

His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
President  
Office of the President  
Cumhurbaşkanlığı  
06689 Çankaya, Ankara  
Republic of Turkey

Strasbourg, 21 July 2016

Your Excellency,

EuroScience is the organisation of grassroots scientists and other science stakeholders across disciplines, countries and the public-private sector divide in Europe. We stand for the interests and the integrity of the science endeavour and its institutions, requesting the scientific community to operate in full responsibility, independence and openness of minds, which are at the heart of science.

That openness, independence and autonomy are in serious jeopardy in Turkey. The recent measures involving the forced resignation of all 1600 Deans at all Turkish universities, the reported travel ban for the staff of universities and science institutions and the order for Turkish scientists abroad to go back to Turkey are in flagrant opposition to constitutionally guaranteed rights and statutory relations between state authorities, institutions and individuals, and for the international scientific community as a whole.

We have valued and will continue to value the contacts with our Turkish scientific colleagues. But they now seem to have to operate in a country that is closing itself off from the open international community which we regret for them and for Turkey's people in general.

Sadly enough this is not the first time. In October 2011, when Your Excellency was Prime Minister EuroScience spoke out against a similar situation: the government's attempt to take control of appointments to the Turkish Academy of Sciences TÜBA.

EuroScience calls upon the Turkish authorities to respect the basic rights of scientists, as well other educators and their institutions. It is not in the interests of Turkey, or indeed of any country, if its population as a whole, and, in particular, the scientific and educational community are put under such pressure and cut off from international contacts.

Next week in Manchester, EuroScience celebrates its EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF), the largest general science conference in Europe and the meeting place par excellence for open discussions among scientists, policymakers, business leaders, media specialists, students, and in fact the public at large. ESOF highlights this open exchange of minds, which is at the heart of science and our open societies. At ESOF, we will speak up frankly about the great worries we have concerning the way Turkish authorities are opposing the free flow of people and information, and are threatening individuals and the scientific and educational institutions in their basic rights.

Yours sincerely,



Lauritz Holm-Nielsen  
President



Peter Tindemans  
Secretary General