



European Junior Doctors

## **Statement of Solidarity and Support for the Afghan Junior Doctors and Medical Students.**

The European Junior Doctors Association stands with the Afghan junior doctors and medical students, in particular female students and female staff in the healthcare field who are prohibited from continuing their education and training due to the recent political ban which has outlawed young girls and women from pursuing higher education.

Access to education is one of the basic human rights, included in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and must be endorsed by every government and the international community. The medical profession has the duty to support fair and equitable provision of health care. This includes addressing inequities in health and care, the determinants of those inequities, as well as violations of the rights of both patients and health professionals.

The World Medical Association states that “A lack of gender representation and diversity within the medical profession may lead to female patients and their children not having equitable access to health care. Discrimination against girls and women damages their health expectation. It serves as a barrier to accessing health services, affects the quality of health services provided, and reinforces exclusion from society for women and girls.” Without the presence of educated women, fewer medical professionals would be on hand to serve the population that is already facing enormous challenges due to decades of war and instability, which would be disastrous for the economy as well as the well-being of the Afghan people.

European Junior Doctors condemn the ban on higher education for women and girls in Afghanistan and call on the government of Afghanistan to repeal these restrictions and violations to basic human rights.

We join our colleagues in the international medical community to strongly advocate for the human rights of all citizens to be honoured, including the right to access higher education and the ability to participate in the labour force.

Brussels, 8 February 2023

### *References*

- United Nations. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- World Medical Association Resolution on access of women and children to care and the role of women in the medical profession  
<https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-resolution-on-access-of-women-and-children-to-health-care-and-the-role-of-women-in-the-medical-profession/>
- World Medical Association Statement on gender equality in medicine <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-statement-on-gender-equality-in-medicine/>
- WMA Code of Ethics <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-international-code-of-medical-ethics/#:~:text=The%20primary%20duty%20of%20the,good%20medical%20practice%20and%20professionalism.>