Persecution of the medical profession

Mr President Erdoğan

I am writing to you on behalf of the British Medical Association to express our grave concerns about the continuing campaign against members of the medical profession in Turkey, including members of the Turkish Medical Association. (TTB)

The BMA is appalled by the Turkish Government’s prosecution of Dr. Gençay Gürsoy, founder and former president of the TTB; Dr. Özdemir Aktan, former president of the TTB; and Dr. Şebnem Korur Fincancı, a world-renowned forensic medical expert and president of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, all of whom, according to the Standing Committee for Doctors in Europe, have been prosecuted for charges related to their involvement in a peace petition in 2016.

The prosecution and detention of physicians for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression is a gross violation of the human rights enshrined by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was ratified by Turkey in 2003.

We urge you to reconsider the sentencing of these physicians and put an immediate end to all acts of intimidation of physicians in Turkey. Further we urge you to ensure that the human rights and fundamental freedoms of physicians in Turkey are upheld in all circumstances in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Turkey.
We trust that you will take promptly all the necessary actions in line with these core universal human rights and values.

Yours sincerely

Dr John Chisholm CBE
Chair Medical Ethics Committee