

## [ Ümit Özdağ's Statement ]

### Incident Information

**Date of incident:** January 31, 2023

**Location of incident:** Turkey

**Identifying information of perpetrator:** Ümit Özdağ, Chairman of the Victory Party (ZP)

**Source:** <https://twitter.com/zaferhabercom/status/1620386922437967872>

### Hate Speech Analysis

**Transcription of hate speech statement:** "FETÖ<sup>1</sup> is the last crusade", "We will identify and immediately expel the remnants of FETÖ", "FETÖ is more dangerous than the PKK", "Fetö is an espionage organization", "FETÖ has betrayed us from within and continues to betray us", "FETÖ and FETÖ militants are not Muslims", "FETÖ is the strongest and most effective tool that the Christian world has put forward against Turkishness in the last thousand years", "FETÖ is a network of treason"

**Target group(s) of hate speech:** Members of the Gülen movement

**Justification of hate speech:** The hate speech statement is made in response to the statement "*We will put an end to the victimizations arising from the decree laws*" in the memorandum of understanding jointly released by six opposition parties.

**Analysis of the hate speech statement:** The hate speech statement made by Ümit Özdağ targets those who are alleged to be members of the Gülen movement. The statement uses derogatory language to describe the group and accuses them of being a dangerous and treasonous organization. The statement also implies that the members of the Gülen movement are not true Muslims.

- "FETÖ is the last crusade": This statement implies that the Gülen movement is a harmful and dangerous entity, and uses religious language to further demonize the group. The use of the word "crusade" could also suggest that the speaker views the Gülen movement as an enemy of the Turkish people.
- "We will identify and immediately expel the remnants of FETÖ": This statement calls for the exclusion and expulsion of those who are alleged to be members of the

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<sup>1</sup> FETÖ is a derogatory term that the Turkish government coined to refer to the faith-based Gülen movement, which it deems a terrorist group responsible for a failed military coup in July 2016. Its US-based leader, Fethullah Gülen, denies any involvement in the putsch. The European Union and the United States have refused to adopt Turkey's views on the group.

Gülen movement. This type of language promotes discrimination and dehumanization of the targeted group.

- "FETÖ is more dangerous than the PKK": The PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) is a designated terrorist organization in Turkey, so to compare the Gülen movement to it is to equate them with a violent group. This statement further demonizes the Gülen movement and contributes to a hostile and discriminatory environment towards its members.
- "FETÖ is an espionage organization": This statement makes a serious and unproven accusation against the Gülen movement. Such accusations, without evidence, can contribute to the spread of misinformation and prejudice against the group.
- "FETÖ has betrayed us from within and continues to betray us": This statement accuses the Gülen movement of being a traitorous entity, which can contribute to the spread of conspiracy theories and harmful stereotypes about the group.
- "FETÖ and FETÖ militants are not Muslims": This statement implies that the Gülen movement is not a true representation of Islam and that its members are not true Muslims. This type of language can contribute to religious divisions and discrimination against the group.
- "FETÖ is the strongest and most effective tool that the Christian world has put forward against Turkishness in the last thousand years": This statement makes a baseless and inflammatory accusation that the Gülen movement is a tool of the Christian world against Turkey. This type of language contributes to the spread of misinformation and hostility towards the group.
- "FETÖ is a network of treason": This statement accuses the Gülen movement of being a treasonous entity, which can contribute to the spread of harmful stereotypes about the group and encourage discrimination against its members.

**Contextual information:** The Gülen movement, which has been active for decades, promotes a moderate and progressive interpretation of Islam and has a strong emphasis on education and interfaith dialogue. However, the Turkish government and some members of the public have accused the movement of being a terrorist organization and of being behind a failed coup attempt in 2016. As a result, the movement and its members have faced significant persecution, including mass arrests and dismissal from public and private sector jobs.

**Impact of the statement:** The statement made by Ümit Özdağ has the potential to increase hostility towards those who are alleged to be members of the Gülen movement. It can also contribute to the spread of misinformation and encourage discrimination against the group.

## Conclusion

The statement made by Ümit Özdağ constitutes hate speech against those who are alleged to be members of the Gülen movement. The language used in the statement is derogatory and dehumanizing, and the accusations made are inflammatory and not supported by evidence.

# Hate Speech Monitoring Report

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Such speech has the potential to increase hostility towards the targeted group and contribute to discrimination.