



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

REGIONAL COMMITTEE

WPR/RC42/DIV/3

**Forty-second session
Omiya, Japan
10-16 September 1991**

10 September 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**MESSAGE OF THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELFARE,
MR SHINICHIRO SHIMOJO, PRESENTED BY THE VICE-MINISTER,
MR TATSUHIKO SAKAMOTO, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
FORTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
WESTERN PACIFIC
OMIYA, JAPAN, 10 SEPTEMBER 1991**

Dr Nakajima, Director-General of WHO, Dr Han, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific, Distinguished Representatives, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the occasion of the opening of the forty-second session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific, I would like to extend my hearty welcome to all of you here present. It is indeed a great pleasure and honour for me that for the third time the Regional Committee is convened in Japan.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere respect and gratitude to the WHO staff for their accomplishments aiming at the goal of "Health for All" under the supervision of Dr Nakajima. I highly appreciate that the progress of health promotion in this Region has been considerable under the strong leadership of Dr Han.

At present the international situation is dramatically changing and affecting the life of all people. I regret to say that in many countries the gap between the rich and poor in health is getting wider rather than narrower. Health is the primary source of welfare of a human being. Therefore it is very important that we should endeavour to enable everyone to enjoy it. Our experience clearly demonstrates that a country's continued investment in promoting health leads to social and economic development. At present we are strongly urged to reach a consensus on investment towards a brighter future for mankind.

In the Western Pacific Region, a vast area with a huge population, we have a wide variety of difficult health tasks such as poliomyelitis eradication, hepatitis control, AIDS control, global environmental health, and solving health problems related to age and changing lifestyles. Thus the role of WHO as the international agency responsible for health is really important.

We are receiving many WHO fellows at WHO collaborating centres and sending many experts to other countries. We would like to strengthen our collaboration with WHO towards the improvement of medical and health conditions in the Western Pacific Region and in the world.

During the next week, the future health and medical programmes in our Region will be discussed. In addition we have arranged a field trip to a rural area, and we hope this can deepen your understanding of the present situation of Japan.

Finally I wish to express my sincere hope that this session will be fruitful and you will have a pleasant and memorable stay in Japan.

Thank you very much for your attention.