THE RESOLUTION OF THE EUROPEAN PEOPLE'S PARTY - Ömer Engin LÜTEM

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The European Peoples Party (EPP) is an international party formed by several center-right parties, especially the Christian Democrats, of the European Union member countries. Mainly it operates in the European Parliament. It is the largest political party in this parliament.

Center-right parties of associate member countries of the European Union are also able to become associate members of the EPP. Center-right parties of other European countries are able to join the EPP as observer members.

No political party from Turkey joined the EPP, although Turkey signed an Association Agreement with the EU.

The ruling Republican Party of Armenia and two opposition parties, namely, Heritage Party and Rule of Law Party in Armenia are observer members of the EPP. President Sargsyan, as the leader of the Republican Party of Armenia, is attentive to participate in the meetings of the EPP.

The European Peoples Party, on March 3rd, 2015, adopted a resolution entitled The Armenian Genocide, Turkish Responsibility, and European Values.

This resolution condemns genocidal acts against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire and various regimes of Turkey in 1894-1923, dispossession of the homeland of the Armenians and the destruction of the Armenian heritage. It states that not only Armenian

people but also the Pontic Greek and Assyrian peoples were subjected to such acts.

The resolution invites Turkey to face history and recognize the reality of the Armenian Genocide and the dispossession of the Armenians, to make redemption and make restitution to Armenians. It says these acts are appropriate for a European country. Ensuring a right of return to the Armenian people, protection of cultural heritage and conducting an integrated inventory of Armenian and other cultural heritage are among the demands of this resolution from Turkey.

Additionally, in brief, Turkey is invited to take the following measures: recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide; comprehensive resolution of issues relating to the freedom of expression; reference to the genocide in state, society, and educational institutions; repair of religious and other cultural sites and their return to the Armenian and other relevant communities; normalization of Turkey-Armenia relations. Other than these, the Resolution invites the European Union, its Commission, Council and Parliament, and the international community as a whole to officially commemorate April 24 as a day of remembrance and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide.

As it can be seen, this resolution espouses the Armenian views altogether. As such, it has a one-sided and biased character. For that reason, this resolution can hardly facilitate the settlement of the Turkish-Armenian controversy. It can hardly contribute to the reconciliation between the Turks and the Armenians.

At the same time, this resolution, which was issued in a time when islamophobic currents gain strength, provokes the idea that genocide allegations are used as an instrument to impede Turkeys accession to the European Union. This kind of a conduct will obviously impair Turkeys European vision.

Another point that shall be underlined is that it is not a fair act to take decisions against Turkey in its absence, hence without ensuring Turkey an opportunity to explain and defend its position and views.

Finally, it shall be clarified that resolutions of this sort have no consequence other than affecting public opinion. Particularly, they do not have any legal significance. Therefore, this kind of resolutions do not merit much attention.

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