

## TO ANKARA 32ND HIGH CRIMINAL COURT

**File no:** 2018/361

**Subject:** My first statement of defence against charges in the indictment.

The science of medicine emerged and developed to mitigate the suffering of human body and keep life going until body's potential is fully exhausted as a gift of wise persons to all humanity. Our profession that that is for human beings as entities regardless who they are and what they possess also determined our attitude as physicians to individual persons.

This deep relationship that we enter into with other human beings shapes us, as different from people in other occupations, as professionals who ask the question what is human being and seek answers. This interest in human beings, learning about them and how they can get better enables us to adopt a different attitude to mankind.

It enables us to grasp who and what a human being is beyond differences in language, nation, religion, wealth, social status, sex and citizenship. Beyond any outer appearance, dressing or social differences we know that we have the same kind, human being in front of us. Hence, physicians see themselves as physicians of all humanity and grasp the human being and the world through a universal approach extending beyond singular or particular interests.

Our responsibility to keep others alive starts from mother's womb and continues till the end of life (in some cases even after). According to our professional moulding our responsibility is actually not to individual patients applying to or registered with us. It is to humanity as a whole, as we declared in our oath while starting our profession, "regardless of age, disease or disability, faith, ethnic origin, sex, nationality, political opinion, race, sexual orientation, social status or any other characteristic." Therefore we want to protect, heal and improve the health potential not only of individuals all people in the country and in the world. When it seems impossible, we intervene inform people about possible consequences and try to ensure that people make choices to their benefit.

We physicians know the different aspects of war. We witnessed the death, wounding and physical and emotional suffering of people we helped in their birth and made so much effort to keep them in good health status. Again in wars we saw how people kill each other with bullets, bombs, missiles, chemical and nuclear weapons, how they caused unrecoverable losses; we saw those who we healed returning to battlefield to kill or to get killed. In our present day armed conflicts that directly target living spaces we also witnessed not only the killing of children, elderly people, persons with disabilities and sick women but also the destruction of infrastructure on which healthcare is delivered. Today we are witnessing problems coming along with migration movements. In short, we learned through our professional practice how wars cause problems for individuals and communities. Consequently, in line with our oath "to share medical knowledge to the benefit of patients and for improvements in health services" we shared our professional knowledge: War is a public health problem.

War is a preventable public health problem. We know well that problems can be solved by parties mutually recognizing each other, trying to understand the other side and dialogue on the basis of equal footing and mutual respect. As a member of a profession that knows well what war is, that it is a right to leave in peace, and that problems can be solved through peaceful ways I am against war and I will never give up raising my voice for peace.

Women have always suffered their unique pain in wars. The most recent dramatic example is what Ezidi women experienced in the hands of ISIL. They were enslaved, sold as sex slaves and assaulted. The ISIL is still a great threat for us, women. We saw how imminent this threat is in their Suruç and Ankara train station bombings here in Turkey. The use of reports from investigation files related to these cases that TMA is a legal party as evidence of crime is utterly hurting for a person like me who survived the massacre of October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

Many convicts and detainees in prisons apply to the TMA for help in their health problems or difficulties in access to healthcare as well as problems negatively affecting their physical and psychological health given that the association has the duty of protecting public health. Now, the prosecution tries to use my notes and responses related to these applications as evidence of crime. It is again from my notes taken during legitimate meetings and conventions that the prosecution is trying to produce evidence. A medical congress I participated years ago was presented as “affiliation to an organization” to create a specific impression. I find this quite odd and I am really astonished.

I am fifty six years old and half of my life passed witnessing classes leading to the death of thousands of people each year as a result of the “Kurdish problem.” Again in half of my life I tried to investigate how peace can be established; for this I made efforts to understand this society, the world we are living in and what is going on in order to contribute to peace efforts. Books and journals that the police selected from among some 4,000 printed materials as “evidence of crime” are materials I have read for this purpose and motivation. They say some of these materials are banned and so it is evidence that I am involved in a crime...

In my past life of fifty six years I witnessed coups and political memorandums. Books, journals and opinions of people were presented as evidences of crime. On my part, I was first surprised by this approach and then I strongly rejected it. I made my personal efforts not to have any coup again and to have past coup leaders put to trial. I cannot understand why any opinion not provoking or calling for violence is considered as “crime”.

Peace and living in peace is the finest dream of humanity. It is for this reason that all religions tell about another world where there is no violence, where people live together in peace. That is another word; but we deserve in our present day a world in which people live in happiness and health free of violence and not being afraid of others.

The process of “Democratic Opening” declared by the government in 2019 and “Solution Process” in 2013 inspired hope to us all that violence is going to be stopped. I read in these processes about what was done and said to evaluate the possibilities of sustaining these processes. Now, materials about processes launched by the government that I read are presented as evidences of crime and this cannot be accepted.

I have no membership to any terror organization. I have never approved any terrorist activity and as TMA we stood against and denounced such activities. Efforts to bring peace and declarations made for this purpose are not for supporting any terror organization but for protecting the life, health and welfare of people. I refuse all charges and ask for acquittal.

With my regards,

Dr. Selma Gngr