

MWIA POSITION STATEMENTS
San Paolo 1998

1.

**URGENT STATEMENT FOR THE CONDEMNATION OF
TRADITIONAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES HARMFUL TO
WIDOWS, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA AND ASIA**

MWIA strongly condemns the cultural and traditional practices that harm widows.

MWIA reviews these violations of human rights as cruel, dehumanising and repugnant.

MWIA strongly recommends honest, accurate research mainstreaming the gender perspective, into the extent of these practices in countries where they exist.

MWIA further calls on governments to discharge their duties to protect widows from such practices and to abolish totally these violations of the human rights of women.

The perpetrators must be prosecuted.

2.

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN

Issued at the end of the .

24th International Congress of MWIA

24th Congress of the Pan American Medical Women's Alliance

29th Congress of the Brazilian Medical Women's Association
held in Sao Paulo,]Brazil from the 8th - 13 October 1998.

MWIA has received reports from Afghanistan about violations of the rights of women doctors especially their right to earn a livelihood.

This is clearly a breach of the fundamental Human Rights of women as articulated in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights

There are also reports about the lack of access of Afghan women to appropriate health care, as male doctors are not allowed to treat female patients.

MWIA strongly condemns the violence and oppressive practices of the Taliban militia in Afghanistan. They have failed in their duty to protect the fundamental freedoms, social rights, professional lives and benefits of all Afghan women

including women physicians and other women professionals. These women are now in virtual captivity, confined to their homes and forbidden to practice their vitally important professions.

MWIA strongly condemns these human rights violations. imposed on women that result in refusal of essential health care to women.

MWIA also strongly condemns all barriers and impediments that obstruct women from unfettered and free health care access.

MWIA demands IMMEDIATE economic sanctions against the Taliban, and the continued refusal of recognition of the Taliban militia by the International family of Nations.