

# The Turkey Analyst

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Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's January 12-13 visit to Moscow did not achieve a major breakthrough in bilateral relations, but it did highlight Russia's emerging role as Turkey's leading energy partner. The two governments made further progress on several important joint energy projects. At the same time, evidence persists of continuing differences between Turkish and Russian officials over Nagorno-Karabakh, partly due to the diverging energy interests involved. Overall, the visit did not alter the mixture of overt friendship and restrained competition that has characterized Turkish-Russian energy relations during the last decade.

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# THE TURKEY ANALYST

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# AS DOĞAN YIELDS, TURKISH MEDIA FREEDOM PLUMMETS

Svante E. Cornell

*Following billion-dollar fines and the prosecution of its owner, Turkey's largest media group, Doğan Media, appears to have capitulated to the AKP government. Over the New Year holidays, personnel changes in DMG removed the most controversial individuals from managerial and editorial duties, while the sale of a large chunk of the company's assets to a pro-government business was being prepared. The fall of the remaining large independent media group in the country is not an isolated incident, but the completion of a systematic trend beginning already in 2004.*

**BACKGROUND:** On December 29, 2009, Ertuğrul Özkök resigned from his post as Editor-in-Chief for 20 years of *Hürriyet*, DMG's flagship publication and one of Turkey's most-read newspapers. The very next day, Aydın Doğan resigned as Chairman of the Board of Doğan Holding, DMG's mother company. These events happen a week after news reports suggested DMG was about to sell three major DMG assets to the pro-AKP Ipek Group. These events are not occurring in isolation. Indeed, they are the culmination of a trend.

Turkey's media landscape suffers from numerous flaws. Chief among these is the dominance of large holding companies over the media landscape. As a



result, major newspapers and television channels are owned by firms with broad and substantial

economic interests. For many, winning government tenders is a chief objective. This means that owners of media outlets seldom see these as their main preoccupation, but often as assets they can use for leverage – either by using their assets to pressure incumbents to win favors – or by appeasing the powers that be.

Given the unsavory nature of Turkish big business, this ownership structure also means that Turkey's largest media outlets have been controlled by rather unsavory business figures. The Uzan family, which stands accused of defrauding Motorola of billions a decade ago, is one example; Aydın Doğan is another.

However, the main issue in Turkey's media landscape is not the Uzans and Doğan – or even the fact that they may have contributed significantly to digging the hole they found themselves in. The issue is whether the transfers of ownership that have taken place over the past half decade amount to a systematic campaign against the freedom of the press.

In 2004, the state's Savings Deposits Insurance Fund (SDIF) seized the *Star* newspaper and television channel, owned by tycoon Cem Uzan, together with most of the family's assets. The controversial Uzan family had long developed a reputation of notoriety both within and outside the country. However, Uzan had also created a political party, the "Genç Partisi" (The Youth party), which became a challenger to the AKP in the 2002 elections. Following the AKP's victory in those elections, Uzan's populist party was the only one that kept growing in popularity, prompting Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to state in

spring 2003 that "our only rival is the Youth Party". At the time, the image of the AKP was a party pushing some of the most democratic reforms in Turkey's modern history, while Uzan's was that of a crook. Consequently, there was little in terms of a domestic or international reaction: most people felt Uzan had it coming. The *Star* TV channel was sold to DMG, then in good terms with the government, while the newspaper was acquired by a pro-AKP business group with close connections to Northern Cyprus.



*Cem Uzan and Aydın Doğan*

Until 2007, the major media outlets kept relatively cordial relations with the government, which retained support from the Turkish liberal intelligentsia. Only with the 2007 political crisis did a measure of criticism arise from the media's ranks. As the crisis deepened, the pace of ownership changes of media outlets accelerated. ([See Turkey Analyst, June 4 issue](#))

In 2007, the SDIF put the Sabah/ATV group – the country's second largest – up for auction, having seized it several months earlier following alleged wrongdoing by its owners. The single bidder was Çalık Energy, a firm with close ties to the AKP, in which Prime Minister Erdoğan's son-in-law was a chief executive. The deal was financed by loans from two government banks, and additional funds

from Qatar for which President Abdullah Gül had personally lobbied. This deal did begin to raise eyebrows in Turkey.

