

VOSH/International participates in the SPECS 2030 Meeting in Geneva

SPECS 2030 (**S**ervices **P**ersonnel **E**ducation **C**ost and **S**urveillance) is an initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO) to increase access to refractive correction from the current 36% to 76% by 2030.

During May 15th-16th, 2024, organizations in the eyecare field were invited to the launch of the initiative and the inaugural meeting of the Global SPECS network. The meeting was held at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. VOSH /International was one of the organizations chosen to participate as a member of the Global SPECS network. President Héctor Santiago represented VOSH/International and was actively involved at the meeting. In particular, in the workforce stream.

At the opening session, President Santiago thanked WHO for the invitation. Santiago expressed the need for a broader representation of all world regions, including Latin America. He reiterated the objective of VOSH/International to promote professional optometric education. He expressed the concern that in some countries, non-optometric organizations oppose the development of optometric education. The opposition to higher professional education will defeat the achievement of the SPECS 2030 goals. He expected that the SPECS 2030 initiative would allow all stakeholders to work together for the benefit of humanity.

During the meeting, Santiago interacted with several partners and representatives. Among them was Ms. Jackeline Grove from 20/20 Quest and National Vision; Prof Tuwani Rasengane from the University of the Free State of South Africa and faculty adviser of the SVOSH-UFS chapter; Prof Kovin Naidoo from the OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation; Dr. Sandra Block, President of the World Council of Optometry, Kimberley Middleton and Fiona Lawless from Sightsavers; Dr Ivo Kocur, CEO of the International Council of Ophthalmology, Alarcos Cieza, Unit Head, and Stuart Keel, Technical Officer of the WHO Department of Noncommunicable Diseases, Rehabilitation, and Disability. Although not attending in person Dr. Yazan Gammoh, Al-Alhiyya Amman University, Jordan and faculty adviser of the SVOSH-AAU chapter was recognized as a member of the Foundation Committee of SPECS.

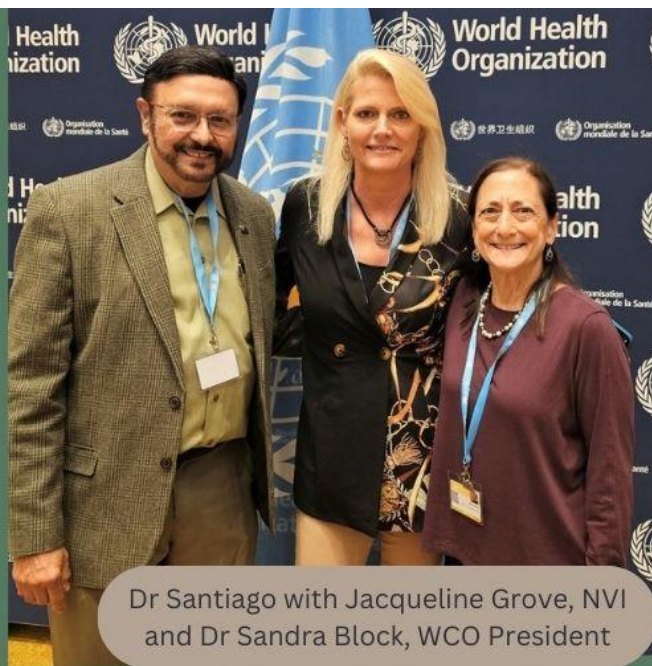
The workstreams will continue meeting regularly to achieve the SPECS 2030 objectives.

More information on the SPECS initiative can be found here.

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/specs-2030/global-specs-network>



Dr Santiago participating at the WHO SPECS 2030 inaugural meeting.



Dr Santiago with Jacqueline Grove, NVI and Dr Sandra Block, WCO President



Dr Santiago with WHO Alarcos Cieza and Silvio Paolo Mariotti



Dr Santiago with Prof. Tuwani Rasengane, SVOSH-UFS-South Africa



VOSH/INTERNATIONAL IS A PROUD MEMBER OF





With Dr. Ivo Kocur from the International Council of Ophthalmology