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**STATEMENT BY DR KIM SOON JA, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES**

Honourable Ki Ho Lee, Chairman, distinguished representatives, Dr Sang Tae Han, Regional Director for the Western Pacific, honourable representatives of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, I thank you all for the exciting five days of participation as an observer visioning *New horizons in health* in this Region, and for the opportunity to address you at this forty-seventh session of the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific. It is indeed an honour and privilege.

I am Kim Soon Ja, member of the Board of Directors of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), a federation representing 1.5 million nurses in 112 Member Nations.

A report from ICN headquarters was disseminated, as so many of honourable delegates had spoken in behalf of nursing and midwifery. The resolution on "Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery" was adopted in May 1996 at the Forty-ninth World Health Assembly (WHA49.1). This report was a source of great pleasure and is indeed, a source of great pride and will be an overwhelming support and encouragement to our members around the world in the forthcoming years.

Four years ago, delegates to the World Health Assembly unanimously declared nursing as a key vehicle to meet WHO's goals. As we know and agree, nurses who are educated for all health care settings, and who are widely and broadly distributed, are ideally suited and placed to help meet the goals of WHO.

Strengthening nursing as a means to achieving health for all is a shared goal of our respective organizations. For its part, ICN is addressing this in many ways; actions are taken worldwide to

prepare nurses especially the nurse-leaders to efficiently adjust to the rapidly changing health care systems and to ensure nursing input at policy development, programme implementation and evaluation of health care at national, regional and global levels.

ICN notes that the emphasis must be on nursing as an essential service to mankind in the preparation and protection of life and in ensuring the quality of life in later years, rather than on the profession itself. Working together with related organizations to achieve common goals is critical, particularly in this era of financial restraint and health care reform.

At this point, may I humbly convey ICN's pledge to continue to work with others to achieve the intent of resolution WHA 49.1 , and may I urge you, distinguished representatives, to keep up the reputation of being the "best Region" in the world by initiating and facilitating the nursing's increased and visible involvement in all phases of development, implementation and evaluation of national and regional health care plans.

Thank you for your attention.