The same year, the government began to put pressure on Kanaltürk, owned by maverick businessman, journalist and nationalist politician Tuncay Özkan, who was later to be prosecuted and jailed under the controversial Ergenekon investigation into alleged coup-plotters. The channel's news coverage was banned for a week due to its allegedly biased reporting on the government. In May 2008, a few months before Özkan was jailed, he was intimidated to sell the channel to the Ipek group.



*Akin Ipek*

In 2008, a court in Frankfurt, Germany, implicated several officials close to Prime Minister Erdoğan in an embezzlement case, in which 16 million Euros gathered by Turkish charities in Europe had been diverted to fund, among other, the pro-AKP *Kanal 7* television station – shedding light on the practices that critics of the Islamic conservative

movement in Turkey had long argued were being used to bolster political Islam.

Until this point, the position of the DMG had evolved from that of an active supporter of the AKP (during 2002-2007) to one of relative neutrality. The leading publicist of the group, Ertuğrul Özkök, had become increasingly critical, while several of the country's most influential liberal, pro-AKP commentators, such as Hasan Cemal and Cengiz Çandar, were DMG employees. DMG outlets nevertheless prominently covered the Frankfurt court case, known as *Deniz Feneri*. This led Prime Minister Erdoğan to publicly accuse DMG owner Aydın

Doğan of blackmail, and to urge all his supporters to boycott DMG outlets. Tax inspectors soon appeared in DMG companies. During 2009, tax authorities then imposed fines totaling over US\$3 billion on the DMG. By October, Doğan announced several of the media outlets would be sold to handle the company's crisis – specifically, *Milliyet*, *Vatan*, and *Star TV*. After having unsuccessfully sought to sell these to Germany's Axel Springer GmbH, widespread reports suggested the buyer would instead be the Ipek group – run by tycoon Akin Ipek, who is known for his close ties both with the AKP and the Fethullah Gülen community. Meanwhile, prosecutors charged Doğan and three

other board members of Doğan Holding for allegedly having purposefully damaged the firm's financial standing, urging for prison sentences of up to several years.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Meanwhile, pro-government media groups have been spared from the SDIF's takeovers, and tax inspectors have not showed similar levels of interest for alleged irregularities

in these groups. This is the case even for Kanal 7 and outlets implicated by German courts in the Deniz Feneri case. Thus, taken together, the events summarized suggest a purposeful two-pronged campaign on the part of the AKP and its allies to remake the Turkish media landscape in their own image. The first element is a systematic transfer of ownership of major media assets to pro-government groups, leading to intimidation of remaining critical media outlets; the second is the growth of new, pro-government media outlets that often but not always share the AKP's Islamic conservative outlook, and which appear in some cases to have been financed through illegal means.



The interaction between politics and media is certainly not new to Turkey: the late Prime Minister and President Turgut Özal, for example,

sought to build up a friendly media constituency. But even Özal, in spite of his dominance of Turkish politics, was unable to avoid a loud and critical media voice that scrutinized his policies and actions.

It should be noted that the freedom of the media is by no means threatened only by the AKP-inspired makeover of the media landscape. The old authoritarianism asserts itself as well. In December 2009, Şamil Tayyar, a columnist with the now pro-government daily *Star*, was handed an 18-month prison sentence after having published a book that discloses information about the former general Veli Küçük, one of the main suspects in the Ergenekon investigation. Mehmet Baransu, a journalist in the liberal daily *Taraf*, was recently brought before a court after having disclosed an alleged coup plot within the military, with the prosecutor demanding that he be arrested. Although the court ruled against the prosecutor, the very fact that Baransu came close to being put behind bars, as well as Tayyar's prison sentence, serve as reminders that it is not risk-free for reporters to report on the military and on alleged coup conspirators.

Nevertheless, the makeover of the media landscape during the AKP's tenure in power stands out as incomparable in magnitude and scope to anything in modern Turkish history. The conclusion that imposes itself is that there is an attempt on the part of the government to secure ideological hegemony by acquiring control over major media outlets. Meanwhile, money is being pumped into pro-government media outlets – whether Islamic-minded such as Kanal 7, the *Zaman* newspaper and its English subsidiary *Today's Zaman*, or the anti-military and self-avowedly liberal *Taraf*.

