Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Basbakanlik  
06573 Ankara  
Turkey

Dear Prime Minister Ahmed Davutoglu,

The European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) is aware that the Turkish authorities have in effect made the practicing of academic freedom a criminal offence through their harsh verbal attacks and threats against supporters of ‘Academics for peace’, and who are signatories of the petition ‘We will not be a party to this crime’. Some of them are members of our Association.

We have learned that more than 27 academics have been detained by police as a result of their support of the petition. Others are being threatened and harassed, and some have lost their jobs or are in risk of doing so. The Turkish President has spoken of the academics who signed the petition as pseudo-intellectuals and traitors, and the Turkish Higher Education Council has instigated investigations of the signatories, who are being accused of supporting terrorism.

We see the situation of our colleagues in Turkey as being very disturbing. The freedom of expression, and the right to engage in humanitarian issues, are among the main prerequisites for an open intellectual discourse, and they are crucial values in an open society committed to the development of knowledge and ideas.

The EASA asks that your government stop punitive actions and sanctions against the academics who have signed the petition. They are innocent of any crime and should be allowed to continue their work in the service of knowledge and Turkish society.

Yours respectfully,

Executive Committee, European Association of Social Anthropologists:

Thomas Hylland Eriksen, University of Oslo  
Hana Cervinkova, Czech Academy of Sciences  
Valeria Siniscalchi, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales  
Niko Besnier, University of Amsterdam  
Alberto Corsin-Jimenez, Spanish National Research Council  
Paolo Favero, University of Antwerp  
Rachael Gooberman-Hill, University of Bristol  
Patrick Laviolette, Tallinn University