



H.E. President's speech

By the name of Allah

Members and representatives of the SAARC countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and our Afghan participants, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to begin with a word of sincere thanks to all of you. We are honored to have the opportunity to host this forum in Kabul and I am pleased to be here today to speak on the occasion of the South Asia Breast Feeding Forum -3.

My presence here today recognizes and pays tribute to the efforts made by all of you to come to Afghanistan and participate in this important meeting.

At this very special South Asian meeting, it has been an immense privilege to take this opportunity and thank you all for the efforts and sincere will in coming to participate in this meeting. I realized how strong this forum is and the subject it deals with. It is strong because you have a clear purpose and direction to promote breastfeeding. Each of you brings with him a distinctive personal flavor and builds further on the achievements of this forum.

This is a moment of great personal honor for me. I am proud of you and you have to be proud of yourselves as well to be working in promoting health. The work you do together saves lives and relieves suffering.

Islam recommends saving lives:

Saving a life is as saving the world. Your success in giving health is a central place on the development agenda. As a world, we face global as well as local threats to health.

In Afghanistan the maternal mortality ratio is 1600/100,000 live births and infant mortality rate is 140/1000 live births

The wellbeing of our people is vital, and well being of two specific groups of people in particular:

1. The health of the women
2. The health of their children

Women do much more than to have babies. Evidence shows that women are agents of change for families, the workforce and the entire communities.

The health of children largely depends on the health of women. As mothers, sisters, aunts, as grandmothers in the home and as carers, as teachers and as health workers in the community.

Reducing health problems in women and children will result in a dramatic increase in health promoting behaviors.

It is only recently that modern scientific research has brought to light the paramount importance of breastfeeding to the health of the child.



Islam has known and emphasized this fact some 1400 years ago. To underestimate the benefits of BF is in contradiction to the teachings of Islam, where BF is a must for all mothers who can do so and weaning should be at about two years of age.

Breast-feeding is a very natural and normal way designed by God.

Breast fed babies not only grow healthy with mental and physical development, but their chances of survival is substantially higher compared to the bottle fed babies. Breast feeding benefits include mental and physical development of the infant and economic advantages for the parents.

Natural mothering is not going to cure all of the problems of the world, but it does have some far-reaching effects. At the family level, it contributes to the physical and emotional health of both mother and baby. At the larger community level, it results in less pollution in a number of ways, and, at the level of both the individual family and the nation, it provides a natural form of birth regulation. With all these benefits for natural mothering, it would seem more than appropriate that it would be encouraged at every level.

The theme you selected for this forum is:
“Breast feeding saves lives and saves money”

We are in urgent need to save lives especially the lives of our mothers and our children. This also will help us save our money to be used in development and secure a better future to our people particularly our children. I have great optimism for the future.

I wish you all the very best in this forum and wish you enjoyable and peaceful stay. I want to assure you that you have the support, commitment, energy and enthusiasm of all of us behind you.

God Bless you all.