

Hellenic Federation of University Teachers' Associations (POSDEP)

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Communication about Persecution of University Professors in Turkey

Dear colleagues,

On the occasion of the attempted coup in Turkey, a great number of citizens face mass persecutions and dismissals from work on the pretext that they sympathize with the coup. Among those citizens, there are thousands of teachers in the public and private sector who were expelled from their work. The teachers' layoffs, the decision of the country's Council of Higher Education to invite 1,577 university deans to resign, in conjunction with the government's prohibition of university teachers to leave the country, constitute an unprecedented operation of "ideological purification" of the state regime. The Hellenic university community denounces this pogrom against Turkish Academics and in general opposes the government's stance towards Turkish citizens who are not benefiting supporters of Erdogan's policy. Unfortunately, the Turkish government has been systematically moving its policies in this direction well before July 15.. Recently, in January (17.1.2016), POSDEP expressed its solidarity with the Turkish University Professors, through a unanimous resolution (see resolution of POSDEP and text university Turks here:

http://posdep.gr/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=207&task=doc_download&gid=1829)

That which is happening in Turkish universities constitutes another brutal attack on academic and, in turn, democratic freedoms. The threat to overthrow parliamentary democracy is not neutralized by limiting democracy and individual freedom, but by strengthening them.

The Turkish government must:

- Respect the academic freedom and democracy within universities; stop the massive prosecutions of university professors and other educational staff. They must curb the criminalizing of general dissidents who were not involved in illegal actions. Ultimately, their only crime was to oppose government policy, in turn only aggravating the circumstantial opposition to its policies..
- Respect international treaties on human rights and freedoms.
- Not reinstate the death penalty nor retroactively apply emergency legislation.
- Immediately suspend emergency measures and fully implement law guarantees to maintain internal regulation" with the Universities.

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POSDEP takes the initiative to be reviewed by the EU so as to suspend financing to Turkey for academic activities (research programs, student exchanges, etc.), as long as democracy, academic freedom and independence rules and limitations do not apply to the systematic structure within Universities.

We ask all educational associations, Greek and European, to denounce the unfounded prosecutions that Turkish colleagues suffer without having had any accusation against them formally announced.

The Executive Committee

