

The International Pediatric Association, devoted to the well-being of children across the globe, is composed of 167 national, regional and subspecialty pediatric societies representing over one million pediatricians has issued the following declaration.

A DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION ON THE FAMILY SEPARATION AND INCARCERATION POLICIES OF UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AT ITS BORDERS.

All countries have a moral obligation to protect children, both within their country as well as those refugees fleeing danger from elsewhere. The future of the world rests on this obligation.

THEREFORE:

The International Pediatric Association (IPA), representing over 144 nations, hereby expresses our opposition to those polices being employed by the government of the United States of America that result in the incarceration of children with or without their families at United States borders.

Medical science has documented the irreparable harm that such separations and imprisonment can cause in children. The imposition of toxic stress caused by such family separations has been found to cause profound and long-lasting emotional and physical damage to children. It is the position of the IPA that the United States government should take immediate action to cease such separations and incarcerations. It is the policy of the member countries of the International Pediatric Association that all countries should promote protection of their children as well as protection of refugee children seeking to enter borders. When the separation of children from their parents is necessary for the safety and well-being of the child careful inter-agency records must be kept detailing the location of the child to permit the rapid and effective reunification of the family.

The IPA urges all governments to fulfill their moral obligation to not expose refugee children to conditions and settings that will further traumatize them.