

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
International Islamic Fiqh Academy

**Second Declaration of the
International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA) on the
Obligatory Nature of Polio Vaccination**

**Praise be to the Lord of the Universe and Peace and
Blessings Be Upon our Prophet Mohammad and
His Kin and Companions**

Proceeding from its Islamic position as the Islamic Ummah's Jurisprudence reference, and prompted by its belief in the scholars' duty as agents of advice; having received reports on the successes achieved by the inoculation campaigns in Islamic States putting a stop to the spread of polio, except in certain states such as Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan; and in concomitance with the new campaigns launched by the governments of these countries, the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA), issued from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, renews its call to all parents, fathers, mothers and guardians of children across the globe to respond to those campaigns and see to it that their sons and daughters get vaccinated against polio, as this vaccination has proven to be – with a grace of God – an effective medium to spare them the evils and hardships of this vicious disease which has no treatment and causes permanent disfiguration and crippling effects that condemn the child to a life devoid of joy. This is therefore a Shariah-commanded duty, a trust placed in the hands of the guardians of kids whose neglect makes them accountable before God. The relevant Islamic States' authorities have had ample proof that the vaccines used are safe from any pork products; and trustworthy experts have ascertained that they contain no agents that may cause infertility in girls later, and all world states, including the Islamic States, have agreed that these vaccines have been given to newborn babies and to children without any harm resulting from the procedure.

This duty is required of the parents and guardians as of the first day of the child's birth and extends until the age of six, including a full abidance by the set inoculation schedule such as to ensure the anticipated benefits for the child. This is in addition to other

inoculations such as against tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus and the whooping cough as well as against epidemic hepatitis and scarlet fever. All these inoculations and other similar ones have resulted – with the grace of God – in the elimination of multiple epidemics and infectious diseases that used to wreak havoc amongst humans such as pests and smallpox.

IIFA's Council has issued authorization for the ruler (represented by the state or government) (whose decrees are linked to the public good) to make it compulsory for citizens to take all necessary protections such as to guard against epidemics and their spread. As a matter of fact para b of article 3 of IIFA Council's resolution No: 67 (7/5) of the year 1412H (1992 G) on medical treatment, stipulates "A ruler may impose medication in certain cases, as in the case of infectious diseases and preventive health measures"

All the scholars and jurists of IIFA, representing their Islamic Member States, nurture the hope to see all current and future generations of the Islamic Ummah enjoying God's gift to mankind in the form of good health and wellbeing, on a forward track toward prosperity and welfare. Indeed the healthier the children are (boys and girls), the better the future of the Ummah will be.

IIFA recommends all world states to look at these issues as a high priority humanitarian concern and recommends that Islamic states in particular and their various organizations consider the issue as of particular import to the entire Ummah, to be placed high among their priorities, in favour of which they should do all possible to remove any obstacles and difficulties.

In this respect, IIFA's General Secretariat denounces the Fatwas (rulings) issued by some erring parties who have prohibited vaccinations, founding their views on irrelevant information and fallacious ideas, not measuring the grave consequences that may result from their rulings in terms of exposing to this appalling disease the innocent children whose only fault would have been that their parents heeded their opinions.

IIFA recommends that preachers and Imams, counselors and teachers motivate people in their speeches to respond to the vaccination campaigns according to the prescribed schedules, particularly in times of national campaigns, and to combat the deviationist and erroneous rulings that prohibit the use of those vaccines and inoculations or cast doubt and cause disruption without there being any foundation for their claims.

IIFA strongly condemns the act perpetrated by certain criminals who have killed some innocent agents working in the medical teams active in the anti-polio campaigns or other health pursuit, or who have taken such agents as hostages using them as blackmail in their negotiations in favour of whatever claims, public or private, a practice

strongly prohibited by Islamic Shariah and all other Shariahs (Religious Laws), covenants and international law.

IIFA further denounces the exploitation of the vaccination campaigns for any party's interest – publicly declared or hidden agendas – which have nothing to do with medicine, as undertaken by certain sponsors of such vaccination campaigns, such exploitation being in violation of conventions, standards and medical ethics.

