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From: [Redacted]

Sent: 21 January 2010 15:07

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: Media Coverage - Armenian Protocols

Dear All,

There has been lots of Armenian protocol related coverage in the Turkish media for the last two days. Turkish government representatives took every opportunity to express their reaction to the Armenian Constitutional Court's grounding of the decision for the adoption of the protocol (*the Court made indirect reference to 1915 incidents and genocide allegations*).

The MFA written statement on Monday, mentioned that the Court's grounding of the decision contained preconditions and restrictive provisions which damage the spirit of the protocols. Turkey was loyal to its commitments as mentioned by the main provisions of the protocols and expected the same loyalty from the Armenian government.

The issue was top of the agenda as from yesterday. **FM Davutoglu** had a phone conversation with his Armenian counterpart Nalbantyan to express its concern and disappointment. He asked Armenian government to clarify the decision of the Constitutional Court and display the necessary political will. **Prime Minister Erdogan** stated that Armenia attempted to change the text and adopted an unacceptable attitude. He warned that this may damage the process altogether. He added that Turkey does not have the luxury to keep relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan out of this issue.

MHP leader Bahceli asked the government to withdraw the protocols from the parliament and apologize from the Turkish people. CHP leader **Baykal** said AKP's attempts ended with failure as Armenia announced its rejection to withdraw from the occupied territories. In his response to criticisms, Head of Parliamentary **Foreign Affairs Commission Mercan** said that there was no practical difference between holding the protocols at the Turkish Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and the Turkish government's withdrawal of the protocols. He said that the committee will take into consideration the sensitivity of the Azerbaijani people while approving the protocols.

Press covered the viewpoint of Armenian authorities as well. This was perceived as an excuse to prevent / delay the ratification of protocols. The fact that Turkey has done nothing to start the ratification process was noted by the armenian authorities.

Some of the headline as follows : *Milliyet / Yeni Safak* ' Armenia attempted to change the text' ; *Radikal* ' Erdogan's warning to Armenia'; *Aksam* ' Crisis in between Turkey- Erivan'; *Vatan* ' Armenian Court damaged the protocol'. *Yeni Safak* ' Erivan blocked the opening'; *Cumhuriyet* ' Show ended with fiasco'.

Commentators:

Taha Akyol (*Milliyet*) believes that the current position of the Court does not mean that the protocols and the opening process was a mistake. Armenia's real expectation from the protocol was the 'opening of the borders'. One of the aims of Turkey was the establishment of commission of historians to discuss the genocide allegations. Protocols established a balance but the Court

damaged this balance. Armenian government needs to bring an explanation as Turkey signed a protocol with the Armenian government not with its constitutional court.

Murat Yetkin (Radikal) Ankara reacted Armenia's reference to genocide allegations in its grounding for the decision. Armenia in return reacted Ankara's establishing realtions with the protocol and the Karabakh issue (Erdogan established such a connection numerous times). Both Russia and America does not want any conditions before the adoption of the protocols. The Armenian lobby in the US already started working for the recognition of genocide claims at the Congress.

Thanks,

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