The makeover of the media landscape has aggravated the already existing practice of self-censorship in Turkey. Owners and editors of the

remaining independent media outlets can now be assumed to think twice and hard before reporting on news stories detrimental to the AKP, or Islamic conservatism.

This does not mean that critical voices are being totally silenced, but that they are being marginalized. The fiercely anti-government *Cumhuriyet* is allowed to exist, much like *Ekho Moskvy* continues to broadcast critical stories in Putin's Russia. Indeed, the AKP seems to be paying closer heed to the Putin model in Russia, rather than striving for European-style media freedom.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Given the importance that Western powers normally accord to media freedoms, their silence to developments in Turkey is puzzling – in spite of the obvious and highly negative implications of the reduction in media freedoms on Turkey's EU membership prospects. The European Commission did express concern regarding the fines against the DMG; but on the higher political level, there is no sign that media freedom is a key message that U.S. and EU officials raise at the highest levels with their Turkish counterparts.

One reason for this may be the lack of a domestic critique, on the part of the opposition, of the AKP based on a liberal democratic vision for Turkey's future. It is by now beyond doubt that the AKP is in the process of securing an ideological hegemony through its media policies, which runs counter to pluralism and democratization. However, that case needs to be made from a liberal vantage point. As long as the political opposition in Turkey is seen to be motivated principally by the desire to defend the old, illiberal system that itself suppressed media freedom through legal means, the very legitimate worries that Turkey faces a “postmodern” version of authoritarianism will fail to get the impact – in Turkey as well as internationally – that they deserve.

Nevertheless, that should not be a cause for complacency. Turkey's friends in the West may be hoping against hope that the events in the media landscape do not amount to a systematic onslaught against the independent media. But ignoring these events is not, as the saying goes, a way to treat a friend. It is a recipe for disaster down the road, as a democratic downturn in Turkey will not help the cause of those wishing to see Turkey as a reliable Western ally integrated with Europe.

## TURKEY AND RUSSIA DEEPEN ENERGY PARTNERSHIP

Richard Weitz

*With its policies of a “democratic opening”, the AKP government has embarked on an enterprise that ultimately challenges the core identity of the republic as a specifically Turkish state. The revulsion that the notion of putting Turkishness on an equal footing with the other identities of society is eliciting suggests that it may, once again, prove difficult to find a liberal way out of the perennial dilemma of Turkey – to establish a secure foundation for the state in a setting of societal heterogeneity.*



Taner Yıldız, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Minister Mehdi Eker and Transportation Minister Binali Yıldırım accompanied Erdoğan. They met with President Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, and other Russian political and business leaders.

Russia currently supplies almost two thirds of Turkey’s natural gas consumption (which provides most of Turkey’s electricity) and one fifth of

**BACKGROUND:** Last week’s Moscow meeting marks the implementation of a 2009 agreement to hold regular senior Turkish-Russian intergovernmental consultations. Turkey has institutionalized such high-level meetings with Iraq and Syria and Erdoğan successfully secured Putin’s approval for this process when he visited Ankara last August. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, Foreign Trade Minister Zafer Çağlayan, Energy and Natural Resources Minister

its domestic oil needs. In 2008, Turkey imported 65 percent (22 billion cubic meters) of its natural gas and 25 percent (8 million tons) of its oil from Russian sources. Turkey also purchases coal from Russia and is contemplating establishing a nuclear power program that would rely on Russian-made reactor fuel. The natural gas from Russia and Central Asia enters Turkey directly via “Blue Stream” dual pipeline that runs along the seabed of the Black Sea and indirectly through an older

Western Pipeline whose convoluted route traverses Moldova, Ukraine, Romania, and Bulgaria.

Both Russian and EU energy managers see Anatolia as a pivotal transit route for their future energy plans. Turkish officials have sought to balance their demands while also exploiting them to elevate their country's importance as a key energy bridge for both Moscow and Brussels. From Ankara's perspective, serving as an oil and gas conduit connecting Europe with Central Asia and the Caucasus underscores Turkey's value as a major Eurasian energy security partner to many countries. Turkish officials hope to transform their country into an energy hub for much of the eastern Mediterranean. Although approximately two-thirds of the world's known oil and gas reserves are located around Turkey, most oil and gas exports from Eurasia currently bypass the country, passing either through the Persian Gulf or through Russia and Europe. Thus far, Turkey's own dependence on Russian energy and the EU's lethargy in implementing its energy initiatives has given Moscow a distinct advantage over Brussels in winning Ankara's support.

