

This Issue of intWOJDE is dedicated to
Prof. Dr. Türkan SAYLAN
(1935-2009)

Medicine Dr., Educator, Author and Women Movement Defender



Prof. Dr. Türkan SAYLAN was born in Istanbul in 1935. She graduated from the Faculty of Medicine of Istanbul University in 1963 and specialized in Venereal Diseases and Dermatology in the Hospital of the Social Security Institution during the next four years. As she explains in her autobiographical book, "The Sun Rises Now Out of Hope" (in Turkish), she laid face down in bed for 13 months to recover from spinal tuberculosis while studying medicine.

She was appointed to the position of head research assistant at the Department of Dermatology of Istanbul University in 1968. In 1971, 1974 and 1976 she did research work, financed by grants, in Britain and France. She was appointed Associate Professor in 1972 and Professor in 1977 at Istanbul University where she retired in December 2002.

Prof. Dr. Saylan concentrated her work on Leprosy from 1976 onwards and founded the Society for the Struggle Against Leprosy (SSAL) in the same year. She also initiated the establishment of the Foundation for the Struggle Against Leprosy (FSAL) in 1976. At present, she is the president of both the SSAL and the FSAL. She is a founding member of the International Leprosy Union (ILU) and at present she is the vice-president of ILU. She was the Head of Istanbul Leprosy Hospital for 21 years between 1981 and 2002. For 20 years until the end of 2001, she was the director of the Center for Lepra Research and Practice at the Faculty of Medicine of Istanbul University. For about 30 years till 2006, she was a consultant to the World Health Organization (WHO) on Leprosy.

By the mid-1980s, Prof. Dr. Saylan was internationally known for her wide ranging medical, educational and social work on Leprosy. In 1986 she received the International Gandhi Prize, presented to her in India. From 1989 onwards, while still dedicated to teaching, researching and working in the field of leprosy, the emphasis of Prof. Dr. Saylan shifted towards educating the people, especially of young girls and women in Turkey.

In 1989, Prof. Dr. Saylan founded the Association for Support of Contemporary Living (ASCL) in Istanbul together with a group of colleagues. She has been the president of ASCL since its establishment. She has also been the president of Foundation for Support of Contemporary Living (FSCL) since 1995. She is a founding member of both the Association of University Teachers and the Center for Research and Practice on Problems of Women. She was appointed a member of the Higher Education Council of Turkey, by the president, between the years 2001 and 2007. During 2003-2004, she was a member of the Human Rights Consultancy Committee at both the national and provincial levels, the latter being in Istanbul.

Prof. Dr. Saylan has numerous articles published in English and in Turkish in the fields of medicine, education and problems of women. She has six books published in Turkey.

Prof. Dr. Saylan was diagnosed twice with breast cancer went through surgery and chemotherapy. She has two sons and two grandchildren. (For details pls search as from Google "Türkan Saylan")