



President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan  
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Kópavogur, January 31, 2018.

Mr President Erdoğan,

The Icelandic Medical Association (IcMA) is writing to you to express its grave concerns regarding the current campaign against the Turkish Medical Association (TMA) further to its press release of 24 January 2018 stressing that war is a public health concern that destroys environment, humankind and threatens social life.

The campaign included intimidations against TMA and its members last week. A criminal complaint was then filed against TMA and the head prosecutor of Ankara opened an investigation. In addition, another lawsuit was filed against TMA's leaders, demanding that they are dismissed from their position on the ground that they are acting beyond the scope of the mission of TMA. Eleven TMA's leaders are now under arrest.

Like our Turkish colleagues, we do feel responsible to denounce violence and alert our government and other relevant decision-makers to the dramatic immediate and long-term health effects of warfare and armed conflicts.

Moreover, filing a criminal complaint against the TMA further to its call for peace constitutes a flagrant infringement of the freedom of opinion and expression as stated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in the the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that Turkey has ratified in 2003, hereby establishing its consent to be bound by its provisions.

The TMA has done nothing else than expressing its opinion in support of human rights and peace. To our knowledge, calling for peace constitutes an expression of opinion, certainly not a criminal offence.

The IcMA therefore urges Turkish authorities to:

- Release immediately the physicians' leaders of the TMA;
- Put an immediate end to all acts of harassment and intimidation, including at the judicial level, against the TMA;
- Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Turkey.

The IcMA trusts that you Mr. President will take promptly all the necessary actions in line with these core universal human rights and values.

Yours sincerely  
The Icelandic Medical Association



Reynir Arngrímsson  
President



Sólveig Jóhannsdóttir  
Secretary General

**Copy:**

World Medical Association

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The Icelandic Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guðlaugur Þór Þórðarson.