Russian officials perceive Turkey as their main energy partner in southeast Europe, similar to Germany's role in northeast Europe. Russia and Turkey are now contemplating constructing a second leg for Blue Stream. The expanded capacity would allow Turkey to import more gas for domestic consumption as well as enable Russia to export gas to other countries in the eastern Mediterranean such as Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon, and Syria. Russia's Gazprom and Turkey's BOTAS have been evaluating the merits of constructing a giant underground natural gas storage facility in Turkey that would facilitate selling gas to third parties.

Russian officials have also been pushing Ankara to back the \$11-billion South Stream pipeline project

supported by Russia's state-run energy company Gazprom and Italy's state-run energy corporation ENI. It would complement Blue Stream by also running under the Black Sea, delivering natural gas from Russia and Central Asia directly to Southeastern Europe. The pipeline's route would traverse Turkey's underwater economic zone, come ashore in Bulgaria, and then split into two branches that would terminate in Italy and Austria. Moscow's goal in this endeavor is to bypass Ukraine. The Nord Stream pipeline supplying Russian gas to Germany serves the same purpose by circumventing Poland, Belarus, and the Baltic republics.

European governments have instead been pressing Ankara to join the EU-backed 3,000-km Nabucco pipeline project, which would avoid Russian territory and transport natural gas from the Caspian and Middle East regions through Turkey and the Balkans into Central Europe. From this perspective, Nabucco serves as a complement to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline which circumvents Russian territory. Although the Turkish government remains committed to Nabucco, financial and other problems continue to impede its construction. Nabucco would be twice as long as Baku-Ceyhan, cost three times as much (over \$11 billion), and has not even started construction despite being proposed in 2002.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Turkey's and Russia's energy goals coincide insofar as each wants to benefit from the transport of energy supplies into central Europe. Although frictions have risen over which country should assume the lead role in supplying Central Asian gas to European importers, even serving as a transit country for a Gazprom-led effort would benefit Turkey by generating millions of dollars in transit fees, reducing tanker traffic through Turkey's overcrowded and environmentally threatened Bosphorus Strait, and perhaps enhancing Ankara's leverage over

Moscow by increasing Russian energy companies' dependence on traversing Turkish territory to reach international markets.

The frictions became evident when Turkish officials originally sought to link the Russian and EU projects by having Gazprom supply gas to Nabucco by sending it through Blue Stream to Turkey, which would then direct the flow into Nabucco. This arrangement would have reinforced Turkey's status as an energy "hub" country, allowing Turkish energy firms to store and resell gas at marked up prices. Turkey has also sought a similar arrangement regarding Azerbaijani gas exports that pass through Turkey. Neither Russian nor Azerbaijani energy managers have been eager to allot Turkey such an expensive role. They have instead sought to confine Turkey's status to that of a transit country. For their part, EU governments want to limit Gazprom's involvement in Nabucco since the pipeline's purpose is to limit Europeans' already alarmingly high dependence on Russian gas supplies.

During Putin's visit to Ankara in August 2009, Turkish officials gave Gazprom the right to explore in Turkey's Exclusive Economic Zone to determine where they might construct the South Sea pipeline. After meeting with Erdoğan in Moscow last week, Putin told reporters that the Turkish government will decide whether to proceed with South Stream by November 10, 2010, pending favorable results from an environmental impact assessment and geological and seismic studies. Both Turkish and Russian officials profess to support the construction of Nabucco as well, but doubts persist that sufficient gas will be available to support both projects given the stagnation in Russian domestic production and the recent deals to send a large share of Turkmenistan's gas exports to China and Iran.

During Erdoğan's visit, the two governments agreed to expand their cooperation regarding the

Samsun-Ceyhan trans-Anatolia oil pipeline. This 500-kilometer project is currently being constructed by the private Turkish company Calik Energy and Italy's state-controlled ENI corporation. It aims to carry 1.5 million barrels of Russian and Kazakh crude daily from Turkey's Black Sea port of Samsun to its Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, where the oil would be loaded onto tankers for shipment to European markets. Ankara supports the pipeline both to reduce the oil tanker traffic in the Bosphorous Straits and to strengthen Turkey's role as a major Mediterranean energy hub. Putin said he had proposed, and Erdoğan had agreed, to work with ENI to transform the present 50-50 joint venture into a tripartite agreement that would have the Russian government join the consortium. As a result, Rosneft and Transneft, Russia's state-owned oil and energy pipeline corporations could assume prominent roles in constructing and operating the pipeline. A competing proposal, previously preferred by the Russian government, to build a Burgas-Alexandropoulos pipeline appears to have collapsed due to a lack of support by the Bulgarian government that took office in July 2009.

