

Date: March 6th, 2023

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.  
World Health Organization  
WHO Headquarters Avenue Appia 20  
1211  
Geneva 27

Subject: Chemical Attack on Girls' Schools in Iran

Dear Dr. Ghebreyesus,

We, a group of individuals with Iranian heritage who are healthcare experts, are writing to address the recent incidents of poisoning among Iranian schoolgirls.

Over 100 schools have reported cases of mysterious poisoning affecting thousands of girls, with two fatalities already reported. Despite this, there has been no chemical analysis conducted, and the short and long-term effects of this poison remain unknown. These incidents occurred during a time of uprising for women's rights and freedom in Iran, leading us to believe that they may be deliberate attacks by religious groups affiliated with the regime in Iran opposed to girls' education and in responding to the punishment of protesters.

We are concerned about the conflicting statements made by officials regarding the cause of the poisonings, which have contributed to fear and anxiety among the population. In particular, the health minister has stated that investigating the origin of the poison is not within his ministry's scope.

The health emergency list outlines the disease outbreaks, disasters, and humanitarian crises that require the vital intervention of the World Health Organization (WHO) to assist countries in responding to and recovering from emergencies with public health implications. Therefore, we urge the World Health Organization (WHO) to take the following actions:

1. Appoint a senior member to lead a team of scientists formed by specialists in epidemiology, medical toxicology, chemistry, and medicine to conduct an evidence-based assessment of the situation and collect appropriate samples for toxicological analysis.
2. Integrate awareness of gas poisoning, short-term, and long-term care procedures, and vulnerabilities into all WHO activities related to schoolgirls.

We urge that the WHO can assist in addressing this life-threatening attack as expeditiously as possible and help protect the health and well-being of Iranian schoolgirls.

Sincerely,

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