



Editorial

Professor Samuila Sanoussi, the fighter

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Professor Samuila Sanoussi is gone [Figure 1]. At 58 years old. Young. Very young. Too young if we consider the projects, he carried with enthusiasm and his passion for his family, his country Niger, and Africa. With limited resources, Samuila Sanoussi had the exceptional quality of fighting with the same energy on several fronts at the same time, with the aim of making the world a better place. “Act as a man of thought, and think as a man of action” (Henri Bergson 1859–1941) could be his motto.

Niger is ranked last on the Human Development Index (2018). Prof Samuila Sanoussi demonstrated through his achievements that there is truth in the adage that faith moves mountains. Indeed, after neurosurgical training in Strasbourg (France) – where he could have stayed – he chose to return home to establish and develop the specialty for which he had great ambitions and also to get his compatriots out of the tragic precariousness socioeconomic situation that continues to overwhelm them. Belonging to the Christian minority in a majority Muslim country, he leads his party's parliamentary group, demonstrating that in his part of the world, bruised and devastated by a war from another time, living together in harmony is free from religious differences. The honors bestowed on him by his country and the President of the Republic are a vibrant testimony to his legacy.



Figure 1: Professor Samuila Sanoussi (January 13, 1965–May 9, 2023).

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Holder of a chair, he performed his academic activities fully, as well as that of head of the neurosurgery department. The ravages of hydrocephalus following recurrent measles epidemics and the excessive cost of shunts led him to develop the “Niamey Valve” to make it financially accessible to many poor people. Chairman of the Ethics Committee at the Ministry of Health, he ensured compliance with the “*primum non nocere*” rule and the dignity of patients. His desire to promote neurosurgery led him to become actively involved in regional and global organizations. Concerned about the future, he established a local neurosurgical training center calling on the best international neurosurgeons to supervise his students. He granted me the honor of chairing the jury of the first promotion of six Nigerian neurosurgeons and I am grateful to him [Figure 2].



Figure 2: First graduate neurosurgeons Niger.

Prof. Samuila Sanoussi, with the sobriety and discretion of the people of the Sahel, was keen to protect his family from basic needs by investing in a private clinic which he patiently and methodically equipped to the highest standards (staff, biology, computed tomography scan, and magnetic resonance imaging). His care for his family was constant. During a congress in Hanover (Germany) which we attended together, his wife and he were constantly worried about whether the children had done their homework and constantly tried to reach them on the phone. Respect for traditional values made of respect for elders was reflected in his human relationships. The address to his parents when he was admitted to the professorship in 2010 testifies to this: “*When the President of the Jury told me that I had been admitted, I immediately thought of my parents. I am lucky to have them alive at 80 and 75. In Africa, it is an advanced age! My parents cannot read, write or speak French, have never been to school and yet have great ambitions for their children’s studies.*”

Samuila Sanoussi was a fighter. An example of the stature one must have to overcome the constant and even aberrant adversities that one encounters when one wants to make health and social equity triumph, particularly in our African nations where basic needs are glaring and a priority. The force that animated him must penetrate the younger generations so that they invest themselves with tenacity, vigor, and courage on the battlefield of social well-being.

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