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THE NECESSITY TO OPEN THE ARCHIVES AND ESTABLISH A JOINT COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS AND EXPERTS HAVE COME TO THE FORE ONCE AGAIN

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It appears that a news item published in the Turkish press has galvanized the Armenian Diaspora on to a counter campaign based on religious solidarity. Briefly, the incident has developed as follows: It was published in the Turkish press that speaker of the Catholic bishops conference, a bishop born in Turkey, expressed that around one million documents exist in the Vatican archives concerning the Ottoman period, including documents which indicate that the 1915 forced relocations were a result of Armenians internal problems. It was also reported that a decision was taken to inaugurate a department at Bahçeşehir University for the research of the Vatican archives.

In a written announcement made through the Vatican radio, as would be expected, a denial was issued, indicating that the speaker of the bishops conference had refuted the news item which had caused indignation among the Armenian Diaspora and thereby the Christian community and that the bishop was a victim of falsified propaganda.

The purpose of this article is not to comment on the abovementioned incident which could be considered as an ordinary incident within the scope of extreme nationalist Armenian campaign activities carried out against Turkey. The point that requires attention and needs to be emphasized is that apart from the Turkish archives, rich sources also exist beyond the Armenian and Russian archives which possess documents on Turkish-Armenian relations that have never been revealed or perhaps not even been researched, that the Vatican archives is one of the forerunners among these, and as could be surmised, the sine qua non for the researching of these archives and documents is through the establishment of a joint commission.

However, there is a caveat. The Armenian allegations are not based on scientific and historical research and finding. Therefore, the masterminds of these allegations must safeguard and be content with the political support they have received. Since scientific and historical facts could also erode the attained political gains, the only way forward for them is to continue with religious and political propaganda and if necessary, not to refrain from provocation. Currently when international terrorism is an important global agenda item, it is curious that the files of recent Armenian terror and its collaborators in the recent past have still not been brought into public light.

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