IIFA has already issued in the year 1430H (2009 G) a detailed declaration encouraging vaccinations against polio, which included Shariah-grounded rulings and proofs in support of the fact that vaccination forms a duty, and it wishes hereby to reaffirm the same, in particulars that:

- It is a duty for everyone to protect his body and that of any of his dependents, to see to their safety and to keep them away from any harm as much as possible, as 1. God Almighty says: “.....

(Surat Al Baaqaa verse 195)

Indeed preserving the body against every harm is one of the key duties in Islamic Sharia. This is confirmed by the rule of “Keep harm and harmful agents at bay”, which forms one of the Prophet's sayings as reported by Ibn Abbas. The Messenger of God (PBUH), he related, said “Keep harm and harmful agents at bay” [verified by Imam Ahmed in his “Masnad”, by Al Hakim in his “Al Mustadrak, and others].

- Islam assigns fathers and mothers a great responsibility in preserving the welfare of their sons, daughters and dependents in all matters, including their health, particularly for those under the age of puberty. This was the subject of many Hadiths (Prophet's sayings) including: “Each one of you is a steward, accountable for (the wellbeing of) his followers. So is the man in his family. He too is accountable for his fold. The woman too, in her home is accountable for her dependants.” [verified by al Bukhari and Muslim].

The Prophet (PBUH) also says: “What an awful sin for a man to neglect this dependent” [Al Mustadrak, and the Saheehayn].

- God Almighty graciously created Man in the best form. Allah says:

(Surat, Al Teen Verse 4)

God, Exalted be He, praised his Prophet Zachariah (Peace be Upon Him) when he asked for ‘a wholesome progeny’, whereby ‘wholesome’ means healthy in spirit and body. Allah, Mighty and Sublime be He also says:

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At that, Zechariah called upon his Lord, saying, "My Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring. Indeed, You are the Hearer of supplication."

(Surat Al Imran: 38)

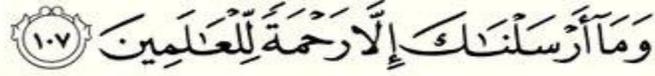
Islam encourages people to seek wellness and strength such as to benefit their living. Abu Huraira (May Allah be Satisfied with Him) reported: “The Prophet (PBUH) said: “A strong believer is preferred and favoured in Allah’s sight compared to a weak believer, though both are appreciated. So be diligent in preserving what is of benefit to you” [verified by Muslim in his book “Sahih Muslim”, Chapter on the advocacy of strength and eschewing weakness and helplessness].

- Also there are many Hadiths urging one to seek medication and health recovery. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Seek medication for health recovery. Indeed Allah has not let any disease pass without setting a treatment for it, except for the disease of ‘old age” [verified by Abu Daoud, Tirmizi and Ahmed].
- Vaccination against polio is a protective treatment against a disease before it afflicts the individual – This is what is known today as Preventive Medicine – This is a principle well established and approved by Islam. Indeed the Prophet (PBUH) is reported to have said: “Whoever starts his day with seven dates shall be immune from black magic and poison” [verified by Al Bukhari, Chapter on medication with date paste” – Islam also approved the principle as it prescribed quarantining pest-afflicted individuals in the Prophet’s words: “If you hear of the pest prevailing in a country, do not enter that country. And if the pest hits a country where you happen to be, then do not leave that country”. [verified by Al Bukhari, Chapter on what must be noted on pests]
- Islam also calls on people to benefit from every scientific research or achievement likely to ease Man’s living on earth. Islam indeed has been set to help Man achieve happiness and wellbeing on earth and in the hereafter – Allah, Exalted be He says:

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And We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed [Our message]. So ask the people of the message if you do not know.

(Al Nahl:43)



And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.

(Surat Al Anbiya, Verse 107)

- Protecting oneself with vaccination does not clash with the idea of “Surrendering oneself to God in the first place”. Just as in the case of thirst or hunger or in the case of (defending one’s body against) cold and heat – Rather the idea of full surrender to and reliance on God is fulfilled indeed when one does his best to address the affliction, even though it may be willed by God for reasons and purposes known only to Him. In fact, neglecting vaccination may be a causal agent for harm, which makes it a sin.

(A.A. Abridged text)

May the Prayers of God and His Peace and Blessings be Upon our Prophet Mohammad and His Kin and Compassions and Followers till the Day of Judgment.

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