

Message for The International Osteoporosis Foundation
IOF World Congress on Osteoporosis
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, May

Standing Tall for Life

Ladies and gentlemen, less than twenty years ago public health authorities were scarcely aware that preventative measures for osteoporosis existed. And there certainly wasn't enough effective treatment for those who suffered. Many people expected that their twilight years would inevitably include pain and disability. Today, the situation is dramatically different.

The fight against osteoporosis has become a large, global, social and medical movement. Tremendous advances, have been made in the fields of science, healthcare, public awareness and public policy. And many of the people responsible for these achievements are sitting among you all today. So first of all, I think we should pause to congratulate the IOF on the remarkable strides that have been made in the diagnosis, treatment and publicity of this highly preventable disease. Thank you.

From Brazil to Bahrain...from Chile to China, the IOF now has members in more than eighty countries. Furthermore, it is increasing its global outreach at the heartening rate of some 20% per year. Whether it is implementing an education campaign, like we have undertaken in Jordan.... running training programs for physicians, as was recently done in the Dominican Republic....or encouraging scientific research to find new treatments.....men, women and children around the world are feeling the benefits.

Advances in treatment signal good news for governments and health authorities around the world. But the impact on the lives of thousands of individuals is even more inspiring. For someone threatened with the debilitating effects of osteoporosis, the promise of effective treatments offers a whole new lease on life. It means an opportunity to reclaim lives and fulfill dreams, without restrictions...without limits.

You are enabling people to stand tall and set their sights firmly on distant horizons, never before viewed.

As I say that, I am aware that there are still many more lives that need our help and I know that the demands for healthcare resources are still high. But in less than twenty years, your tireless work has transformed people's lives.

On my behalf....on the behalf of those fighting the battle with osteoporosis today....and especially in the name of those millions in the future who will be spared its ravages as a result of your dedication and perseverance I thank you and wish you a highly successful conference.