



Addendum to

The Science Academy Statement of February 3, 2020 on the Appointment of a new President to Boğaziçi University

We find it necessary to add the following points in response to further developments violating academic freedoms in the last few days since we issued our statement of February 3, 2020 concerning the appointment of a new president to Boğaziçi University:

- Prof. Dr. Ayşe Buğra, esteemed member of the Science Academy, is a highly and duly respected academic of the international scientific and scholarly community. Turkey should be proud of her. We are greatly upset by the fact that the honourable President of the Turkish Republic could accuse her of having played any role in the student demonstrations at Boğaziçi University. In addition, we witness more and more that individual academics are insulted, slandered and pointed out as targets of hatred by some media outlets. This is a violation of their personal rights which are under the guarantee of the Constitution and the respective laws for all Turkish citizens.¹ This level of roughness towards people of science and scholarship, labelling every contrary opinion as provocation and every objection as treason is causing great harm to our country. What will carry Turkey forward is not interference in and suppression of science, its institutions and scientists and scholars, but to show them the respect they deserve.
- Sadly, however, instead of taking measures in the direction of reason, once again bypassing all councils of Boğaziçi University two new faculties, of Law and of Communication, have been abruptly installed in this university. Considering the fact that in Istanbul alone there are 28 Law and 23 Communication Faculties it is clear that the needs of stakeholders in higher education were not taken into account in installing these faculties at Boğaziçi University. We hope, despite all, that those to be appointed to these faculties and those university and Higher Education Board administrators to have a role in their appointments, irrespective of their career records and titles, will assess the situation they are in with reference to principles of academic merit and integrity, and will remember the responsibility of being a scientist or scholar.

We respectfully submit this note to the attention of the public, ‘in sorrow for our country’, in the words of Ayşe Buğra.

The Science Academy Executive Board – February 8, 2021

¹ Besides, as expressed in a Constitutional Court Ruling of September 2020: “*The right to organize meetings and demonstrations serves the purpose of bringing individuals together in order to express an opinion, to defend common interests, to form public opinion within the framework of certain ideas and views, and to influence political decision-making. Therefore, the right in question is closely related to freedom of expression and together with freedom of expression forms the basis of a democratic society. The importance and sensitivity shown to freedom of expression in a democratic society should also be valid in terms of the right to hold meetings and demonstrations.*” OJ, 18.11.2020, no 31308.