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To whom it may concern;

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Chairman of the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye, which was established on April 20, 2016, to operate as the national human rights institution, national preventive mechanism and equality body.

As an active member of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI), our Institution sent an official letter to the officials of the peer national human rights institution within ENNHRI on January 26, 2023, calling for the development of collective sensitivity based on institutional partnership to address the rising Islamophobia and xenophobia that could lead to human rights violations.

On the first day of Eid al-Adha, the holy day of all Muslims worldwide (June 28, 2023), an act of Quran burning was carried out in front of the main mosque in Stockholm. The same individual also perpetrated another action on July 20, 2023, in front of the Iraqi Embassy in Stockholm, targeting the Quran, promoting hate speech, and fueling discrimination in a systematic manner.

As it is known, following the events on June 28, 2023, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution (A/HRC/53/L.23) on July 12, 2023, on countering religious hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. By recognizing attacks on the Quran, the holy book of Muslims, as acts of religious hatred, Human Rights Council called upon States to adopt national laws, policies and law enforcement frameworks that address, prevent and prosecute acts of religious hatred that constitute incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, and to take immediate steps to ensure accountability.

We would like to reiterate that advocating for hatred based on religion, ethnicity, or race, in a manner that incites discrimination and hostility, is fundamentally incompatible with the principles of human rights. Such archaic and fascist rhetoric and actions that target human dignity and sacred values fuel violence, xenophobia, and marginalization in democratic societies that uphold pluralism.

Our institution, main mission of which is to protect and promote human rights, prevent discrimination, raise awareness on these issues and following and assessing international developments in areas of human rights and non-discrimination within the framework of the basic norms set forth by international human rights law and standards, by strongly condemning the actions that have been reported in the media, calls upon peer national human rights institutions to become supporters of the aforementioned United Nations Human Rights Council's resolution.

Respectfully yours.

Prof. Dr. Muharrem Kılıç
Chairman

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