

## **Statement from the IPA President regarding Violence towards Migrant Children**

Available in: [Chinese](#), [Farsi](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Greek](#), [Hebrew](#), [Italian](#), [Portuguese](#), [Spanish](#), [Turkish](#).

News in the international media in recent weeks concerning the alarming decision to separate children of migrants from their families in the United States has thrown into sharp relief the heart-breaking abusive situation faced by children both there and in other parts of the world, such as in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and Africa.

The circumstances faced by refugees and their families has been desperate for many years now, but what has happened in the United States in recent months has raised to new levels the worldwide indignation against those who fail to respect the basic rights of the individual.

The International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) as an institution has created spaces specifically for the in-depth study of this problem and also to offer assistance whenever necessary to those in need based on the theory and practice of Psychoanalysis. We have recently introduced a new programme called IPA in the Community which is made up of a number of our committees such as Migration and Refugees, Humanitarian Organisations, Education, Health, and Violence. They work hand-in-hand with the Committee on Child and Adolescent Psychoanalysis and the Inter-Committee Project on Child Abuse to research and develop community action projects which aim to reduce the pain and effect of the traumatic uprooting suffered by migrants and refugees as a result of policies which result in millions of people enduring inhuman experiences.

Pioneers of Psychoanalysis such as Sigmund Freud, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott, Serge Lebovici, and many others who have followed in their footsteps, have tried assiduously to understand the delicate balance of the psycho-emotional development of children and the way in which traumatic situations interfere with this.

Therefore, we would like to take the opportunity to repudiate energetically any and all forms of violence against children and adolescents which alter the essential variables of upbringing all around the world. We include in this the forced or early separation of the family and the lack of basic care and respect for the rights of children and adolescents. As mental healthcare professionals, it is our obligation to protect children and young people and defend them against any form whatsoever of violence or threat which in any way impedes their safe and secure development as human beings.

Virginia Ungar, IPA President  
Sergio Nick, IPA Vice President  
JULY 2018