

SAFEGUARDING HEALTH IN CONFLICT

PROTECTING HEALTH WORKERS, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

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Safeguarding Health in Conflict
c/o IntraHealth International
1776 Eye St. NW, Suite 650
Washington, DC 20006 United States

Dr. Margaret Chan
WHO Director-General
World Health Organization
Avenue Appia 20
1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

January 21, 2013

Dear Dr. Chan:

We, the undersigned, share your shock and distress over the recent attacks on polio eradication campaign workers in Pakistan. Sadly, these attacks are a manifestation of the much broader problem of violence against health workers and health services. Violence against health care is a commonplace occurrence that usually escapes broad public attention, in spite of its terrible consequences.

We appreciate your leadership on behalf of the safety of health workers. Your support for the resolution passed last May at the World Health Assembly providing global leadership in the collection and dissemination of data on attacks on health workers is an important step toward prevention of these atrocities. We look forward to your continued guidance and inspiration in implementing the resolution.

As members of the NGO and academic communities, we stand ready to partner with the WHO to devise methods for collecting, aggregating, and disseminating data on violence against health care. We will support the WHO in developing the technical means to carry out its mandate.

We recognize that the protection of health workers will ultimately require a much wider movement, involving the broader global health community and concerned political leaders. We believe we should all respond to these attacks by redoubling our efforts to protect health in conflict. We stand ready to work with the WHO in galvanizing a comprehensive effort to protect health workers. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

Accordia; AMREF; Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses; Doctors for Human Rights; Global Health through Education, Training and Service; International Association of Providers of AIDS Care; International Council of Nurses; International Health Protection Initiative; International Medical Corps; IntraHealth International; Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation; Management Sciences for Health; Medact; Merlin; Pathfinder International; Physicians for Human Rights; Save the Children; World Medical Association

