

World Federation of Associations of Paediatric Surgeons



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Statement from the World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons (WOFAPS)

On Safeguarding Children in Armed Conflict

The World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons (WOFAPS) expresses its profound concern for the physical, emotional, and developmental wellbeing of children affected by armed conflicts worldwide including, but not limited to, Gaza, Sudan, and Ukraine.

As pediatric surgeons, our commitment is unwavering: every child deserves access to health, healing, safety, and hope.

Children carry the heaviest burdens of war—not by choice, but by circumstance. In such times, the role of caregivers and medical professionals becomes even more critical.

WOFAPS therefore reaffirms the following principles:

- **Childhood is inviolable** — no child should be deprived of protection, education, or the opportunity to grow into a healthy and hopeful adult.
- **Medical care is sacred** — healthcare facilities, pediatric surgical teams, and humanitarian workers must remain neutral, protected, and shielded from harm.
- **Healing extends beyond surgery** — children's recovery includes mental health support, restoration of normalcy, and opportunities for play and learning.

We call on all parties involved in armed conflicts to:

1. **Protect children from violence** — safeguard them from physical harm, psychological trauma, and disruptions to education and social development.
2. **Ensure uninterrupted access to healthcare** — particularly life-saving pediatric surgical services, regardless of the evolution of conflict.
3. **Preserve the neutrality of medical spaces** — uphold hospitals and clinics as sanctuaries for healing, never as targets of attack.
4. **Support resilience and recovery** — enable psychosocial support, education, safe reunification with family, and the creation of safe spaces where children can grow even amid crisis.

WOFAPS stands in solidarity with pediatric surgeons, nurses, and caregivers who continue their vital work under extraordinarily challenging conditions. Above all, we stand with the children—the most fundamental priority—whose courage and vulnerability compel us to act.

The protection of children in conflict transcends politics. It is not optional; it is an urgent humanitarian obligation.

On behalf of World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons (WOFAPS)


Alp Numanoglu
President

Date: 25 August 2025

Udo Rolle
President Elect


Shilpa Sharma
Secretary General