**WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

19 February 2015

**WMA CALLS FOR CHARGES AGAINST PHYSICIANS TO BE DROPPED**

The World Medical Association has today demanded that all charges be dropped against the Ankara Medical Chamber and has offered its continuing support to Turkish physicians who are facing resumed court action tomorrow (Friday) for providing urgently needed emergency medical care to demonstrators injured during the Gezi Park demonstrations in 2013.

A further court hearing is due in Ankara in the lawsuit brought by the Ministry of Health for the dismissal of the governing bodies of the Ankara Chamber of Medicine and their replacement by newly elected bodies. The Ministry claims that the Chamber established and operated health units called infirmaries during the Gezi Park protests and refused to supply the Ministry with information about patients receiving first aid services in these units as well as health workers delivering these services.

Today the WMA Chair of Council, Dr. Mukesh Haikerwal, called for the Turkish authorities to drop all the charges against these physicians who were performing their ethical duty to care for all those injured while maintaining the core obligation of medical care - patient confidentiality that all patients of the world expect, demand and deserve.

‘Physicians must be able to practise their profession without any fear or intimidation in Turkey and in all other parts of the world. They should be able to help anybody anywhere without any distinction.

'These charges are a challenge to the universal principles of medical autonomy and patient confidentiality and must be dismissed. For the sake of patients and doctors we urge the Turkish authorities to think again'.