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**STATEMENT BY MR ROBERT GEORGE, REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS AND
RADIOLOGICAL TECHNOLOGISTS (ISRRT)**

Director-General, Regional Director, members of the Regional Committee of WHO, delegates, special guests, and colleagues.

I welcome this opportunity to address this meeting as the Regional Secretary of the International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists.

May I especially convey the greetings of our president, Dr Nakamura, our Secretary General Mr West, and the Members of our Board of Management.

The ISRRT which is a nongovernmental organization having official relations with WHO was founded in Europe in 1962. The Society has within its Member Societies, over 120 000 members and has 2000 individual Associate Members. The ISRRT is divided into three regions: the Americas, Europe/Africa and Asia/Australasia, which has a special interest in the Western Pacific area..

The aim of our Society is to improve the standards and delivery of radiation medicine throughout the world by:

- promoting quality patient care;
- advancing education and research; and
- acting as the international liaison organization for medical radiation technology.

ISRRT offers support and advice to radiologically developing countries in forming their own national societies as well as organizing international and regional conferences, teachers seminars and educational workshops, we publish documents related to the role and function of radiographers and radiological technologists, education standards, quality assurance and radiographic and radiation therapy practice.

In Europe and Africa, ISRRT has been very active, holding educational workshops to improve the knowledge of medical imaging in those areas. We have recently helped re-establish radiography training in Yugoslavia. We have also supported the development of the Basic Radiography System (BRS) a simple, inexpensive X-ray apparatus for use in developing areas, and the Basic Ultrasound Unit (BUS). These systems have been successfully installed in many African countries, and operators trained in their use.

In the Pacific area, our Member Societies in Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, New Zealand and Singapore have cooperated in providing training for Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Solomon Islands. This is especially so in Japan where the JIMTEF and JAICA programmes in conjunction with the Japan Association of Radiologic Technologists (JART) have accepted nominees from Asia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Samoa for basic and advanced radiographic and ultrasound training at their education centre in Suzuka, which is a recognized WHO collaborating centre.

We are now planning to hold an educational workshop in the Western Pacific Region in 1998 to offer radiographic technologists and X-ray operators the opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge in radiography and ultrasound for the benefit of their local communities.

There is a great need to increase the knowledge and improve the techniques of existing diagnostic imaging in this Region as highlighted by the Sub-Committee of the Regional Committee on Programmes and Technical Cooperation and the Regional Director in his recent report. It is recognized that appropriate education of radiographers and radiological technologists can reduce the amount of radiation received by the population from medical procedures and lower costs through increased efficacy.

The ISRRT is very active in the Asia/Australasia and Western Pacific Region. The World Congress of the ISRRT was held in tandem with the International Congress of Radiology in Singapore in 1994. There will be another World Congress of ISRRT in Tokyo in 1998, with the

largest technical exhibition of radiological equipment since 1994 in Singapore. In the year 2000, Australia will host the Asian/Australasian ISRRT regional conference in Sydney.

I would like to offer WHO, particularly in the Western Pacific, the assistance of ISRRT through our Member Societies in this Region. We have the expertise and manpower to work with WHO in the programmes they have identified in their conditions (article 2), namely:

- to establish and maintain effective collaboration with...professional groups;
- to promote cooperation among scientific and professional groups that contribute to the achievement of health;
- to promote improved standards of teaching and training;
- to standardize diagnostic procedures.

In cooperation with WHO, I am sure that our Member Societies can work with their government agencies to achieve these worthy aims and act as a resource centres for medical imaging technical technology.

May I again express my thanks to the Regional Committee for the invitation to attend this Meeting and for the opportunity to address this Session.