



SLOVENSKÁ LEKÁRSKA KOMORA
SLOVAK MEDICAL CHAMBER
SLOWAKISCHE ÄRZTEKAMMER

SECRETARIAT, Račianska 42/A, 831 02 Bratislava

Bratislava, 08.11.2011

Request for support of hospital doctors in the Slovak Republic from the Slovak Medical Chamber.

Dear Mr. President,

Please let me bring to your attention important information on recent developments in the health sector in Slovakia.

The Medical Trade Unions Association, a partner organisation of the Slovak Medical Chamber has initiated in September a mass resignation of doctors employed in hospitals. The reasons for this step are summarised in the following four points:

1. Violations of the Slovakian Work Regulations and EU Directive on certain aspects of working time
2. Long-term under investment in the health care sector in Slovakia
3. Undervaluation of the remuneration for hospital doctors
4. Planned transformation of public hospitals into Public Limited Companies

The points set out in paragraphs 1 - 3 are causing significant long-term economic migration of Slovakian doctors in search of better working conditions abroad. This causes issues such as specialist labour shortages in Slovakia and it may contribute to a deterioration of the balance of health systems in host countries. Doctors therefore require compliance with the Slovakian Work Regulations, an increase of resources in health care sector and adjustment of salaries.

Point 4 poses an issue on its own. The government of the Slovak Republic has adopted measures to transform public hospitals into state owned public limited companies. The reason given is poor management of existing hospitals. Public companies function in accordance with the Commercial Code and shall not create debts. Continued underfinancing of the health care sector will, however, bring the following risks:

- Hospitals will limit the range of health care services in order to conserve resources thereby reducing its availability for the patients.
- Hospitals will reduce levels of staff in order to save finances resulting in further drop of the already low salaries of doctors
- Perpetual creation of debt will result in hospitals being subject to executions and bankruptcies and becoming completely owned by large capital groups.

The latter fact would mean the disappearance of public health care in Slovakia. Slovakia would be considerably different from other European countries. It should be noted that the government of the Slovak Republic adopted the law on transformation of hospitals into public limited companies without consulting the professional health care organisations.

The Slovak Medical Chamber therefore supports the activities of the Medical Trade Unions Association and hopes that the government of the Slovak Republic will address the identified problems in a timely fashion and will not allow any mass exodus of doctors from Slovakian hospitals.

I would be grateful if you could support the activities of the Medical Trade Unions Association and the Slovak Medical Chamber in enforcing their demands.

Please address your correspondences to:

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Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic
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Kind Regards,
Prof. MUDr. Milan Dragula, PhD.,
President of the Slovak Medical Chamber