AVİM Commentary • No: 2015 / 3 •

FREEDOM OF SPEECH IS NOT TO BE SELECTIVE

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08.01.2015

The reprehensible murders committed yesterday in France are a merciless act of terrorism, and such an act must be vehemently condemned by every civilized individual and institution. AVIM too condemns this act of terrorism, and extends its condolences to those who have lost their loved ones.

It is observed that this act of terrorism has brought the need to come to the support of freedom of speech and the resolve to combat terrorism to the agenda in France. Considering that an evil might lead to some goodness, we perceive these sentiments and developments within such a light. In this respect, we consider it important to underline that neither freedom of speech nor combatting terrorism should be practiced in a selective manner, and that differentiations such as freedom of speech that is suitable for me or terrorism that does not hurt me should be avoided at all costs.

AVIM has long drawn attention to the weakness, even tolerance, in the combat against Armenian terrorism which targeted selectively Turkish diplomats; to the recent efforts to penalise the views opposing the Armenian allegations and discourse; and to the more recent decision that was adopted against freedom of speech in the Swiss Courts, reversed by the European Court of Human Rights,then taken again to the European Court of Human Rights by Switzerland, with France being a party. All of these unfortunately indicate the validity of a selective approach.

Regarding the deplorable tragedy that took place in France yesterday, a holistic and resolute approach towards defending freedom of expression and combating terrorism under all conditions would be the most effective response.

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To cite this article: mot1985, . 2026. "FREEDOM OF SPEECH IS NOT TO BE SELECTIVE." Center For

Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No.2015 / 3. January 07. Accessed November 20, 2026. https://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/FREEDOM-OF-SPEECH-IS-NOT-TO-BE-SELECTIVE

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