



**The Norwegian
Medical Association**

DEN NORSKE LEGEFORENING

President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Külliyesi
06560 Beştepe-Ankara
Fax: (+90 312) 525 58 31
E-mail: contact@tccb.gov.tr

Your ref.:

Our ref.:

Date: 20 December 2018

Mr President Erdoğan,

Stop the Harassment of Turkish Physicians

The Norwegian Medical Association is worried about the prison sentences handed down to several leading Turkish physicians.

Dr. Sebnem Korur Fincanci, the Chair of Human Rights Foundation of Turkey and former member of Istanbul Chamber of Medicine Honorary Committee, was sentenced this week to two years six months imprisonment. And last week Dr. Ozdemir Aktan, a former president of the Turkish Medical Association, was sentenced to one year and three months imprisonment, while a court in Istanbul ruled that the prison sentence of two years and three months handed down to Dr. Gençay Gürsoy, a former president of the TMA and one of the founders of Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, would be upheld.

Former members of TMA's boards, including Dr. Feride Aksu Tanik, a former Secretary General of TMA and official advisor to WMA, are facing trial or sentences on the same charges of supporting terrorism. Many of them have lost their jobs, had their passports cancelled and will never be able to work in public institutions.

These physicians, along with many other physicians and health care workers, are being punished for supporting a petition calling on the Turkish government to stop the violence against civilians.

Drs Fincanci, Aktan and Gürsoy have done nothing else than expressing their opinion in support of human rights and peace. Calling for peace constitutes an expression of opinion, certainly not a criminal offence. Sentencing physicians for using their human rights to speak out for peace is an infringement of the freedom of opinion and expression as stated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in the the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that Turkey ratified in 2003.

We urge Turkish authorities to stop the harassment of the sentenced physicians and physicians facing trial immediately.

Yours sincerely

The Norwegian Medical Association



Marit Hermansen
President



Bjarne Riis Strøm
Acting Secretary General

Copy
Turkish Embassy in Oslo