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AAS Statement on Diversity, Scientific Development and International Fellowship

On January 27 2017, President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order suspending the resettlement of Syrian refugees and preventing entry to the country by people from seven predominantly Muslim countries. While this policy was motivated out of concern for national security, it has very real implications for the medical and scientific workforce.

As an organization that is committed to developing young surgeon-scientists—no matter their religion or country of origin—the Association for Academic Surgery (AAS) feels it is important to publicly express our commitment to diversity and international collaboration. As many others have highlighted in the last few days, the principles of diversity and inclusion are the cornerstone of academic and scientific advancement. We are collectively saddened by any policy that creates hardship and fear among young surgeon-scientists around the world. We want to assure our membership and partners that we will do everything we can to support your continued participation in our organization. International collaboration and the exchange of ideas are critical to our mission.

Next week marks the 50th meeting of our organization in Las Vegas, NV. We hope that all of our nearly 2,000 registrants will be in attendance. However, with surgeons and scientists registered from around the world, we understand that not everyone may be able to attend or will feel safe doing so. We want to ensure that recent policy changes do not threaten free scientific exchange in our community. The AAS is committed to a compassionate policy regarding late cancellations due to difficulty with international travel. For anyone unable to attend our conference due to the recent travel ban, please contact us at registrations@academicsurgicalcongress.org or contact one of us directly so that alternative arrangements can be made.

The AAS stands committed to diversity and international collaboration and believes these principles are critical to scientific advancement within our field and more broadly in American society.

Sincerely,

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