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Armenian National Committee of America  
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

To: Foreign Affairs LA  
From: Aram Hamparian, Executive Director  
Date: September 12, 2005

**Re: NY Times criticizes Turkey for silencing discussion of Genocide**

**The New York Times**, in its September 10th issue, ran a policy editorial criticizing the Turkish government's prosecution of noted author Orhan Pamuk for speaking about the Armenian Genocide:

**The New York Times**

*In February, a Swiss newspaper quoted Mr. Pamuk on Turkey's longstanding refusal to discuss the **Armenian genocide** and the deaths of some 30,000 separatist Kurds more recently. Mr. Pamuk's remarks inflamed Turkish nationalists, and he left the country.*

*He faces the possibility of three years in jail.*

Please keep this editorial in mind during the consideration of the Armenian Genocide Resolution. Feel free to contact the ANCA for more information on this legislation at (202) 775-1918 or [anca@anca.org](mailto:anca@anca.org).

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# The New York Times

ON THE WEB

## Editorials/Op-Ed

### **The Turkish Identity**

Published: September 10, 2005

Next week, the Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will address the United Nations here on one of the issues threatening to slow down negotiations to admit Turkey into the European Union - recognizing Cyprus. But he should also address the question of Orhan Pamuk, the pre-eminent Turkish novelist who has been charged with “public denigration” of Turkish identity.

In February, a Swiss newspaper quoted Mr. Pamuk on Turkey’s longstanding refusal to discuss the Armenian genocide and the deaths of some 30,000 separatist Kurds more recently. Mr. Pamuk’s remarks inflamed Turkish nationalists, and he left the country. He faces the possibility of three years in jail.

The charges against Mr. Pamuk violate the standards of free speech, one of the prerequisites to Turkey’s admission to the European Union. The charges also cut to the heart of Mr. Pamuk’s writing. The question of Turkish identity informs his work. In “My Name Is Red,” Mr. Pamuk never lets the reader forget the ethnic and cultural diversity of Turkey’s past. Nor does he flinch, in “Istanbul,” from reminding readers of the “deliberately provoked” 1955 riots that destroyed several non-Muslim neighborhoods in that city. Beneath the notion of a Turkish identity lies a tension, still noticeable today, that has nourished Mr. Pamuk’s writing.

It has been about six months since Mr. Pamuk’s comments were published, so it is unclear why the charges are being brought just now. Whatever the motive, they are a reminder that one of Turkey’s biggest obstacles in dealing with the West is the way it chooses to patrol its own history.