



Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
President of Turkey
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Külliyesi
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Mr President Erdoğan,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) and of the World Medical Association (WMA), representing together millions of physicians worldwide with the shared professional commitment to medical ethics, human rights and peace.

We have been informed by our Turkish affiliate, the Turkish Medical Association (TMA), that Dr. Şeyhmus Gökalg, a member of the High Disciplinary Committee and former member of the Central Council of TMA, is in detention since November 20th and has been referred to the Diyarbakır 2nd Criminal Court of Peace for “strong suspicion of crime”. According to our sources, the acts of which he is accused are based on a testimony from a health worker unknown from Dr. Gökalg and for suspicious activity, in particular the participation to a meeting that he strongly denies having attended.

Dr. Gökalg claims that these the two counts of indictment are not based on any substantial proof. Furthermore, the testimony has been retained against him as “evidence” against the stance of the Court of Cassation, Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights whereby statements made by confessors have no value as evidence.

We have serious concerns that the right to a fair trial is not fully guaranteed to Dr. Gökalg, in particular the presumption of innocence, as well as the right to a competent, independent and impartial tribunal in criminal proceedings. This fundamental human right is guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that Turkey has ratified in 2003 and for which you are therefore accountable.

Moreover, it is our understanding that Dr. Şeyhmus Gökalp is a well respected physician exercising his profession in line with the core ethical values of the profession. He is an active affiliate of the TMA, a dedicated member of our organisations, recognised for its commitment to serve public health interests and to protect patients and physicians.

We therefore urge you to take all actions within your competence in order to release Dr. Şeyhmus Gökalp immediately and to drop all charges against him without substantial and documented evidence in support of the indictments against him.

Sincerely,



Dr. David Barbe
President of the World Medical Association



Prof. Dr Frank Ulrich Montgomery
CPME President