



HOLLANDA MEZUNLARI DERNEĞİ THE NETHERLANDS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF TURKEY

The Netherlands Alumni Association of Turkey, formally established in December 2006, started its activities shortly after the launch of collaboration with the Netherlands Institute for Higher Education – *NIHA*. Since then, the Association has organized a series of conferences, together with *NIHA*, in order to announce its establishment and reach a broader audience who the Association thought might be interested in its aims and purposes. The lectures that have been organized so far are:

1. 1 May 2007, **Reinier M. Speelman** (Utrecht University), “*Jewish People in the Netherlands, Turkey, and Italy: The Contribution to a Secular Society of a Religious Minority*,” together with *NIHA*.
2. 31 May 2007, **Prof. Dr. Ergun Türkcan** (Ankara University, Faculty of Political Sciences), “*Why Turks can not Become Capitalists? A Comparison between the Dutch and Turkish Societies*,” together with *NIHA*.
3. 13 September 2007, **Prof. Dr. Touraj Atabaki** (Leiden University), “*1st World War and Ottomans in Central Asia*,” together with *NIHA*.
4. 26 October 2007, **Prof. Dr. Erik Jan Zürcher** (Leiden University), “*Decisive Moments in the History of Turkey in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: Where Could it Have Gone Differently, and Why didn't It?*” together with *NIHA* and the METU History Club.
5. 13 December 2007, **Dr. Kıymet Giray** (Ankara University, Faculty of Letters, Department of History of Art, Chair), “*The Nineteenth Century Turkish Still Life Painter: Süleyman Seyyid*,” together with *NIHA*.

The members of the Association have all pursued a graduate program in the Netherlands and have an academic background. Our first activities, as a result, consisted of a series of lectures in academic format. Our aim is to become an establishment which not only organizes academic activities, but more so forms a think-tank which engages in various intellectual and scholarly projects. With the vastly growing number of members, our main goal is to become an organization which is able to respond to all sorts of needs, by bringing together as many Turkish students and researchers as possible, who have participated in either short or long-term education programs in the Netherlands.

Amongst our aims is to,

- Organize national and international conferences,
- Publish academic and broad periodicals,
- Act as an intermediary to form and foster relations between the Netherlands and Turkey in the social, cultural, and economic fields,
- Lend assistance to Turkish migrants living in the Netherlands and matters concerning their situation,



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- Provide guidance and lend assistance to Turkish students who want to study in the Netherlands,
- Bring together Turkish and Dutch businessmen in order to create a working ground for various initiatives,
- Contribute to the bilateral relations between Turkey and the Netherlands,
- Contribute to strengthen relations with the Netherlands which is one of the founding countries of the union regarding the relations of Turkey with the European Union.

Next to the presence of Turkish migrants living in the Netherlands and businessman who want to initiate economic relations, the increasing number of Turkish researchers going to the Netherlands to pursue a graduate program and the exchange of students between the two countries, provide sufficient grounds to strengthen the relations between Turkey and the Netherlands.

Both societies need to get better acquainted to create a better understanding of each other and form the basis for durable relations. This is why we believe the Association will meet a series of serious needs.

In order to realize our aims and broaden our scope we need the input of new members. We do hope that almost everyone who has participated from Turkey in either short or long education programs in the Netherlands will join our Association so that we can grow to become an organization which is able to fulfill many needs and requests. We will be honored if you would you join us!

Yours respectfully,

Dr. Nuran Savaşkan AKDOĞAN
Chair