

**TEXT OF SAFAK PAVEY PARLIAMENT SPEECH,  
OCTOBER 31, 2013:**

I am delivering this speech to you at the general assembly where everything is forbidden... In this Parliament, where the average age is 50, we are working at a general assembly where even drinking water is banned. I'm talking about a general assembly where the rights of the elderly or the rights of patients are not considered.

I am speaking as a person who was obliged to wear the veil for years in geographies you would not even visit as a tourist, in Afghanistan, in Yemen, in Iran. I am speaking as a female deputy who was banned from wearing pants by a male deputy in Parliament. I am speaking as a person, whose non-existent leg has been turned into a political topic by men.

And now I think that it is high time the showcase non-veiled deputies of the AKP return their borrowed deposited votes to their true owners. I believe that the true women who have carried the AKP to power have the right to take their place in the seats of the Parliament. I will go further; it even offends me that some AKP deputies hide away the covered women that are with them.

Indeed, I have enormous concerns about the future of secularism in my country. But my concern is not about the symbols that got caught in between red lipstick and headscarf.

I was very surprised that while male police were accepted naturally in the democracy package, who shared the same ideology, but a headscarf-wearing female police was banned. Can there be a more serious gender discrimination? I would not be afraid of the headscarf at the head of the police; I would be afraid of the future of violence promised by the police.

I am afraid of the mentality in Parliament that seeks a fatwa from the Religious Affairs Directorate open a Cem House [Cemevi - Alevi place of worship] in the Parliament. In other words, I fear the way of thinking that makes one faith's right of worship dependent on another faith. I am afraid of the mentality that puts religion before law.

I am never afraid of women's rights and freedoms. What I want to tell you is this: A life of freedom is achieved very slowly but can be shattered very quickly.

Exactly for this reason, I want to remind the young girl with her flower-printed headscarf and tight fitting pants, who kisses with her boyfriend in the hidden corners of Çamlıca Park, that she owes her freedom to Mustafa Kemal.

The relationship between the headscarf and freedom is a two-edged sharp knife. On one hand it represents the freedom of belief; on the other hand it represents the pressure of belief. While many women put on the headscarf because of their beliefs, some young girls are forced to wear the headscarf by family powers that control them.

Clinton said in 2007, "If women change, then the future will change." Emine Erdoğan must have liked it so much that she used it in a speech of hers recently. Our social freedom spaces are being destroyed one by one, stolen from our future. Let's look at our girls who are covered at age 5 and married at 15. Our future is truly changing, over the state of our women, for the worse. We, as a culture, don't ever prioritize it, but each freedom is at the same time a responsibility...

I have great expectations from our headscarf-wearing female deputies; for example, I am expecting them to explain why my country is at the 120th place in the world in the field of women's rights. I expect them to explain why the average of the entire women's rights in 57 Islamic countries cannot reach the level of Taiwan alone, which is not even a part of the United Nations.

From now on, the safety of the one who was fired from her job because she wore a mini skirt, the one who was beaten because he had an earring on his left ear, the one who was lynched because her low-cut was not liked by the cabinet minister, the one who was killed because he did not observe the fasting, those who changed their names to hide that they are Christian are entrusted to these female deputies more than anyone else.

Now, it is their responsibility to transform the headscarf from a violation of human rights to a human rights gain. The biggest assurance of freedom of belief is not controlling our future through religious guidance but is a flawless secularism.

What I am trying to say, will be best understood by those who were born in secular Norway and became a deputy in my country. I hope that, if they believe in secularism, they will explain it to their supporters why law and secularism are essential. Please remember, our secular society was shining like a solitary diamond in the Middle East...

There is a detail I am very curious about. Can belief be used for show? Isn't it ordered that it must be lived with a magnificent modesty born out of major soul cleansing? I scanned the speeches of the headscarf-wearing deputies before I came here and I did not come across even one word they used regarding the freedoms of others. I was not able to see the sensitivity they demonstrated for their own freedom of belief in those problematic fields of belief such as the Halki Seminary, minority schools, Cemevis and the declaration of a belief as filthy.

For example, I do not know their opinions on YÖK (Higher Education Board), which has shackled the freedom of science and knowledge.

However, I have heard this insult in every news bulletin: "I will not be soiled again by uncovering my head." In this

case, those who do not wear the headscarf, are they soiled? Whose might is it to declare the other filthy through belief?

Apparently, our myth of cohabiting has collapsed. If you have been intoxicated by arrogance, how can you hear the cry of the one who is not like you? While one side is searching for ways to live together, and if the other side wants to intimidate, transform, destroy their freedoms one by one; then when you finally destroy us, who will you find to put in the next Olympics presentation?

We are the ones torched at and burnt in Sivas, the ones who were shot at and killed in Gezi, whose houses are marked, who are being punished because of our lifestyles... But, for some reason, you are the chronic victims...

It is not sustainable that the minority suppresses the majority. However, it is sustainable that the majority suppresses the minority.

If you really intend to avoid dragging this country to a horrible fate, then you should very soon learn the difference between justice and revenge.

Why didn't the Republic of Turkey's most authoritarian government of all times make an amendment in internal regulations that would have taken only a few minutes in their time? Could it be that the political gain they imagined they would achieve by their plan show that turning into a fight was quite tempting? I cannot know that but as a lawmaker, I will never wear pants before the internal bylaws are changed. I am emphasizing for those who expect confrontation from us: We are not clashing; we are resisting for our own existence.

If you take a look at history, you will see what is waiting for all of you. It is only our struggle to exist that would prevent your self-built radical beast from taking you over. I am leaving what happens next to the wise...

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/who-will-you-put-in-the-next-olympics-ad.aspx?pageID=238&nID=57225&NewsCatID=396>