Diverging Turkish-Russian energy interests were more evident when the two leaders addressed the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Despite Erdoğan's request, Putin declined to commit to exerting any pressure on Armenia to make concessions regarding Nagorno-Karabakh in order to secure Turkish parliamentary ratification of the October 2009 protocols, which would establish mutual diplomatic relations and reopen their joint border. When asked about the issue at their joint news conference on January 13, Putin argued that linking the Turkish-Armenian reconciliation with the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute would simply delay progress on both issues. "Both the Karabakh and Turkish-Armenian problems are extremely complicated in their own right, and I don't think



they should be joined together in a package,” he said. “Each problem is hard to resolve even taken on its own, and if we lump them together, any hope of their resolution automatically recedes into the distant future.” Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made similar remarks the following day when he visited Yerevan. Russian officials may not be eager to see a reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia since, while offering the possibility of drawing Azerbaijan and Turkey closer to Russia, the protocols’ adoption could reduce Moscow’s influence in Armenia and promote the development of new east-west energy and commercial routes through Turkey that circumvent Russian territory.

**CONCLUSIONS:** One divisive energy issue that the Turkish and Russian negotiations will need to address soon is the scheduled expiration in 2011 of their natural gas purchase agreement. The current deal has penalized Turkey by requiring Ankara to buy large quantities at fixed prices. A few years

ago, Turkey had to import more gas than it needed and at higher prices than Azerbaijan and certain other suppliers would have charged. Turkey will want the next framework accord with Russia to give Ankara more

flexibility on the size of its purchases, the price Turkey pays, and the right to re-sell gas purchased above Turkish domestic needs on third markets.

In addition, Turkish policy makers must decide whether to deepen their energy partnership with Moscow by accepting Russia’s offer to construct and provide fuel for the nuclear reactors Turkey plans to build in coming years. Accepting the Russian bid would make Turkey even more dependent on Moscow for energy, in this case for both Russian nuclear technology and Russian-made uranium reactor fuel. Not only could this worsen even further the already large trade imbalance in Moscow’s favor, but it would render Turkey even more vulnerable to Russian pressure.

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## WHAT THE COLUMNISTS SAY

*The question whether the AKP is about to introduce a sort of civilian authoritarianism has been the major topic of the Turkish debate during the first weeks of the New Year. The issue has sharply divided the commentators, and the ensuing enflamed discussion has been yet another expression of the highly charged, polarized political atmosphere in the country. The critics of the AKP assert that the ruling party is undermining democracy, while the influential, liberal supporters of the government accuse those critics of gross exaggeration, indeed of subverting democracy themselves.*

### **ÜLSEVER: WHERE IS TURKEY HEADED?**

Cüneyt Ülsever in *Hürriyet* writes that the age of military tutelage is over in Turkey. That is so because every sensible person has understood that military interventions in politics don't offer any solutions. It is also an undeniable fact that the governing AKP has made a crucial contribution by breaking many of the taboos of the past, although the ruling party has sometimes been carried away in its policies by feelings of revenge. Yet, I disagree with those liberals who maintain that Turkey now faces normalization and democratization. Indeed, there is very little to support such a suggestion. I am pessimistic because the backbone of the AKP – the Islamic National outlook movement – has no democratic inclinations. It is telling that the AKP's proposals for democratization have so far not ventured beyond satisfying

conservative demands. Democratization has got stuck between the headscarf and the right of students of the Muslim preacher high schools to enter university. Never mind that no constitutional reform has been implemented, the AKP has only produced "openings" towards Kurds and Alevis that lack substance.

