

All European Academies



Secretariat ALLEA | Jägerstr. 22/23 | 10117 Berlin | Germany

His Excellency Abdullah Gül
President
Office of the President
Cumhurbaşkanlığı
06689 Çankaya, Ankara
Republic of Turkey

ALLEA Presidency

c/o Berlin-Brandenburg Academy
of Sciences and Humanities

Phone: +49 / (0)30 / 325987372

Fax: +49 / (0)30 / 325987373

Email: secretariat@allea.org

31 October 2012

Excellency,

We are writing to you in follow-up to a letter dated 12 September 2011 that our predecessors, Professor Jüri Engelbrecht and Professor Nicholas Mann, had issued in the light of legislative changes with regards to the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA).

We deeply regret that the letter of concern of the former Presidency of the All European Academies (ALLEA) alongside the numerous other expressions of discontent and dismay by individual academies, federations of academies and leading individuals of the international science community has not resulted in a reversal of the legislative changes concerning TÜBA.

As stated in the above mentioned letter, TÜBA has been – and still is to date – a very active and important member of ALLEA. Among other internationally recognized activities in science and research, through its long-standing representation in the ALLEA Board and its wide-ranging involvement in different ALLEA expert committees, TÜBA has significantly contributed to numerous ALLEA initiatives that have been widely recognized within the international scientific community as well as among decision makers on the national and European level.

We would like to reiterate our concerns regarding the statutory decree published on 27 August 2011 modifying *inter alia* the election procedure for TÜBA membership and for the appointment of the TÜBA President.

Independence and excellence are the basic conditions and decisive criteria for Science Academies worldwide. Only if these criteria are respected, an Academy can exercise its function as the conscience of science in society. Hence, every Science Academy that wishes to be respected and integrated in the international science community needs to strictly follow these criteria, being in a position of political, economic and ideological independence, and building up its activities on the fundament of scientific excellence and autonomy.

We deeply regret that our initial fears that the potential benefits of a close dialogue between science and politics would stand the risk of being overshadowed by a loss of autonomy and independence of the Turkish Academy have become reality. These fears have regrettably found their evidence in the recently introduced nomination and appointment procedure for new TÜBA members and for the appointment of the TÜBA President. For an Academy, it is of the utmost importance that President and new members are nominated and elected by the scientific community on the basis of scientific merit and without any interference of governmental bodies or other third parties.

Excellency, please allow us to state that in view of these fundamental changes the Academy will be losing its credibility not only in the national debates on the future role of science and technology, but also in global scientific exchanges. The reputation of the Republic of Turkey among the scientific community is threatened to be undermined.

By means of the now valid legislation, if not being reversed or substantially modified, the Turkish Academy is being deprived of functioning on the basis of the criteria of independence and excellence.

Against this background, we would like to urge you once more to restore the Academy's autonomy and to grant and protect the basic criteria of independence and excellence by reversing the legislative changes in question.

We are looking forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely yours,



Professor Günter Stock

ALLEA President



Professor Daniela Ježová

ALLEA Vice President



Professor Ed Noort

ALLEA Vice President

CC: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan