



TÜRK TABİPLERİ BİRLİĞİ

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Dr. Margaret Chan,
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03 April 2013

Dear Dr. Margaret Chan,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Turkish Medical Association representing more than 100,000 medical doctors on a very "recent" agenda: "*Violence against Health Professionals*".

As very well known, violence against health professionals is an emergent issue all around the world. Parallel with the global data, we very often face with this problem among our 74 millions of inhabitants in Turkey. Although realistic and sustainable solutions need a much broader perspective, public awareness might be an important motivator to mobilize communities and have their support as a grass root movement.

The World Health Organization has broad experience in placing "new", "successful", and "sustainable" topics on its agenda for the well being of the world's population. As the Turkish Medical Association, we have been very closely following one of your recent global efforts on tobacco control. Anti-tobacco efforts have officially started with the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control preparations in the early of 2000s and today these efforts yielded 176 countries as Parties to the Convention.¹

Looking at this story, we want to suggest you to take the lead in producing solutions for another hot topic: *Violence against Health Professionals*. In Turkey, many health staff is facing this "horrible" and "unacceptable" issue during their daily practices. Unfortunately, one of our young medical doctors, Dr. Ersin Arslan, was killed on April 17, 2012. Since the date he has passed away, we conducted many activities to solve the problem of "violence" strategically in our country collaboratively with other organizations representing health

¹ <http://www.who.int/tobacco/en/index.html>

workers including nurses, health technicians, labour unions, etc. In Turkey, the date of Ersin's death has been "symbolic" for the community as well. We had our international colleagues' support and collaborative efforts from different medical associations. The World Medical Association also followed up the Turkish experience very closely. The President of the World Medical Association Dr. José Luiz Gomes do Amaral joined a demonstration of physicians in Istanbul, Turkey on April 19th 2012 (Thursday) in memory of Dr. Ersin Arslan who was stabbed to death in his office on April 17th 2012.²

Dear Dr. Chan,

Violence against health professionals is an issue which could have been prevented through collaborative work. Hence, the whole process needs guidance and a leader. Awareness among both health staff and public can help to produce solutions more systematically.

Besides many different activities, a specific date to launch the struggle globally may be a good "starting point". We recommend WHO, to determine 17th of April which Dr. Ersin Arslan was killed on his daily practice at the hospital as the "**WORLD DAY ON COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**".

Please kindly accept our recommendation to be a leader in this regard.

Sincerely yours,



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www.ttb.org.tr
<http://www.ttb.org.tr/en/>

² <http://www.ttb.org.tr/en/index.php/tuem-haberler-blog/179-ttb/1213-wma>