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Open letter

Academic freedom – Boğaziçi University

Vienna, April 15, 2021

The University of Vienna is seriously concerned about the significant violation of academic freedom and University autonomy in Turkey, which is evident from recent disputes over the appointment of a rector at Boğaziçi University (Istanbul) and the planned restructuring of the university. We herewith reiterate the position we have taken earlier through statements of Universities Austria (uniko).

We are dismayed that professors and students who peacefully protest against university politics have become targets of hatred, threats, and physical violence. We firmly stand with the Turkish higher education academic community and hereby express our sympathy, support, and solidarity for their struggle for academic freedom and free speech.

It is our deep conviction that both academic freedom and free speech are fundamental to advancing scientific progress in an open society, and should be protected in every way.

On behalf of the Rectorate of the University of Vienna,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Engl'.

Heinz W. Engl, Rector

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Tyran'.

Jean-Robert Tyran, Vice-Rector