The Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference  
Bangkok and online, 15–17 November 2023  

Agenda Item 3: Thematic discussion on achievements, challenges, gaps and emerging issues in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific:

Statement by Dr Mikiko Kanda, Technical Lead for Healthy Ageing,  
Division of Healthy Environments and Populations,  
World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific  
(443 words, 3 minutes)

1. Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

2. Over recent decades, the Asia Pacific region has made significant progress in enhancing public health, extending lives and ensuring their well-being.

3. As we witness an inevitable demographic shift towards an older population, the significance of good health becomes paramount for societal productivity and sustainable progress.

4. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical relevance of people's health and welfare to the 2030 Agenda.

5. Looking ahead, our collective concerns unite us, covering challenges such as noncommunicable diseases and the profound impacts of rapid population ageing.
6. Confronting these challenges and preparing for the future requires unified efforts among nations to craft a comprehensive agenda for transforming health and social systems.

7. The UN's Decade of Healthy Ageing offers a pivotal opportunity to usher in transformative change and elevate the health and well-being of our older population.

8. Population ageing should be viewed not as a challenge but as an opportunity, given the substantial returns it offers from human, social and economic standpoints through good health.

9. Promoting healthy ageing is fundamental to ensuring that everyone enjoys the highest possible standard of health throughout their lives.

10. Investing in healthy ageing and creating increased avenues for older participation in society can alleviate soaring health-care costs while enhancing their contributions to society.

11. Nurturing healthy ageing necessitates a reorientation of our health systems, shifting from a focus on curative services and disease management to providing preventive and lifelong support for health promotion grounded in community-based integrated care and creating a health-enabling environment.

12. Addressing social determinants of health assumes equal importance, recognizing the profound influence of various factors beyond the realms of traditional health care.

13. Encouraging technological innovation, social entrepreneurship and community-driven solutions can hasten progress towards healthy ageing.
14. For instance, connecting the health sector with other relevant fields through social prescribing can tailor services to meet the specific needs and preferences of our older population.

15. Digital inclusion is increasingly recognized as a significant social determinant of health, with the potential to optimize other social factors and advance well-being as individuals age.

16. Forming stronger partnerships across multiple sectors and undertaking long-term collaborative initiatives can cultivate environments that promote health and offer opportunities aligned with individuals' values across their lifespan.

17. Recognizing that healthy ageing is a pathfinder for future societies, benefitting not only older people but also all generations now and in future, the World Health Organization is dedicated to collaborating with nations in transforming health and social systems towards promoting healthy ageing.

18. Thank you for your kind attention.