

THE KDC IS FULFILLING ITS MISSION AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Zylfije Hundozi

Former KDC President

The first president of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber, Prof. Dr. Zylfije Hundozi says that when she ran for this position, her goal was to contribute to the construction of an institution where doctors will have full independence in regulating issues in their work, but at the same time cooperate with other relevant institutions to accomplish the duties and responsibilities provided by law.

What was the feeling of being the first president of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber?

During many years of work in healthcare, I have had various experiences and challenges. The events that had an extraordinary impact on Kosovar medicine were those of the early 90s. At the beginning of these years, Kosovar medicine suffered a big blow from the then Milosevic regime, with the aim of destroying Kosovar medicine. A large number of Albanian doctors, who were the majority of doctors in healthcare institutions, were fired by this regime. This led to 90 percent of the doctors being excluded from most of the clinics of the UCCK, while clinics such as Gynecology, Surgery and Internal medicine were left without Albanian doctors. All Albanian doctors were severely impacted by this attack on medical institutions, therefore, on the occasion of my election as president of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber, I felt privileged, that I was being given the opportunity to contribute to the construction of a new independent medical institution where doctors will have the opportunity to decide about their work, continuing education and their future. In those moments, I felt that I and other KDC colleagues were being given the opportunity to improve an injustice that was done to us doctors when they pushed us out of public institutions, but at the same time to be able, from now on, to make independent decisions about work and all other matters of importance for Kosovo doctors.

So, to put it briefly, it was a feeling of joy and responsibility for the creation of a new institution of great importance in Kosovar medicine.

What prompted you to compete for this task, and what were the first steps in the establishment of the KDC, given that it was a new organization in Kosovo?

Some specialists from the Neurology clinic had come to talk with me, suggesting that I run for KDC president. I didn't give them an answer at first, promising that I would first read the Law on Chambers of Healthcare Professionals, since the KDC did not exist before and I was not informed of what is expected from the president of the KDC.

After reading the law, which clearly defined the duties, obligations and responsibilities of the

president, but also of all other members, I agreed to run. So, my goal was to contribute to the construction of an institution where doctors will have full independence in regulating issues in their work, but at the same time cooperate with other relevant institutions to accomplish the duties and responsibilities provided by law.

How would you evaluate KDC's development so far and, in your opinion, what are its achievements?

I see the development of the KDC in a positive light. The KDC has managed to function with almost all of its powers, with the exception of specializations, which under the Law on Chambers of Healthcare Professionals are its responsibility. I hope it will continue to perform this function in the future.

Is the KDC fulfilling its mission and responsibilities defined by law?

Yes, the KDC is fulfilling its mission and responsibilities under the law.

What, in your opinion, were the challenges faced by the KDC in the first years of its establishment and strengthening, and what are they now?

In the first years of its operation, the KDC had many challenges. For the first three years, the KDC budget was allocated to the Ministry of Health, with the condition that that budget be given to the KDC in the meantime for use. However, in the four years of operation of the KDC, that budget was not awarded to the KDC under different pretexts and demands for health professionals. A lot of time and effort has been spent to meet the Ministry's demands, but the budget dedicated to the KDC has never been used. I and the members of the KDC have been working on a voluntary basis for 4 consecutive years. Due to the lack of budget, we did not have administrative staff or lawyers, but we ourselves compiled all the regulations, the Statute, and all the necessary legal documentation. I should mention the tireless work and unreserved dedication of the members of the Steering Council, the members of the commissions and all the members of the KDC Assembly, for their great dedication to the functioning of this institution. The very strong will and desire to have our own independent institution has led all doctors to give indisputable support to the KDC.

Our work and commitment to the establishment of the bodies of the KDC has not enjoyed the support of the Ministry of Health, but on the contrary, the continuous refusal to transfer the budget and public powers that by law have been assigned to the KDC, although we have consistently met all the criteria set under the law. To

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this day, despite all the rejection and negative pressure that has been placed on it, the KDC has continued to exist and has managed to continue its work, just as the Law on Health Professionals has foreseen.

What would you have suggested for the further development of the Chamber, and what should its future be like?

The KDC has so far performed very well in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities provided by law. My suggestion would be that future elections for members of the KDC Assembly be more transparent, and to address the shortcomings that have accompanied this process. This would increase confidence in the KDC and its bodies and lead to even greater success.

The KDC needs a facility where it will be possible to increase and further develop its capacity as an independent institution. We fought for this since the first mandate, contacting many donors who would help us in this direction, since the material opportunities did not exist then.

The KDC must continue its commitment to carry all the powers that belong to it under the law. Specifically, I am thinking about specializations,

which are its responsibility under the law, because in all European countries the respective doctors chamber are responsible for specializations. Planning the needs for the number of specialist doctors, determining the mentors who will guide the specialists, and the programs, would be best done by the experts from the KDC.

What would you like to share with the readers from your experience as president for one term of the KDC?

One of my experiences at the head of the KDC is from holding the 2nd assembly of the KDC when the election of the members of the Steering Council and then of the commissions of the KDC was held.

With these elections, doctors have shown a high level of democratic culture. In the competition that took place, doctors showed a high intellectual and moral level that was a positive example for the entire Kosovar society. The democratic and fair competition that has accompanied these elections has created a sense of pride that I am a doctor and that I am part of this community.

The positive impression I experienced that day still lives in my mind.



The selection of the first President of the Kosovo Doctors Chamber