



HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY

Hacettepe University invites the French Parliament to take responsibility in the name of universal values

Hacettepe University believes in its capacity as a scientific institution committed to freedom of thought, expression and scientific research and the principles of universal law that the law criminalizing the denial of so-called "Armenian genocide of 1915" that has adopted by the French Parliament will have serious and irreparable consequences. Our university also believes that this particular law would also jeopardize and harm the relations between the peoples of Turkey, France and Armenia.

Our University is deeply concerned that such legislation is created and aimed to domestic politics without considering the traditional friendship and vital interests between the two countries and that this policy is irrational and so harmful to future relations and it is a clear deviation from the democratic spirit which France is always so proud of. Indeed, this legislation does not convince on its humanitarian objectives and gives the impression of a political expediency that will certainly disappoint the core values that created democratic France.

On the other hand, this criminal law could be a model for other laws that are just as contrary to the scientific spirit, the freedoms of conscience, thought, expression and moral values.

In a world where Islamophobia causes so much misery and perturbation, it is foreseeable that the adoption of such a law will worsen the situation and lead to new conflicts and new cross-cultural manifestations of racism.

While it is not up to parliaments to legislate on issues going beyond their historical functions of decision-making and comment on what is scientific truth or what is not, it is especially dangerous and a clear sign of exceeding power when that particular issue is not even about France and that it is still a matter of debate among historians. By what right the French Parliament could prohibit research and scientific discussion?

It is very difficult to see where the interest lies to enact such a law so openly flouts human rights and scientific freedom and also spoils the traditionally good relations between Turkey and France and hinders the development of a constructive dialogue that would establish a mutual understanding and lasting peace among the peoples and states of Turkey and Armenia.

In opposing a law that is clearly in line with the inquisitorial applications of the Middle Ages and even intends to forbid scientific research on the subject, Hacettepe University sees this particular "denial law" as a very unfortunate move which has a potential of opening a deep and unhealable wound and therefore strongly condemns it and calls all the scientific institutions to do the same.

This law would also mean the denial of Voltaire, who had declared "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say" and established the freedom of speech and expression as we understand today. We hope that the good sense would prevail and this particular Act will be repealed by the French politicians for whom it would definitely constitute a universal democratic trial.