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ASIA/TURKEY - The analyst Oktem: the revolt does not disavow the conciliation between Islam and democracy

Istanbul (Agenzia Fides) - The parallel between the Turkish uprising and the Arab Springs "appears for the time being misleading," and the current crisis "cannot be taken as a pretext to deny the possible conciliation between Islam and democracy." Thus the geo-political analyst Emre Oktem, professor of international law at Galatasaray Istanbul University, responds to the readings that especially in the West present the popular protests taking place in Turkey as a historical denial to the hypothesis of composition between democratic method and Islamic culture. According to Professor Oktem, interviewed by Fides Agency, similar manipulative interpretations are denied by the key role played in the crisis by the Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc: "He managed to appease the movement, he apologized to the boys and girls who started the protest in non-violent forms, began a dialogue with some sectors of the protesters. Yet Arinc is a convinced, traditional and popular Islamist, and at the same time he is a pacifist and a moderate. He is linked to the movement of Fethullah Gülen, the thinker residing in the United States that supports a modern and non-extremist vision of Islam and has excellent relations with Jews and Christians".
According to Professor Oktem the protests have revealed "a popular movement that cannot be underestimated, mainly peaceful, which lacks a unifying ideology. 70 percent of the protesters show that they have no connection with political parties. Among them emerge slogans and symbols of Kemalist inspiration. But the Kemalist secularism is rediscovered in reaction to the projects of Islamization from above pursued by certain sectors of Prime Minister Erdogan’s party." Before the Turkish crisis, according to Oktem the European community "must not give the impression of wanting to intervene directly in Turkish politics. It would be disastrous. Erdogan would exploit any external intervention as an argument to attack the opposition movement. In this sense, the messages which have arrived from the White House so far seem reasonable: it is sufficient to call for calm and respect of human rights." (GV) (Agenzia Fides 05/06/2013).

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