications to facilitate sharing and professional development with their members.

A major focus relating to design has been developed in recent years. This relates to recognizing designers and manufacturers of products who have embraced the ergonomic process in their product development program. Whilst the intention of this program is not to offer endorsement of individual products, it does recognize the methodology of the designers to utilize ergonomics principles and processes in the development phase.

A major initiative in collaboration with the WHO and other agencies such as the International Labour Organisation has been the development of simple resource materials for use in developing countries. Two particular projects to mention relate to the development of "Ergonomic Checkpoints" focused primarily on manufacturing industry. A new program relating to "Ergonomic Checkpoints in Agriculture" is currently in its final stages of development. This embraces ergonomic issues from agriculture in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, together with recent workshops conducted in India. We also hope to conduct further validation workshops in Southern Africa in 2007.

The IEA is also supportive of maintaining a strong educational basis to post graduate studies in ergonomics within universities. A variety of competencies have been developed to form the basis of these educational programs. These are also reflected in the certification programs which help to identify those ergonomists who are capable of providing competent services to industry.

The IEA is pleased to work with the WHO in the development of the Activity Areas for the WHO 2006-2010 strategic plan. As a participating NGO we are pleased to work alongside the WHO in a wide range of research and application areas.

We look forward to continuing to develop our role as a participating NGO to support the WHO in the diversity of the program areas that are being undertaken.

I thank you for this opportunity for making this brief presentation to the WHO regional meeting.