

## **CENTURY: PROFESSOR KRIKOR ERZINGATSIAN (APRIL 1942 – JULY 2022)**



Professor Krikor Erzingatsian, 80, was known as the father of surgery in Zambia having started teaching medical students at the University of Zambia Ridgeway Campus in 1979. He was the longest serving lecturer and was a selfless man who dedicated his life to serving mankind particularly the under privileged. It was his nature to provide surgical services to poor communities at no cost. His work was his hobby and he was well known for his meticulous attention to detail. Professor Krikor's parents were Armenian by birth, and fled the Armenian genocide to Ethiopia where Professor Erzingatsian was born. His secondary education was in North Wales and he entered into medical school in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) in 1963. During this time, he won several prizes and undertook higher surgical training in several hospitals in Dublin. He became a Fellow of RCSI and lectured in anatomy. He also obtained Irish citizenship.

Following surgical training in Ireland he returned to Africa where he spent most of his clinical career as a surgeon in Lusaka, Zambia. He held a number of key administrative posts during this time period and he was appointed Professor of Surgery in the University of Zambia in 1999. At the University Teaching Hospital, he had previously served as a surgical consultant and Head of Department of surgery. Prof Krikor was also a former President of the Surgical Society of Zambia. His educational activities during this time period are too numerous to mention but the thematic approach was to promote and advance the cause of surgery and surgical training in East, Central and Southern Africa. He published extensively in topics relevant to the local delivery of surgical practice including the importance of local anaesthesia and ketamine, the management of sepsis and trauma and also a recognition of the cancer burden in Africa. Professor Krikor then entered into a remarkable new phase in his career. The recognition of the need for a formal structure of surgical training in Africa resulted in the creation of the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA). Professor Krikor was a driving force behind the creation of this college, was the longest serving member of its Council and has been its Vice-President and President. He was the College Registrar for many years until the time of his passing. His tireless energy helped nurture a young college and contributed greatly to a rapid increase in COSECSA training numbers to almost 1,000 trainees in 2022. For this Professor Krikor Erzingatsian was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of COSECSA in 2012.

Prof Erzingatsian had no wife nor children. His death is a great loss and he will be greatly missed.

*By the Zambia Medical Association/Surgical Society of Zambia*