



Association of American Geographers

1710 Sixteenth Street Northwest
Washington, DC 20009-3198
Voice 202-234-1450
Fax 202-234-2744
gaia@aag.org
http://www.aag.org

AAG Councillors

President

Sarah Bednarz
Texas A&M University

Vice President

Glen MacDonald
University of California Los Angeles

Secretary

Thomas Mote
University of Georgia

Treasurer

Melissa R. Gilbert
Temple University

Past President

Mona Domosh
Dartmouth College

Stuart Aitken
San Diego State University

Julie Cidell
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux
University of Vermont

Melissa R. Gilbert
Temple University

J.M. Shawn Hutchinson
Kansas State University

Richard Kujawa
St. Michael's College

Patrick Lawrence
University of Toledo

Robert Mason
Temple University

Scott A. Mensing
University of Nevada Reno

Thomas Mote
University of Georgia

Gregory Pope
Montclair State University

Darren Purcell
University of Oklahoma

Susan M. Roberts
University of Kentucky

Susy S. Ziegler
Northern Michigan University

Jeremy Tasch
Towson University

Executive Director
Douglas Richardson

May 10, 2016

H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
President of the Republic of Turkey
T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Genel Sekreterliği
06689 Çankaya, Ankara
Turkey

Dear President Erdoğan:

It was a great honor to welcome you to our Association's Annual Meeting in 2010 as we displayed the reproductions of 16th and 17th century maps and manuscripts by influential Ottoman Turkish cartographers. We were pleased to work with your nation's Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Bahçeşehir University in organizing that exhibit and many of our members enjoyed the opportunity to view those beautiful maps during our meeting.

In the spirit of friendship we shared in 2010, I am writing to you to express our concern with ongoing reports in the United States that academics in Turkey who signed the "Petition for Peace" have faced sharp reprisals from the government. As an Association of over 12,000 members, some of whom are in Turkey and others who study Turkish geography, it is deeply troubling to us that academic freedom has come under direct threat in your nation.

We respectfully urge the government of Turkey to be a leader by taking all possible steps to protect free expression and academic freedom by ending any efforts to punish signers of the petition. We also urge your government to ensure that signatories are protected against the public threats of bodily harm that apparently have been made against them.

The American Association of Geographers is committed to academic and scientific freedom of expression – as I hope we were able to demonstrate to you personally when you joined with us in 2010 for the exhibit. It is our hope that your government will stand up for these ideals for our fellow scholars in Turkey. Thank you for considering this issue.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bednarz
President

Douglas Richardson
Executive Director