

**Remarks by Queen Rania**  
**International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) Women Leaders' Roundtable**

Lisbon, Portugal  
May 11, 2002

Let me say hello and welcome to all of you...and thank you for spending your time with us today.

I'd like to extend my special thanks to the members of the media who have joined us...to the IOF sponsors who have made this meeting possible...and to my distinguished colleagues on this Roundtable. I am glad to see so many old friends...women who have worked together on this important issue for a number of years. And I am delighted to see new faces. You are a sign of how much our global alliance has grown and the leadership that is contributing to its success.

Gathered in this room is immense energy and intellect and capability. You are the backbone of this movement...and I believe that with your help, our movement will only become stronger and stronger.

Our meeting today draws on women's experience and insight about the challenges of osteoporosis and the directions we should go. And this is tremendously important: Because, history shows that only when women are active advocates for our healthcare, do our concerns get the attention and priority they need...in research, in developing diagnostic and treatment options, and in providing services and covering the costs.

Women's leadership is especially important when it comes to osteoporosis...because this is a disease where prevention is key...and prevention only succeeds when women are directly involved, informed and respected. For millions of families around the world, it is the women who have the main role in household diet and other activities, like exercise, that build healthy bones. It is women who educate daughters. It is women who manage healthcare for older parents. But women have another important role, and that is to spearhead change. We are the ones who can keep the focus of the research world, the medical community, government, and the private sector on this terrible disease.

We just saw a video about all that Regina Prado has experienced due to osteoporosis. Her story is tragic, but it is more than that: It is an outrage. This

Congress and all its participants are providing abundant evidence of the scientific, diagnostic and treatment advances that are making this kind of suffering unnecessary. Yet every day, millions of people like Regina, men and women in every one of our countries, are losing their mobility, their independence, their hope...even their lives.

The key to ending this tragedy--as all of us involved with IOF know so well--is to take action before the first fracture. First, to prevent...to diagnose early...to make effective treatments available. Second, we must continue doing all we can to promote research and development into new diagnosis and treatment options. Our aim should be to reach even more people, even more effectively...again, before that first fracture occurs.

If you look around this room and this roundtable, you will see many of the people who will be important in this effort--through their leadership, commitment, and professional work.

Again, thank you for coming. I look forward to all you have to contribute, today and in the days ahead.