IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORY OF PROF. DR. CENGİZ UTAŞ (1959 – 2015)

As eloquently stated by Sartre, “One always dies too soon or too late. And yet, life is there, finished: the line is drawn, and it must all be added up. You are nothing other than your life.” For our recent loss, Dr. Cengiz Utaş, death surely came too soon. He was only 56 years of age when we lost him on October 19, 2015, due to an unexpected heart attack. Nevertheless, his life was assuredly long enough to be a leading figure of nephrology, both in Turkey and around the world. He served as one of the most active members in the Turkish Society of Nephrology (TSN). During, and even after, his membership on the executive board for 11 years (2000 – 2011), he always had some direct responsibility in TSN-led congresses, meeting organizations, and also academic publications. In this context, he served for 14 years (1994 – 2008) as the editor-in-chief of TSN’s official journal, the *Turkish Journal of Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation*. It has been difficult to even imagine organizing any large-scale national or international event without his contributions for more than 2 decades. As an organizer, lecturer, or hearty supporter, Cengiz was always there, presenting the intelligent, warm, and welcoming face of Turkish nephrology. From 2005 to 2008, Dr. Utaş worked as an elected member of the European Renal Association-European Dialysis and Transplant Association (ERA-EDTA) Council and served as congress secretary in 2 ERA-EDTA congresses in Istanbul: the 42nd Congress (2005) and the 50th Anniversary Congress (2013). Cengiz also acted as Dialysis Outcomes and Practice Patterns Study (DOPPS) Stage 5 country investigator for Turkey.

Cengiz was one of the pioneers, leaders, and most active members of the once young Turks of Turkish Peritoneal Dialysis. Starting in the early 90s, he acted as a member, author, decision-maker, and representative of the largest peritoneal dialysis (PD) program in the country in the “Turkish

Multicenter Peritoneal Dialysis Study Group-TULIP,” a nationwide academic group formed by the collaboration of 11 leading university and state hospital-based PD programs in Turkey. Thanks to his contribution, the group has been successful in preparing multicenter research projects nationwide and also at the international level, establishing country-oriented PD standards and making recommendations regarding technical and organizational aspects of PD practice. That movement was rewarded by the International Society for Peritoneal Dialysis (ISPD) when it gave us the chance to organize the 2008 ISPD Congress in Istanbul. Under his presidency, it was one of the most successful ISPD Congresses ever.

Professor Utaş was always active in promoting nephrology not only in Turkey, but also in regional areas. He was a dedicated member of the Balkan Cities Nephrology, Dialysis and Transplantation Association (BANTAO), contributing to successful activities such as the 2009 BANTAO Congress held in Antalya, Turkey. Less than 2 weeks before his tragic demise, we were together in Iran, participating in the 15th International Congress of Nephrology, Dialysis, and Transplantation held in Mashhad, Iran, in order to collaborate with our regional fellow colleagues to advance the ISPD Middle Eastern Chapter.

His contribution to Turkish academics was not confined to the field of nephrology. Professor Utaş acted as a founding faculty member, chief of the nephrology division, dean of the medical faculty and finally rector of Erciyes University (2004 – 2008), a large state university located near Cappadocia, Central Anatolia, comprising 18 faculties, 12 colleges, 7 institutes, 38 research centers and a total of more than 60,000 students. During his successful presidential term, he made game-changing contributions to Erciyes University and the City of Kayseri on cultural, social, technical, and academic grounds.

Cengiz and his graceful wife, Prof. Dr. Serap Utaş, had a long and happy relationship, having been married right after completing their medical school. Cengiz is survived by a wonderful son, Alper, who is a successful lawyer.

We will remember Cengiz, with his supportive friendship, endless energy, silent and thoughtful smile, and, above all, his achievements. May God bless his soul and rest him in peace, and grant his family and us the strength to bear his loss.

F. Fevzi Ersoy
ersoy@akdeniz.edu.tr

On behalf of the
Turkish Society of Nephrology
Peritoneal Dialysis Study Group
Akdeniz University Medical School
Antalya, Turkey

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