



# The Declaration of Istanbul on Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism

Compiled by the DICG taskforce for Professional Organizations



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## WHY ?

To address the urgent and growing problems of organ sales, transplant tourism and trafficking in organ donors in the context of the global shortage of organs



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## By Whom?

Produced by an international summit meeting convened by The Transplantation Society and International Society of Nephrology in Istanbul, Turkey (April, 2008)



# The Istanbul Summit





# The Declaration of Istanbul: Definitions

**Travel for transplantation** is the movement of organs, donors, recipients or transplant professionals across jurisdictional borders for transplantation purposes.

*Travel for transplantation is considered an acceptable practice*





# The Declaration of Istanbul: Definitions

Travel for transplantation becomes **transplant tourism** if:

1. It involves organ trafficking and/or transplant commercialism.

OR

2. The resources (organs, professionals and transplant centers) devoted to providing transplants to patients from outside a country or region, undermine the country's ability to provide transplant services for its own population



# What is organ trafficking?



## Living or Deceased donor

- Gaining financially

## Recruit by means of:

- threat
- use of force
- other forms of coercion
- abduction
- fraud
- deception
- the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability

## Where a third party is involved:

- recruiting the donor
- receiving payments or benefits
- have potential control over the donor



# Summary of the Principles



## Screening and prevention programs

- Should be implemented by local governments

## Recovery of organs from deceased and living donors

- Should be legislated by local governments according to international standards

## Allocation

- Should be equitable and fair

## Medical care for living donors

- Short and longterm care should be provided

## Transplant commercialism

- Should be avoided/prohibited to protect impoverished and vulnerable donors as it could lead to inequity and injustice





# The Declaration of Istanbul on organ trafficking and transplant tourism



## Available on the website

- Full text of the Declaration of Istanbul
- Some proposals on how to promote the ethical practice of donation and transplantation
- Latest information on organ trafficking
- Patient Information Brochure translated into many languages

## Patient Information brochure

**Protect your health**  
**Follow your conscience**  
**Do not break the law**

**The Declaration of Istanbul**

In 2008, a group of leading medical experts from around the world met in Istanbul, Turkey to develop strategies to prevent organ trafficking and transplant tourism.

The group well appreciates the desperation felt by many patients in need of a transplant. It put forth a number of principles and proposals designed to promote both deceased and living donor transplantation around the world in a manner that protects the health and welfare of both recipients and donors while ending exploitation. They developed a policy document called **The Declaration of Istanbul**.

In 2010, the **Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group (DICG)** was formed to promote the principles of the Declaration internationally. The DICG is sponsored by two major international professional organizations, **The Transplantation Society (TTS)** and the **International Society of Nephrology (ISN)**. More than 80 international professional societies and governmental agencies have endorsed the Declaration of Istanbul.

**THE DECLARATION OF ISTANBUL**  
ON ORGAN TRAFFICKING AND TRANSPLANT TOURISM

For more information:  
**DECLARATION OF ISTANBUL CUSTODIAN GROUP**  
[www.declarationofistanbul.org](http://www.declarationofistanbul.org)

**THINKING OF BUYING A KIDNEY?**

**STOP**

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**Introduction**

For many patients with end-stage kidney disease transplantation is the treatment of choice. Transplantation is a sophisticated procedure requiring an experienced team of surgeons and nephrologists in an advanced hospital environment. Kidneys transplant may come from a **deceased donor** or **living donor**.

The availability of a deceased donor kidney and its allocation to you will depend on practices that are specific to your country of residence and are not discussed further here.

A living kidney donor is typically a close blood relative. In some countries a legal or emotional relationship (such as a spouse, partner, or friend) may be acceptable for donation. In each of these cases the act of donation is done willingly as an expression of love, trust, and mutual concern. The donor and recipient each care that the other has a safe and successful outcome. Transplants like this are performed openly and legally, and the outcome is typically excellent for both the recipient and the donor from a medical, psychological, and social point of view.

There is however, another source of living donor kidneys. Some people, in dire financial distress, may be willing to sell one of their kidneys. The buying and selling of kidneys is called "transplant commercialism", and it is illegal in almost all countries of the world. Kidneys taken from executed prisoners are also sometimes sold.

This brochure discusses some of the implications for you in buying a kidney and is meant to discourage you from taking this step even out of desperation.

[www.declarationofistanbul.org](http://www.declarationofistanbul.org)

*Over 100 endorsing organizations...*



*And still growing.....*



# The Declaration of Istanbul on Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism



Do you have a statement endorsing the declaration on your website?

Do you have a link to the declaration's website on your own society's website?

What can your professional organization do?

Do you use the patient brochure for your patients?

Do you make sure local presentations and journal articles oblige to the declaration?

[www.declarationofistanbul.org](http://www.declarationofistanbul.org)



Together...



With your  
help...



We can stop  
organ  
trafficking

