



## Joint Statement

### **International medical community calls for autonomy of Turkish Medical Association to be safeguarded**

The [Standing Committee of European Doctors](#) (CPME) and the [World Medical Association](#) (WMA) are deeply concerned by the continuous harassment towards the Turkish Medical Association (TMA), in particular through a proposed Turkish government bill undermining the representation of the medical profession in Turkey, and threatening the autonomy and independence of TMA, and by the hearing to be held on 10 January 2023 that aims to dismiss the eleven members of TMA's Executive Council from their duty.

TMA has been a trustworthy member of both our organizations for many years, recognized for its commitment to serve public health interests, to protect patients and physicians with great respect of the ethical values of the profession.

The delivery of healthcare by physicians is governed by ethical rules, professional norms as well as national and international law. An autonomous medical profession allows the best delivery of healthcare and, as is knowingly necessary, the best influence on public health. An independent representation of the medical profession is paramount in the implementation of these unchallenged principles. It can furthermore act as a unique voice of the civil society, fostering the democratic integrity of a country and complementing the work of elected officials and administrators.

Hence, independent, autonomous and democratic national medical associations, such as the TMA currently is, constitute indispensable overarching medical bodies fulfilling a crucial role not only for the medical profession, but for patients, the healthcare system and the population as a whole.

The proposed Turkish government bill would have irreversible deteriorating impacts on the delivery of quality healthcare to all patients and populations in Turkey. No physician could support such a bill which goes against the well-being of people, at the expense of those whom a state law has the duty to protect. This is simply irrational and unacceptable.

Rather than continuing threats, we strongly recommend considering TMA as an independent and constructive partner in addressing public health priorities for the benefit of the Turkish population.

We will never stop supporting national medical associations around the world in their efforts to consolidate the independent and democratic representation of the medical profession. We stand in solidarity with our Turkish affiliate, as stated in the [WMA Resolution in support of the Turkish Medical Association](#) and [CPME's endorsement of the Resolution](#).

The global medical community therefore calls on the Turkish authorities to immediately withdraw the proposed bill, to unconditionally safeguard the autonomy and independence of the TMA and drop all charges against its members.

*9 January 2023*