

PERSONAL STATEMENT

It is my pleasure that I introduce myself to you as Major (Rtd) Jean Damascene GASHEREBUKA, a Physiotherapy Specialist from Rwanda, the Country of Thousand Hills. I have been a Clinician, an Educator, a Mentor, and a Regulator respectively.

Back home, I am one of the pioneers and founders of the Rwanda Physiotherapy Organization of which I became President from 2008 -2014. I am also the champion of the Rwanda Allied Health Professions Council, a regulatory body that regulates all allied health professions including physiotherapy profession; where I occupied the position of Chairperson of the Board of Directors from 2013 to 2020; and then was hired as Registrar & CEO of the Council since August 2020 until now.

I am also the Chairperson of the Steering Committee of Rwanda Health Sector Skills Council (under Rwanda Development Board), a national organ responsible for the capacity development of all health professionals in Rwanda.

Regionally, I was the initiator of the East Africa Physiotherapy Subgroup which is a platform put in place in 2010 to promote research, good practice and ethics; and currently I was elected as the Vice President of the Steering Committee in the process of harmonization of allied health training programs and practice in East African Region.

I have been involved in the leadership of the World Physiotherapy since 2008 when I attended the World Confederation for Physical Therapy Congress for the first time in Abuja/ Nigeria, during which I was elected as the Secretary of the Executive Committee for Africa Region. Since that time my zeal to promote the physiotherapy profession in Africa Region and to serve its interests globally have been manifested and keeps increasing until now. After serving four years as Secretary, I was entrusted to be the President of the Executive Committee of WCPT Africa Region for a period of 2 years (2012-2014).

During my leadership, with my ability of being bilingual, and with the support of international stakeholders, the membership of the Africa region increased following my approach towards the francophone physiotherapy associations which lead to their admission and integration to the big family of Physiotherapy representing all Physiotherapists around the world (WCPT). The integration of the Francophone physiotherapists provided an opportunity to the WCPT to initiate the SUDA Project in 2016, with the objectives of strengthening physiotherapy services in the Western part of the Africa Region; and I was among the few mentors that were selected to implement the project. The success of the SUDA project had a big impact on that region of Africa which attracted many other countries that were not concerned by the project to join WCPT, hence increasing the membership of the Africa Region and globally.

For the last four years, I have been elected as World Physiotherapy Board Member for Africa and my experience in leadership and governance has been improving. Serving as Executive board member allowed me to be part of the global vision of the World Physiotherapy so that everyone can have easy access to physiotherapy services of quality wherever he/she may be, and to advocate for the profession all over the world.

Despite the two years of COVID -19 that negatively affected all aspects of life around the whole world, effective teamwork between the Executive Board and the Permanent Secretariat staff allowed the Institution to set up various activities based on the existing four strategic pillars to ensure its sustainability and influence. The World Physiotherapy remains the only connector of physiotherapists all around the world, it has initiated many reforms to impact and advance the Physiotherapy profession to increase its visibility globally by strengthening regional leadership and creating strong partnerships in global rehabilitation and health sector in general; and it has manifested strong financial stability despite the odds and storms caused by the pandemic.

If I am nominated as Executive Board for Africa Region for the next four years, I will remain aligned to the key strategic objectives of the World Physiotherapy, focusing on its vision and mission; by involving others, improving relationships with all regions, sub groups and other stakeholders; by being transparent about our work and activities; using clear processes and allocating available resources with equity and efficiency.

I thank you, in advance for your support, regards

Major (Rtd) Jean Damascene GASHEREBUKA

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