

[Suat Bezeng's Twitter Post]

Incident Information

Date of Incident: June 14, 2023

Location of Incident: Belgium

Identifying Information of Perpetrator: Suat Bezeng, Editor-in-Chief of Aktif TV and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Aktif Media.

Source: <https://twitter.com/suatbezeng/status/1669079314640388097>

Hate Speech Analysis

Transcription of hate speech statement: "To whom did the Minister of Justice hand over the usurped powers of the Islamic Council of Belgium? Look, officially they are not ashamed to reveal their names! I have been saying this for months. Of course, they handed it over to FETÖ¹, why? Because FETÖ embraces LGBT people. O FETÖ clowns, let's see who will go to the mosques you are responsible for? Who will take you for a man and accept the imam you appointed? Let's see if you can admit LGBTI people into the mosques. Let's see if you can appoint a woman imam. Let's see if you can afford it. The ones you take shelter behind (the ones you sit on) will not save you. You will drown with the saliva hanging from your mouth!" (Unofficial translations from Turkish to English)

Target group(s) of hate speech: The hate speech in this statement is directed against those alleged to be members of the Gülen movement and LGBTI people.

Justification of hate speech: There is no justification for hate speech. Hate speech is defined as any form of expression that discriminates, stigmatizes, or incites violence or prejudice against individuals or groups based on attributes such as their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Analysis of the hate speech statement: Suat Bezeng's hate speech statement exhibits several concerning elements. Firstly, he makes unfounded and false claims regarding the appointment of members of the Gülen movement to the management of the Islamic Society of Belgium. This misinformation serves as a basis for his subsequent derogatory remarks and further perpetuates prejudice and discrimination against the Gülen movement.

¹ 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.

Furthermore, Bezeg employs derogatory and inflammatory language when referring to both the alleged members of the Gülen movement and the LGBTI community. By associating the Gülen movement with the appointment and subsequently mocking LGBTI individuals, he seeks to discredit and dehumanize both groups. This type of rhetoric contributes to a hostile environment and further marginalizes these communities.

Bezeg's statement also implies that the inclusion of LGBTI individuals within mosques is something to be ridiculed and opposed. By suggesting that the appointment of a woman imam or the acceptance of LGBTI people into mosques would be problematic, he reinforces harmful stereotypes and prejudices against these groups. This undermines the principles of equality, diversity, and religious freedom.

The language used in the statement is aggressive and inflammatory, intended to demean and belittle both the alleged members of the Gülen movement and the LGBTI community. By resorting to personal attacks and employing derogatory terms, Bezeg attempts to devalue the worth and dignity of these individuals, thereby fueling hostility and fostering a climate of intolerance.

In conclusion, Suat Bezeg's hate speech statement not only spreads false information about the Gülen movement but also targets and insults both the alleged members of the Gülen movement and the LGBTI community. His inflammatory language and derogatory remarks contribute to the marginalization, discrimination, and stigmatization of these groups. Such hate speech perpetuates prejudice, fosters division, and undermines the principles of inclusivity and respect in society.

Contextual information: "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. Furthermore, the context of this statement is related to the change of management of the Islamic Society of Belgium by the Belgian Ministry of Justice. Suat Bezeg blames the Gülen movement, referring to them as "FETÖ," for the alleged appointment of its members to the new management. It is important to note that these claims are unfounded and false. The statement also displays a clear bias against LGBTI individuals by using their inclusion as a point of mockery. In addition, the Turkish government is cracking down on the Gülen movement in Turkey, considering it a terrorist organization and blaming it unjustly for the attempted coup in 2016. This context contributes to the use of hate speech and the demonization of individuals associated with the movement.

Impact of the statement: Hate speech statements like this can have a significant impact on the targeted groups and contribute to the perpetuation of prejudice,

discrimination, and marginalization. Such rhetoric can fuel hostility, create divisions, and promote a climate of intolerance within society. It may also contribute to further stigmatization of both the alleged members of the Gülen movement and the LGBTI community.

Conclusion

Suat Bezeg's Twitter post contains hate speech directed against the alleged members of the Gülen movement and the LGBTI community. The statement falsely associates the Gülen movement with the management changes in the Islamic Society of Belgium and uses derogatory language to insult both groups. This type of hate speech can contribute to the marginalization and discrimination of these communities, perpetuating a climate of intolerance.