



EMOs statement on violence/burnout against doctors and all healthcare professionals in a war context

The right to health is a fundamental pillar of human rights. It remains applicable in all circumstances and doctors have an ethical duty to ensure they treat the injured and sick.

European Medical Organisations (EMOs) reaffirm that physicians' safety at work is paramount for the provision of quality healthcare. They are deeply concerned about the risk and the negative impact of violence against all healthcare professionals and observe that doctors and other healthcare professionals, working in healthcare institutions are increasingly confronted with situations of violence in their daily practice.

Further, clearly, in situations of war, the violence against healthcare professionals can take still another dimension and the protection of the endangered healthcare professionals is essential too.

This alarming trend goes against human rights, humanity, and medical ethics. It may hinder or prevent the provision of care that must be guaranteed and protected as effectively as possible.

We believe that there is a need for concrete urgent actions to be taken to protect European doctors and other healthcare professionals from all forms of violence that occur during daily medical practice, be it physical, verbal, or psychological – including institutional violence that knowingly contributes to burnout.

EMOs also call, in situations of war, to respect and comply with the Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols, in line with the WMA Statement on the Protection of Medical Personnel in Armed Conflicts and Other Situations of Violence.

We reaffirm the need of an effective reporting and assisting mechanism for victims of violence against all healthcare personnel across Europe, for the implementation of violence prevention programmes and for the enforcement of existing laws concerning violence against all healthcare professionals in the workplace.

We also recommend promoting the training and coaching of physicians on how to deal with verbal, physical or psychological violence and the possible basis of burnout. These actions should be supported by permanent displays in the healthcare facilities indicating that violence is not tolerable and informing about existing solutions and penalties.

We wish to act collectively with different international organizations to defend and protect the right to work in a safe and secure workplace free of violence.