

The 13-th Symposium of Medical Chambers
of the Central and East European Countries
November 3rd, 2006

Memorandum of Sofia
On the significant role of medical chambers
in modern, decentralized and citizens' democracy

The representatives of the Order of Physicians of Albania, Austrian Medical Chamber, Bulgarian Medical Association, Croatian Medical Chamber, Czech Medical Chamber, Federation of the German Medical Chambers, Panhellenic Medical Association, Macedonian Medical Chamber, Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists, Romanian College of Physicians and Medical Chamber of Slovenia who met in Sofia, referring to their Memorandum of Český Krumlov on public functions and professional representation by chambers and associations of physicians and dentists from May 27th, 2000, remind the main aims of medical chambers, namely:

1. Supervision of performance of the medical profession by: development of the ethical principles concerning medical practice, assisting physicians in their postgraduate education and continuing professional development, performing disciplinary measures in case of malpractice, registration and licensing of physicians.
2. Representing professional interests of all physicians by: negotiating working conditions, tariffs and salaries of physicians with public administration, social health insurance funds, health insurers and employers, assisting physicians in their economic needs (insurance, retirement, welfare).
3. Giving expert opinion and cooperation with the authorities on organizational health care solutions, laws and regulations concerning health care and medical practice.

Medical chambers perform their social and political role as statutory bodies. They have as much power as given by national parliaments. **However, to fulfill chambers' duties in the best way they should be organizations with mandatory membership representing all physicians and be given as much independence as possible.** Chambers should be looked upon:

- a) by physicians as their self-government bodies,
- b) by citizens as best guarantee for good quality of medical care,
- c) by national, regional and local authorities as best partners in public cooperation in the field of health care.

Representatives of medical chambers urge politicians to see chambers as part of modern, decentralized and citizen-oriented democracy. **Giving part of state power to self-governments of citizens performing the same medical profession as those living in local communities does not weaken the organization of the state; on the contrary - reinforces it.**

The above mentioned representatives agree to inform their national partners of the content of this memorandum.