### **GÜRSEL: AKP IS NOT DEMOCRATIC**

The attempt of the AKP to defeat the regime of military tutelage is understandable, but that fact alone does not automatically make the governing party a democratic force, writes Kadri Gürsel in *Milliyet*. The struggle that rages currently is a struggle about power, not about introducing democracy; the AKP's attachment to democracy is instrumental, and does not betray any fundamental adhesion to democratic principles. The liberals hold forth

the Kurdish opening and the EU process as proof of the AKP's allegedly democratic nature. Yet, those examples don't hold water. The AKP suddenly embarked on the Kurdish opening only because the foreign conjuncture happened to offer an opportunity, and the opening was subsequently abandoned, with Kurdish politicians being hand-cuffed, amply demonstrating the AKP's lack of democratic sincerity. And the governing party has never internalized the EU process. The initial reforms were pursued only with an eye on short-term political and economic benefits. Had the AKP vigorously implemented EU reforms after 2005, Turkey would have been a very different country indeed today.

### **ŞAHİN: POSTMODERN AUTHORITARIANISM**

Haluk Şahin in *Radikal* questions the presupposition that military tutelage and coups constitute the only threats to Turkish democracy. The liberals who support the AKP only see that threat and accuse those who dare to point to other, sinister developments as cheerleaders for military intervention. Yet, we should bear in mind that democracy and the freedom of the press can never be taken for granted, and that vigilance is always called for. The term "postmodern authoritarianism", which has been coined by EU skeptics in Great Britain who warn about the faceless and growing power of the EU bureaucracy, may indeed be applicable in Turkey as well. What may look like diffusion of power could in fact amount to something altogether different, to the concentration of power. In any case, does it not sound like Fukuyama declaring "the end of history" to content oneself with declaring

that "the military has been crushed, therefore the future of democracy is shining"?

### **ERDOĞAN: IS AKP MOVING TOWARDS FASCISM?**

Mustafa Erdoğan in *Radikal* agrees that the AKP is indeed attempting to change the old system, but he rejects the description "civilian coup" used by the critics of the ruling party. The system that the AKP tries to change was itself only half-democratic, and if we look at the policies of the government as a whole, it becomes abundantly clear that it is moving Turkey towards more, and not less democracy – although the government has committed certain "democratic errors" in this process. In fact, the real concern of those who accuse the AKP of staging a "civilian coup" is something else. What bothers them is rather that the military no longer fully enjoys its traditional, autonomous position and judicial impunity. Even though they accuse the AKP of introducing its own variety of "tutelage" over the political system, the critics are very well aware that the ruling party is indeed far from being able to exert full control over even the executive branch.

### **ÇONGAR: WHY DON'T THE CRITICS OF THE AKP CARE ABOUT THE REAL THREATS TO DEMOCRACY?**

Yasemin Çongar in *Taraf* questions the motives of those who participate in the agitation against the AKP, those who conjure up the specter of "civilian coup, civilian tutelage, civilian fascism and one party rule". If they really aspire for more and not less democracy than we have now, why don't they express tangible democratic demands,

instead of crying loud about an abstract threat of dictatorship? For instance, why don't they raise their voice demanding the acceleration of the EU-harmonization reforms? Why do they abstain from mounting a campaign calling all political parties to implement reforms that would breathe new life into the Kurdish opening, that would ensure that the military remains in its barracks and withdraws from politics and that would force the political parties to prepare a "civilian" constitution that protects the citizen, and not the state? Why are they so afraid of the only political party which, albeit insufficiently and timidly, nevertheless has set its mind on accomplishing at least something on those accounts?

#### **MAHÇUPYAN: THE KURDS MUST ABANDON THE PATH OF VIOLENCE**

Etyen Mahçupyan in *Taraf* writes that the Kurds share a fate similar to that of the

Armenians. They have both been victimized by the Turkish state and they are entitled to justice. Yet, the question is whether being right legitimates political actions inspired by an authoritarian mentality; and would those who have been victimized be inherently incapable of developing policies that depart from authoritarian, nationalist traditions? The stance of the Armenian Diaspora is understandable with regard to those questions; the Armenians no longer harbor any desire to live together with the Turks. The Kurds, on the other hand, incessantly invoke that desire. Yet, that invocation lacks credibility. Kurdish politics has to clearly announce the intention of abandoning the path of violence. Only then will the rightful and legitimate demands of the Kurdish society be supported with rightful and legitimate policies, ultimately rendering the opposition of the state futile.