



H.E. Mr Christian Berger
Ambassador
Delegation of the European Union to Turkey

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Brussels, 7 November 2018

Your Excellency,

Thank you for your response letter of 26 September 2018 about the court proceedings against Dr Yerlikaya, Central Council member of the Turkish Medical Association.

Please allow us to contact you on another disturbing situation for the medical profession in Turkey.

We have been informed of a [new bill](#) related to health submitted to the Grand National Assembly (TBMM) on the 30th of October and approved yesterday by the Health Commission. According to this proposal, physicians who lost their jobs as a result of Law Decrees issued under the State of Emergency (OHAL), will not be able to work in the public sector and, will not be permitted to work in private hospitals operating through contract with the Social Security Agency. This will also apply to the new graduates of medical schools whose “security clearance” is not successful. Medical reports prepared by these physicians shall have no validity before judicial and administrative bodies.

We are very concerned by this proposal in many respects. Not only does it violate the right to work of physicians by preventing them from practicing their profession, it also deprives millions of people from access to health as a result.

A sustainable and equitable health system providing quality care to all those in need relies on a solid workforce with safe and consistent working conditions. Such a proposal would put thousands of physicians out of action, ultimately constituting a tangible threat to the Turkish health system and to the economy of the country.

We deplore any practices threatening the medical profession and the provision of health-care services. The medical profession is guided by clear and recognised ethical principles, including the principle of medical neutrality, and to practice “with conscience and dignity and in accordance with good medical practice” ([WMA Declaration of Geneva](#)), so that they can fulfil their duties to provide care for those in need. By attempting to restrain the medical profession, the bill is moving in the opposite direction alarmingly.

The Standing Committee of European Doctors and the World Medical Association wrote to the President of the Turkish Grand National Assembly to express these concerns.

We would ask you to please address this bill in all relevant exchanges with your Turkish counterparts and appeal to them to take all the necessary steps so that it is withdrawn immediately.

We rest at your disposal for any further cooperation. In advance thank you very much for any support you can provide in this matter.

Sincerely,



Dr Jacques de Haller
CPME President



Ms Annabel Seebohm, LL.M.
CPME Secretary General