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Association**

Every Child · Every Age · Everywhere

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IPA Statement on Support Child Protection in Afghanistan

The International Pediatric Association (IPA) expresses deep concern towards child marriages and selling of children in Afghanistan. This crime is an act of violation towards children's right to safety, hinders children from a safe environment resulting in toxic stress which can have a lasting effect on health across their lives. As well as, inflict both health and psychological trauma to these children and their families.

In alignment with IPA constitution, we should voice children's rights and protect them against child marriages and selling of children. We should voice children's rights and leave no one behind regardless of their age, race, or birthplace. By ensuring these rights, only then we can safeguard children's health, well-being, and bright future.

Child marriages and selling of children in Afghanistan will bring anger and frustration, have both direct effects on children's physical health and indirect harms through chronic fear, toxic stress and deprivation. As a result, Afghanistan children will bear a significant burden, including physical, mental, developmental and behavioral health (increased prevalence of posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, behavioral and psychosomatic complaints) which will persist long through their lives.

As pediatricians we are committed to the health and well-being of children everywhere, to safeguard children's health and well-being for a bright future for all, without racial or ethnic privileges and hierarchies, where all people can live as equals. We urge to avert children's detention and abuse within this conflict in Afghanistan, strive for a fair, equal and dignified treatment of our children. Therefore, these behaviors will continue to impose a heavy price to be paid by children, until it is completely dismantled, to have rights of protection and keep them safe from harm.

This letter serves as an official position statement and we urge the United Nation's call to action to avert children's marriage and selling within this longstanding conflict in Afghanistan. We should all strive for fair, equal, and dignified treatment of children, under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Our actions are imperative to prevent further violence, as this would inflict both health and psychological trauma to the children, as well as family structure destructions.

IPA: working for Every Child, Every Age, Everywhere

Prof. Enver Hasanoglu
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On behalf of IPA Standing Committee