PARSING DAVUTOGLU'S RECENT WEASEL WORDS

Posted on April 21, 2015 by Keghart

Category: Opinions

Commentary, 21 April 2015

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During the last years of the Ottoman Empire, a very large number of Ottoman citizens from different ethnic and religious backgrounds endured great suffering leaving deep scars in their memories. They had all lived together for centuries in peace and harmony. .

As descendants of nations with different ethnic and religious origins who endured these sufferings amid the conditions of the First World War , we understand what the Armenians feel . We remember with respect the innocent Ottoman Armenians who lost their lives and offer our deep condolences to their descendants. .

It is both a historical and humane duty for Turkey to uphold the memory of Ottoman Armenians and the Armenian cultural heritage .

With this in mind, a religious ceremony will be held by the Armenian Patriarchate on 24 April this year and Ottoman Armenians will be remembered in Turkey, just as they will be across the world. .

On this day, it would have been much more meaningful if Turkey and Armenia had been able to

commemorate Ottoman Armenians together with a ceremony that befits both nations. This is what our President, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, stated in his message on 23rd of April 2014, when he was the Prime Minister. .

We believe that when history is no longer exploited for political purposes such a mature and morally sound outcome can be attained .

Ancient Anatolian civilization teaches us to stand up for our history to remember both our joys and pains, to heal our wounds collectively and to look to the future together. .

As I declared in my message on 20 January 2015, on the anniversary of the passing away of Hrant Dink, "two ancient nations can demonstrate the wisdom to understand each other and to contemplate a future together". .

As a consequence of our historical responsibilities and humane mission, and without making any distinction among those who suffered, we respectfully remember today all those who lost their lives in those events that transpired a century ago. .

We also believe that, in order to ease the ongoing suffering, it is just as important to face the past with honesty, as it is to remember the deceased.

It is possible to establish the causes of what happened in World War One and those who were responsible for it. .

However, laying all blame - through generalizations - on the Turkish nation by reducing everything to one word and to compound this with hate speech is both morally and legally problematic.

The scars left by the exile and massacres that Turkish and Muslim Ottomans were subjected to a century ago are still vivid in our minds today. .

To ignore this fact and discriminate between pains suffered is as questionable historically as it is mistaken morally. .

Indeed, recent years have shown that nothing can be achieved by trying to impose conflicting narratives upon one another.

In this context, the memories and convictions of all Ottoman citizens must be heard and respected. .

To reach the truth, it is sufficient to attain a just memory, empathy, respectful language and a reasonable and objective way of looking at things. .

In Turkey, every viewpoint is freely expressed and openly debated. Documents and knowledge of every kind can be investigated. By providing these means, Turkey is taking significant and positive steps towards the building of a common future. .

As descendants of two ancient peoples who a hundred years ago shared the same destiny whether

- in joy or in sorrow, our common responsibility and calling today is to heal century old wounds and re-establish our human ties once again. .

Turkey will not remain indifferent to this responsibility and will continue to do its utmost for friendship and peace. .

As such, we are calling on all third parties to adopt an approach based on just memory and a common peaceful future, rather than aggravating age old wounds. .

It is with these feelings and thoughts that we once more commemorate with deep respect the Ottoman Armenians who lost their lives during the relocation in 1915 and we share in the grief of their children and grandchildren.

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Turkish Prime Minister Davutoglu's Statement

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