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**TURKISH NATIONALISM AND THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE TO BE
SUBJECT OF TALK BY NOTED TURKISH AUTHOR**

(Mahwah) - Historian Taner Akcam, one of the first Turkish academics to acknowledge and openly discuss the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman Turkish government in 1915, will speak March 29, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the York Room of Birch Mansion on the campus of Ramapo College. The presentation is free and open to the public.

Sponsored by Ramapo College's Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, in cooperation with the Armenian National Committee of New Jersey, Akcam's talk will be based on his book *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*, published by Metropolitan Books last November.

The 2006 Nobel Laureate in Literature, Orhan Pamuk, has called Akcam's book "...the definitive account of the organized destruction of the Ottoman Armenians written by a brave Turkish scholar who has devoted his life to chronicling the events. No future discussion of the history will be able to ignore this brilliant book."

Making extensive use of Ottoman and other sources not previously done so by historians of any nationality, Akcam places the genocide within the context of Turkish nationalism. He shows an empire in a state of collapse that is plagued by dissension and contradiction. In its dying breath, as Akcam depicts, it lashes out against one of its ethnic and religious minorities, resulting in what was to become the first of the 20th Century's genocides in which over a million Armenian men, women and children lost their lives and livelihoods through organized killing, rape and

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deportation. Akcam also investigates the postwar efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice and explains how the growing strategic importance of the Middle East assured their failure.

Taner Akcam was born in the province of Ardahan, Turkey, in 1953. He became interested in Turkish politics at an early age. As the editor-in-chief of a student political journal, he was arrested in 1976 and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. Amnesty International adopted him as one of their first prisoners of conscience, and a year later he escaped by digging a tunnel with a stove leg and fled to Germany, where he received political asylum.

In 1988, Akcam began work as a research scientist at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research. While researching the late Ottoman Empire and early Republic, especially the history of political violence and torture in Turkey, he became interested in the Armenian genocide. In 1996 he received his doctorate from the University of Hanover with a dissertation entitled “The Turkish National Movement and the Armenian Genocide Against the Background of the Military Tribunals in Istanbul Between 1919 and 1922.” Since 2002 he has been a visiting associate professor of history at the University of Minnesota.

Akcam is the author of ten books and numerous articles in Turkish, German, English and other languages.

For more information or to reserve a seat, please call the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, 201.684.7409 or the Armenian National Committee, 201.945.0011.

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