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First of all once again as Turkish Cypriot Physician's Union we would like to express our deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences for the losses in your countries. We wish a quick recovery in health and also in economic and social impacts, we hope world overcomes Covid-19 pandemic soon. Our divided island Cyprus until now reported 67,982 cases and 327 deaths in Greek Cypriot Community and 6,527 cases and 32 deaths in Turkish Cypriot Community. Meanwhile we passed through two strict lockdowns. Crossing points between two communities and entries to the country from air and sea are also still partially restricted.

Almost all doctors and healthcare workers have been vaccinated with Sinovac. Despite of the fact that since January we received 140,000 Sinovac from Turkey, and approximately 12,000 Oxford AstraZeneca and Pfizer Biontech from EU, vaccination is driving slow. PCR and rapid antigen tests are available.

We managed to increase new beds and intensive care unit beds by about a hundred.

Presidential elections held in October 2020. Unfortunately UN meeting in Geneva concerning Cyprus Problem turned out to be unsuccessful. Political instability continues. After the general elections held in January 2018 we had the third government which is a minority coalition. Pandemic management is highly poor in health, economics, working life, and education. Economic impacts are much more severe than health.

The government was unable to raise funds externally, the coalition has focused on trying to cut employee's fees. The European Commission announced the release of 5 million Euros which was planned before the pandemic and not related with the impacts of it. Private sectors lost their jobs thus unemployment and poverty is rising. The government made a large amount of domestic borrowing. Furthermore devaluation of Turkish Lira increased the economic crisis.

As there is no “life-line” of funds from Turkey is expected, and no access to European Union funds because of the political situation the economic impact is catastrophic in our country. The poverty and the number of people losing their jobs are increasing in a threatening way.

As Turkish Cypriot Physicians’ Union we under took an important role during this time. The government was highly insufficient in taking the measures concerning health issues and organization of health services. We made leadership in organizing health services in public hospitals. However the government disregarded the needs of doctors. They kept majority of doctors working insecure status(that is more than half of public hospital doctors are working in insecure status), they didn’t pay overtime fees for more than 6 months, put extra taxes, and even stopped free food facility for the doctors on duty. As Union we applied to the Supreme Court for the taxes which are against the Constitution and also we started strike in outpatient clinics on 5<sup>th</sup> April. After 4 weeks with nearly %100 compliance of our members, we managed to force the government to pay overtime fees, and call for secure positions for public doctors. Once again we experienced the great power and result oriented effect of the organized struggles.

So, to conclude our doctors and health workers did a good job as other colleagues all over the world heroically. Both the public and the government saw that strength of the public health system has a vital importance for the countries maintenance. And also we continued to fight for doctors’ rights in dignity during this season as always.

I want to finish my words with our belief in that the world can overcome the Covid problem only with solidarity, cooperation and knowledge sharing.