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£TURKEY: @THE CASE OF SINAMI ORHAN, EDITOR OF AK-DO U

Sinami Orhan, a student aged 24, is the editor of Ak-Do u (Bright Dawn), an Islamic political magazine. The magazine's first issue was published in November 1989. Since then seven issues have appeared. Issues No. 4, No. 5 and No. 6, which appeared in February, March and May 1990, respectively, were all confiscated and the editor put on trial separately for each issue.

In the February 1990 issue, Sinami Orhan published an article written by himself and entitled: "One Hundred Years of Our History Must Be Rewritten". In the context of this article he printed a facsimile of a court document dating from the time of the Ottoman empire which purported to prove that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the much revered founder of the Turkish Republic, was the son of a prostitute and born out of wedlock. This document, the magazine claims, had already been published in its original form, that is in Ottoman Turkish and written in Arabic script, with impunity in January 1990 by one of the main Turkish newspapers. When Ak-Do u reproduced the document with a transcription into Latin characters as used in Turkey today, he was charged under Law 5816 with insulting the memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. On 12 October 1990, Sinami Orhan was convicted and sentenced to 21 months' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal upheld the verdict and on 19 August 1991 he began serving the sentence.

In the March 1990 issue of the magazine, Sinami Orhan published an article under the heading "Dissolute, Shameless, Racist, Bloodthirsty Brute: Atatürk". These purportedly were the words of a US Senator voiced on 18 January 1927. Again the magazine claims that they were previously published, this time by the Islamic newspaper Yeni Nesil on 14 November 1987, and that the responsible editor was tried, but not convicted in the end. Sinami Orhan, however, was tried and sentenced to 22 months' imprisonment. His appeal against the verdict is pending.

In the May 1990 issue, Sinami Orhan published an article entitled "Homosexual Atatürk in English Documents". The description "Homosexual Atatürk" was, according to the magazine, used in a telegram sent by a British officer to the War Office in 1921 and published in its original English version with impunity by the Turkish History Institute in 1979. When Sinami Orhan published the telegram in Turkish translation, he was again charged with insulting the memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and is currently standing trial before Istanbul Criminal Court.

Sinami Orhan is imprisoned solely for the non-violent exercise of his right

to freedom of expression. He is, therefore, considered to be a prisoner of conscience and his imprisonment to be in contravention of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Turkey is a State Party. Amnesty International is appealing for his immediate and unconditional release.