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Excellency,

The European Council of Literary Translators' Associations (CEATL) has been informed of two court cases that are pending for a hearing at Istanbul's Second Penal Court of Peace. In both cases proceedings are started against a Turkish translator and a publisher of a recently published foreign literary work:

- translator Mr Süha Sertabiboğlu and publishing house Sel Yayınları will be prosecuted for the translation/publication of the novel *The Soft Machine / Yumuşak Makine* by the American author William Burroughs;
- translator Ms Funda Uncu and publishing house Ayrıntı Yayınları will be prosecuted for the translation/publication of the novel *Snuff / Ölüm Pornosu* by the American author Chuck Palahniuk.

We understand that the public prosecutor demanded an expertise for both novels from the Prime Ministry's Council for the Protection of Children from Harmful Publications ('Muzır Kurulu'); the Council deemed both novels obscene. Subsequently, court cases were initiated against the publishers and translators concerned. They are charged with violation of article 226 of the Turkish Penal Code for distributing books that do not comply with moral norms, hurt people's feelings and abuse feelings of sexual desire. As we were notified, the first hearing, concerning *The Soft Machine / Yumuşak Makine*, will be held on the 6th of July.

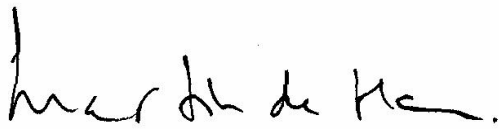
In June 2010, we were informed of a similar court case. The same court then prosecuted Mr İsmail Yerguz and publishing house Sel Yayınları for translating/publishing novels that were deemed obscene by the Council for the Protection of Children from Harmful Publications. The books in question were: *Les exploits d'un jeune Don Juan / Genç bir Don Juan'ın Maceraları* by Guillaume Apollinaire, *Correspondance d'une Bourgeoise Avertie / Görgülü ve Bilgili bir Burjuva Kadının Mektupları* by P.V, and *Perinin Sarkacı* by the Turkish author Ben Mila. In the third hearing (December 2010) both the translator and the publisher were acquitted of all charges. However, we are now facing two new court cases on very similar grounds. Five different novels were thus filed for prosecution in the course of one year.

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On behalf of CEATL, an international organisation representing 32 book translators' associations from 26 European countries, I want to express my deep concern on this matter. In our view, opening court cases against novels for adults on the grounds that they are harmful for children, is directly related to the freedom of expression: it is evident that the novels at stake do not address children, that they are not published as 'children's literature' and that they will not be presented as such. CEATL sincerely hopes that Turkish legislation for the protection of children will not be used to restrict the freedom of expression of translators, publishers, readers or any other actors in the literary field.

Yours sincerely,



Martin de Haan,
President

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