

It is an honour to candidate for President of World Physiotherapy. While acknowledging the enormity of this responsibility, I am resolute in my determination and commitment to serve the global community of physiotherapists. I am grateful to the Associations that nominated me.

Four years ago, I presented myself as a candidate for vice-president. It was a call to action very different than the one for which I present myself today. Leading World Physiotherapy as President requires determination, focus, clarity of mind and a vision that is integral to the values of such a Confederation of Member Organisations. My experience teaches me that if we want to be successful, we must share these values. Hence, I present my vision, and purpose, that reaches out to the heart of the confederation.

**My vision is that World Physiotherapy serves the best interests of the Confederation, always.**

**My purpose shall be to bring the Member Organisations, the Regions, and Subgroups into the centre of the interests of World Physiotherapy and to uphold the ethos of the Confederation.**

To ensure this, I am guided by principles which are rooted in the reason for the foundation of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) and which intertwine with my own views. WCPT was established in 1951 by 11 founding Member Organisations on the wave of political, socio-economic and health problems that were sweeping across much of the globe following World War II. The founders envisioned an organisation that would promote interchange of professional and scientific knowledge, to better the link between countries and within the profession itself. Today, more than 70 years later, and with 128 Member Organisations, we face parallel challenges, and hence it is as important and necessary as ever to uphold the guiding principles of our founders. I steadfastly commit to continue building upon the good work that is ongoing; and where change is required, I also commit to guiding the next Board to make those tough decisions to bring that change about.

My vision is built on three pillars, each of which is aligned to the strategic plan of World Physiotherapy (2022 and beyond) and rooted in the values of connecting, belonging, empowering, and collaborating. These are: 1. Confederation, 2. Financial sustainability, and 3. Physiotherapy Congress.

### **1. Value to the Confederation**

A critical aspect to adding value to the Confederation shall be empowering Member Organisations, and the structures such as Regions and Subgroups, through a decentralisation approach. This shall ensure that operations will truly reflect the interests of the Member Organisations and will be guided by them. World Physiotherapy shall work to strengthen the regionalisation process, being responsive to the unique needs of the Regions. World Physiotherapy shall take on the role of facilitating the collaboration and cooperation between Regions, and amongst Member Organisations. World Physiotherapy shall continue to strengthen the Subgroups, and to ensure that they function collaboratively with Member Organisations and Regions.

In support of this I am proposing that World Physiotherapy instates the role and function of a Secretary General. The purpose of the Secretary General shall be to represent the interests of the Member Organisations and with specific functions such as membership matters and mediation. The Secretary General should be elected by, and from the Member Organisations, and report back to the Member Organisations at the General Meetings.

Enriching the value of membership of the Confederation will take place by putting the Member Organisations at the heart of the work of World Physiotherapy and ensuring that important decisions are taken in a transparent and democratic process, recognising the unique limitations that many Member Organisations experience.

## **2. Financial sustainability**

The diligence of the Board in the past years, guided by a cautious work ethic and a responsible finance committee, means World Physiotherapy sits in a financially secure position. However, with value for membership being questioned as global economic priorities shift, amid a turmoil of international events, we must ensure that World Physiotherapy will continue to be a financially sustainable organisation. This presents as a great challenge, as we seek to weigh up the implications. My view is that economic viability should guide decisions to ensure that economic benefits exceed the economic costs. This shall have to consider the value that Member Organisations hold in their relationship with World Physiotherapy, and to ensure this it shall be fundamental to link the work of World Physiotherapy to the values of the Confederation.

Diverse income streams must be scoped to maintain the current organisational capacity without adding burden to the Member Organisations. We will need to assess the current organisational capacity, and I commit to undertaking this in the first six months of my term, to ensure sustainable practice.

## **3. Physiotherapy Congress**

As President, together with the Board, I would seek to re-engineer a Congress in 2027 that is affordable for all, innovative in style, and that champions the values of global engagement. In 2027 I dream for a world congress that is split over two sites and runs over two consecutive periods, and participants are eligible to attend both events with the same ticket. The world congress shall be guided by the image of a global physiotherapy village, coordinated by World Physiotherapy, and organised with the Regions and Subgroups. The world congress shall champion cultural and professional diversities and be a global showcase of all that is good in physiotherapy. There shall be a participation fee capping established with the Regions and Member Organisations that will ensure equity of access, whilst working together with Regions and Subgroups on content, and to ensure economic and financial viability.

I look forward to the discussions and conversations to take place in the coming months, in unity as one global family of physiotherapists.

John Xerri de Caro

Malta, December 2022