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**STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR M.P. DEVA  
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The World Psychiatric Association is the largest nongovernmental organization representing psychiatrists in the world and has member associations in 18 zones covering all six continents and over 85 countries. It has as its main function the improvement of psychiatry for the good of the mentally ill that psychiatrists care for. To this end, there are over 40 sections representing subspecialties in psychiatry that discuss and work on ways to improve their fields of work. Psychiatric conferences, research projects and studies are held regularly worldwide under the sponsorship of the WPA.

In this Region, a major WPA Regional Conference was held in Beijing, China and the next World Congress after the 1999 World Congress in Hamburg will be held in Yokohama, Japan. The World Psychiatric Association is represented by South Asian, East Asian and South Pacific Zonal Representatives in the WHO Western Pacific Region. Recently, a project to reduce stigma was started in this Region.

The World Psychiatric Association is keen to help countries in this Region to overcome the major problems in the area of mental health.