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TURKISH PM WINS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST DAILY TELEGRAPH

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, has won his libel action against the London-based Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Emma Edhem for the Prime Minister told the High Court in London today that the Daily Telegraph published untrue allegations about Prime Minister Erdogan in September 2010. The newspaper claimed that he had improperly negotiated and accepted a donation of US\$25 million to his AK Parti from the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to further his party's campaign in a forthcoming general election. In doing so, the newspaper wrongly alleged that the Prime Minister had improperly allowed a foreign power to influence, and interfere in, the internal democratic processes of the Republic of Turkey and AK Parti policy; and had thereby seriously compromised the integrity of his party.

The Court heard that there was no factual basis whatsoever for the allegations and that they were untrue. Neither the Prime Minister nor the AK Parti had negotiated any such deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran or with any Iranian institution, entity or individual. Similarly, neither the Prime Minister nor his party had accepted any donation of any kind from the Iranian Government or from any Iranian source.

The Daily Telegraph accepted that its allegations were untrue and publically offered in Court its sincere apologies to Prime Minister Erdogan. The Daily Telegraph has also published apologies in its newspaper and on its website.

SRA No. 44769

The High Court was told that as a mark of its regret the Daily Telegraph has agreed to pay the Prime Minister a substantial sum in damages and the costs he incurred in having to bring the legal proceedings.

Ömer Çelik, AK Parti Vice Chairman in Charge of Foreign Affairs, said:

“The publication of these allegations was a disgraceful smear against Prime Minister Erdogan and the AK Parti. The Prime Minister is pleased that the Daily Telegraph has accepted that the allegations are untrue and has unreservedly apologised to him. We are also pleased that he has been able to clear his good name and that of the AK Parti.”

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