Good Afternoon / Konnichiwa
Ladies and Gentlemen

Firstly, I would like to say a very big thank you to the Japanese government and the Japanese NGOs for the various help given to us. On behalf of the ex-JICA participants in the Okinawa Project, we appreciate your gratitude and your kindness to develop the Massage Education for the Visually Impaired People in Asia Pacific Region.

As a team, the Japanese Government and the Japanese NGOs collaborated in sharing their expertise and efforts to develop Massage Training Program for the Visually Impaired People in other countries. They also worked hard to make massage as a profession for Visually Impaired People.

As an ex-JICA participant in the Okinawa Project: Therapeutic Massage Instructor Training from September 2004 to February 2005, I was exposed to many new ideas in many aspect and the team work experiences between the Japanese government, NGOs and the public in develop massage education for visually impaired people. I benefited tremendously from this course. I gained a lot of new knowledge in teaching techniques. At the same time, I had the opportunity to meet other participants from other countries in the Asia pacific region.

Massage has become very popular all over the world. It has also become very popular in my country Malaysia. Even though the massage profession can be similar to Japan, Korea and Taiwan (because it is being done by visually impaired people), the question is, how do we promote and encourage the visually impaired people in Asia Pacific Region to undergo a proper massage training course so that they can be trained as professional therapists.

Being involved in the massage field since 1984 (more than twenty years), I have tried to develop massage education for the visually impaired people in my country after I attended the second WBU Massage Seminar in Tsukuba, Japan early 1990s. I became more confident in developing the massage education program for the visually impaired after I attended the Okinawa Project.

Since I came back from the Okinawa Project, I did some research on the following:
1. Massage Education Curriculum at the Special Education Department. I got very positive response.
2. Promote massage by a small group of visually impaired people. (similar to Japan’s Health Keeper). We got very positive response.
3. Organize a few half day massage workshop. It was a positive response.

I would like to say thank you to the Japanese Government, JICA and other related organizations in wanting to develop massage education in Asia Pacific region. Once again I
would like to thank you for inviting me as a speaker so that I can share my views and ideas. I understand that you have a five year plan for this program.

With my ability and experiences that I have, I would like to take this opportunity to work together with all of you in order to develop the massage education program for the region. I know that I cannot succeed in developing this program alone but with the help and collaboration from all parties concerned, I know that we can make it a success and this will definitely benefit the visually impaired people in the Asia Pacific Region.

Today, I would like to take this opportunity in sharing my ideas with all of you in this symposium.

Yes, we have to start something and somewhere. Then, we will know on what to do and how to do. Then we will know on how to improve from time to time.

Through the Asian Foundation Council for Medical Massage Instructors Network, we can form the Asian Development Massage Education Committee.

1. ASIAN DEVELOPMENT MASSAGE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
   Japan should lead.
   Objectives
   1. To cooperate with Japan ideas.
   2. To share the ideas with the various countries.
   3. To know each country’s problems.

After we have the Committee for Asian Development Massage Education, we can organize and set-up the Asian Massage Academy for Visually Impaired People.

2. Asian Massage Academy For Visually Impaired People
   Base Place: Malaysia
   Reasons:
   1. Average cost of living.
   2. Multi racial country.
   3. Can use English as the medium of instruction.

   Objectives
   1. To prepare Medical Massage Instructors for their own individual country (Asian Countries or Asia Pacific Region)
   2. To educate the Visually Impaired People in the Asian Countries or Asia Pacific Region in Massage Education.
   3. To make massage as a Profession.
   4. To standardize the Curriculum in Massage Education for Visually Impaired People over the Asia Pacific Region.

Through this Asian Medical Massage Academy we can provide the following:
1. Braille textbooks.
2. Medical Massage Dictionaries.
3. Massage equipment.
4. All types of teaching aids.
5. Others

CURRICULUM
We will use the Japanese curriculum as Japan has a very systematic curriculum for massage education for the visually impaired people.

CERTIFICATION
Because not all countries in Asia Pacific Region can provide proper academic education for the visually impaired children, we should have a certain level of certification in massage education. They are as follow:
1. Certificate Level
   Two years program (basic).
2. Diploma Level
   Three years program (intermediate).
3. Degree Level
   Five years program (advance).
4. Ph.d Level
   Seven years program (research based)

LICENSE
The Local Government should give license to the following:
1. Certificate and Diploma Level
   License of Therapist Assistant
2. Degree and Ph.d Level
   License for Massage Clinic owner, and/or as a Teacher for Visually Impaired Student.

From my point of view, this program can help to develop the visually impaired people in Asia Pacific Countries.

I hope the Asia Foundation Council of Medical Massage Instructors Network will be able to accept this idea and proposal and make it into a reality.

Thank you.