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Address by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
to the
8th Asian Congress of Pediatrics

Delivered by Dr. Jon Rohde, UNICEF Representative, India

New Delhi, India
9 February 1994



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Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
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It is a particularly a great pleasure to send this message to the 8th Asian Congress of Paediatrics to congratulate all Paediatricians on the bold steps you have taken in convening this large and important meeting. UNICEF worldwide is acutely aware of the dilemma you faced in organizing this meeting without depending upon the traditional sources of finance. Your willingness to forego traditional sources of funding give testimony to the sincerity of your message to all mothers that exclusive breastfeeding is the only recommended means to feed a new-born infant. We in UNICEF intend to take this example you have set, to intellectual honest and integrity, to all corners of the world. My deepest congratulations and admiration.

Paediatricians were the first organized group in the world to support UNICEF's child survival and development revolution. Starting with the International Paediatric Association meeting in Manila in 1983, you professional bodies in each country have give major support and leadership to the concepts that underlie the importance of children., their health and nutrition in the national development of every country. As respected professionals, you carried the message that child survival could indeed be achieved by political action and Groups such as Rotarians and Lions, religious leaders, women's groups, Scouts and of course your colleagues in general practice throughout the world that good health could b obtained by all children if only societies made the effort. You have evidenced the very best precepts of preventive and promotive health care by carrying the basic elements of good paediatrics far beyond your offices into the community. You have not claimed a monopoly on important elements of children -- immunization, good nutrition, growth promotion and the timely

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promoting breastfeeding and avoiding the perils of bottle milk. You, in this Conference, have shown yourselves particularly willing to support this Goal. This could be considered the first fully Baby Friendly Paediatric Congress.

I urge you in each of your national and local paediatrics societies to work with governments, with private general practitioners and with other bodies as you have in immunization to make these Mid-Decade Goals for Children a reality in every community -- in every country throughout the world. Your actions have made a tremendous difference -- the miracle of universal is a victory of pediatricians. Your concerted support for action in support of the Mid-Decade Goals for Children will once again demonstrate not only your commitment and leadership but also a national capacity in each country to put first-things-first, where children truly belong.

UNICEF is proud of its relationship with this Congress and particularly proud of the role played by the Indian Academy of Paediatrics in taking the bold steps that will make this Congress notable in history. We look forward to working closely with each of you and we take pride in an association that is clearly dedicated, without reservation, to the best interest and concerns of each and every child of the world.