

THE KDC AND OPA EMERGED AS INNOVATIONS IN KOSOVO'S AND ALBANIA'S HEALTHCARE



Fatmir Brahimaj

President of the Order of Physicians of Albania

The President of the Order of Physicians of Albania says the existing differences between these two organizations are conditioned by the respective legal frameworks, which differ in both countries. However, he emphasizes, the mission of both the KDC and OPA is essentially the same: providing the Code of Medical Ethics and Deontology, maintaining high professional standards, as well as protecting the public from medical malpractice.

What were the first contacts between the Order of Physicians of Albania and the Kosovo Doctors Chamber?

First of all, I want to thank you for the invitation to this interview, giving me the opportunity to express, not only my pleasure for this joint celebration of the 10th anniversary of KDC's establishment, but also to share some thoughts about the work, achievements, challenges for the future. We are not only of the same profession, but also of the same nation and of the same blood, that's why we see things as common, despite the fact that the desires sometimes do not match the opportunities that are created for us.

One year before KDC's establishment, German Medical Association representatives came to Tirana and discussed with UMSH leaders of that time, the idea of establishing a professional body in Kosovo. We were in favor of supporting this idea (I emphasize that even for OPA, the German Medical Association was an important factor in the first steps of our activities). During that year, representatives of the KDC initiative committee came to Tirana twice to discuss details of further steps towards the crowning of this important initiative for the medical profession in Kosovo. All OPA documentation was employed as a template to draft the basic KDC document. The first official contact was the participation in the founding meeting of the Doctors Chamber in Prishtina.

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

Of course, like every beginning, there have been great difficulties for the KDC as well. In our countries, these obstacles are multiplied by the lack of tradition, experience, and the mentality of the past, where everything was centered on the state. However, over the years progress has been positive, in favor of doctors, professional self-regulation and the protection of the public from medical professional malpractice. Above all, I appreciate the fact that we have a professional organization of self-governance and self-regulation of the profession, based on a legal framework. Despite delays in establishing the KDC, thanks to the international support of counterparts and the governments of several countries, important steps have been taken and the achievements are commendable and satisfactory for the time. Of

course, what has been done for centuries in other countries cannot be achieved at those levels in short time intervals.

What has the cooperation between the Order of Physicians of Albania and the Kosovo Doctors Chamber amounted to?

Here, I will emphasize that each contact between us and the KDC has been used in the participation, meetings and activities of the two parties, we have supported each other in international meetings by lobbying in our favor, the KDC, and vice versa.

What have these two organizations been able to learn from each other?

Both of these organisms are innovations in the health system of our countries. The common difficulty we face in our realities, as opposed to the level of self-governance and professional self-regulation in other countries, has made us borrow from each other the way of implementing professional practices permissible under the respective legal frameworks; in other words, same problems in similar realities have led to roughly the same type of implementation.

Are there major differences between the way the Order operates in Albania and the KDC in Kosovo?

There are definitely differences between us, conditioned by the respective legal frameworks, which differ in both countries. However, the mission of both the KDC and OPA is essentially the same: providing the Code of Medical Ethics and Deontology, maintaining high professional standards, as well as protecting the public from medical malpractice.

What are, in your opinion, the challenges the KDC faces today?

We must not forget that the KDC is a new, growing and developing body. Numerous efforts must be made to align the relevant legislation with EU acquis, and work must also be done to gain the full trust and authority that belongs to the medical community, as well as the public's trust in them.

What are the joint projects, and what can the Order and the KDC actually acquire through future collaborations?

I appreciate this question in particular, as I think the time has come for cooperation to be at another level, closer and with more joint activities and projects.

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

Continuous insistence to obtain all the powers that belong to such a fundamentally professional and independent body. Continuous realization

Correspondence:
albmedorder@albmail.com

of short-term and long-term objectives will ensure a successful future, similar to international counterparts.

Do you want to share any of your personal experiences from the events organized by the KDC during these years?

Shared experiences have always given me pleasure. Each activity teaches us something new, that's why I felt privileged to participate in many KDC activities. I will single out the May 2018 meeting in Prishtina, where a very delicate topic, sensitive for the medical community and still unresolved as it seems, that of separating medical error from medical negligence, was discussed. A well organized and quite fruitful meeting that left me with special impressions.



Presidents of KDC and OPA always together