THE ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AMERICA'S (ANCA) OUTRAGEOUS SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST DISNEY PLUS'S ATATURK SERIES PROJECT

AVİM

The recent hate speech-laden smear campaign launched by the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) to cancel a Mustafa Kemal Atatürk series planned by Disney Plus is a development that will seriously damage inter-communal harmony and mutual respect.[1] It is inevitable that such acts of hate speech will not only prevent the peaceful coexistence of nations, but also create a hostile atmosphere by distorting historical facts.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was the first leader of the wars against colonialism and imperialism, a pioneer of understanding and durable peace between the nations and a distinguished statesperson who believed in the dawn of an era of cooperation between peoples free of any discrimination. While declaring the year 1981 as the Centenary of Atatürk's Birth, UNESCO explained the reason for its decision as follows:

> Convinced that personalities who worked for understanding and cooperation between nations and international peace will be examples for future generations, Recalling that the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic, will be celebrated in 1981, Knowing that he was an exceptional reformer in all fields relevant to the competence of UNESCO, Recognizing in particular that he was the leader of the first struggle given against colonialism and imperialism, Recalling that he was the remarkable promoter of the sense of understanding between peoples and durable peace between the nations of the world and that he worked all his life for the development of harmony and cooperation between peoples without distinction of color, religion and race, It is decided that UNESCO should collaborate in 1981 with the Turkish Government on both intellectual and technical plans for an international colloquium with the aim of acquainting the world with the various aspects of the personality and deeds of Atatürk whose objective was to promote world peace, international understanding, and respect for human rights."[2]

Disney Plus's project to produce a series about an internationally respected historical figure, one of the first leaders of the struggle against colonialism and expansionism, is a valiant and respectable initiative that would contribute to world peace. ANCA's campaign against Disney Plus for such a project and its constant use of hostile and inflammatory

language, distortion of history, and unfair and baseless accusations against Atatürk is utterly disgraceful. Using such hateful language, and especially targeting Atatürk with misleading accusations such as genocidal and racist, not only damages the relations between Türkiye and Armenia, but also has the potential to negatively affect Diaspora Armenians in the communities they live in.

It is everyone's responsibility to stand against ANCA, which is an organization infamous for habitually engaging in anti-Türkiye and anti-Turkish hate speech, and similar organizations that distort history and use hate speech to erode harmony between communities. Disney Plus's refusal to give in to ANCA's unseemly threats and the continuation of this project would be the most effective response to acts of hate speech. On this occasion, AVİM invites civil society organizations and opinion leaders to oppose ANCA's threats and to express their support to Disney Plus for the launch of this series. To oppose injustice loudly is the best response to those who recklessly propagate injustice.

[1] ANCA [@ANCA_DC], Calling on @DisneyPlus to Cancel Its Series Glorifying Mustafa Kemal Ataturk - a Turkish Dictator and Genocide Killer with the Blood of Millions of #Greek #Armenian #Assyrian #Chaldean #Syriac #Aramean #Maronite and Other #Christian Martyrs on His Hands. IMDB: ☀ Https://T.Co/6KxPbd4iMu, Tweet, *Twitter*, 29 June 2023, https://twitter.com/ANCA_DC/status/1674459393952186368.

[2] UNESCO Türkiye Milli Komisyonu, UNESCONUN DOĞUMUNUN 100 YILINI ATATÜRK YILI İLAN ETMESİNİ VE GEREKÇESİNİ PAYLAŞARAK ☀ Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Kurucusu Aziz Atatürkü Saygıyla Anıyoruz, International Organization, UNESCO, 10 November 2016, https://www.unesco.org.tr/Home/AnnouncementDetail/162.

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