



**Arbeitsgruppe Anerkennung –  
gegen Genozid, für Völkerverständigung e.V.  
(AGA)**

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October 13, 2005

T.C. Başbakanlık  
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan  
Atatürk Bulvarı No : 203  
Kavaklıdere - 06688 / ANKARA

Türkei - Türkiye

Sir,

with irritation our human rights organization learnt about a court case and a suspended sentence of six month against Mr Hrant Dink, Chef editor of the Istanbul based paper “Agos”. He was charged for alleged offence of the Turkish nation, although his essays in question (of January 23, 30 and of February 13, 2004) deal with the identity of Armenians in Armenian and the Diaspora and their various opinions, as seen by Mr Dink. Clearly, there seems to be a misapprehension about the topic of Mr Dink’s writings. In general, Mr Dink is a known and ardent defender of the idea of Armenian-Turkish reconciliation without inference by the Armenian Diaspora or the Republic of Armenia, and has so far been criticised more by Armenians, than by Turks.

At the occasion of this recent trial against an alleged offence of opinion – and with the earlier charges in the still pending court case against the prominent, internationally respected Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk – we would like to point out at same still existing insufficiencies in the legal system of your country. With article 305 of the recent Penal Code still valid and with an obvious lack of safeguards for the freedom of opinion and media, there is general fear that court cases such as the charges against Mr Pamuk and Mr Dink can and will repeat over and over again. A revision of the recently issued Penal code and the annulment of all articles, which can be misused for oppression of civic and human rights, seems highly necessary and will make an important contribution to the democratisation process in your country.

Let us also use the opportunity to express our gratefulness and respect for your recent support to an international conference on the history of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. We believe, that this important event took place mainly because of your and Mr Gül’s personal intervention. This belief gave us the courage to address to you and to beg you to use your influence again in order to prevent a confirmation of the sentence against Mr Dink and to stop further legal prosecution of Mr Pamuk.

Sincerely,

(Dr. Tessa Hofmann)  
Chairwoman