

April 28, 2019

Professor Keith S. Promislow
Chair of Mathematics Department
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824

Dear Professor Promislow,

We, the immediate past and current Presidents of the Turkish Mathematical Society, are writing this letter to express our deep concern about the proceedings for the dismissal of Professor Selman Akbulut.

Professor Akbulut is one of the leading low-dimensional topologists in the world. He has also contributed in several fundamental ways to real algebraic geometry and symplectic and contact topology. Professor Akbulut has been very productive throughout his career by publishing over 100 research articles in prestigious journals and 3 monographs. His recent book titled “4-manifolds” was published by the Oxford University Press in 2016.

We would like to bring to your attention Professor Akbulut’s most significant services to train, educate and encourage young mathematicians to work in the broader research area of Geometry and Topology. Besides the fact that there are several first-rate mathematicians among his former Ph.D. students (all graduated from MSU), he has run with incredible devotion and enthusiasm the Gökova Geometry and Topology (GGT) Conferences in Turkey that he started in 1992.

The GGT conference commends now a universal prestige and brings also recognition to MSU. Professor Akbulut’s energy and dedication has attracted most established mathematicians, including several Fields Medals Winners and Abel Laurates, to GGT conferences throughout the years. There is no doubt in our minds that, internationally renowned mathematicians have agreed to participate in these conferences because of the solid reputation of Professor Akbulut. Moreover, several established mathematicians holding faculty positions in some top-level institutions today had their first exposure to the world class research experiences at the GGT conferences.

Recently, Professor Akbulut founded the Gökova Geometry Topology Institute (GGTI) in Akyaka, Turkey in 2017 on the 25th anniversary of GGT Conferences. It is remarkable that GGTI (the first of its kind in Turkey) was built by individual contributions and sacrifices, without any government funding. Since its inauguration, GGTI has been hosting many interesting international programs, all due to the efforts of Professor Akbulut.

During the unfortunate dismissal proceedings, which are followed with great concern, we urge you to consider these valuable aspects of Professor Selman Akbulut's universal contributions to the advancement of mathematics, along with his outstanding research contributions.

With best regards,

Attila Aşkar

Attila Aşkar, PhD Princeton 1969
Immediate past President of the Turkish Math. Soc.
and, President Emeritus, Koç University



Burak Özbağcı, PhD UC Irvine 1999
President of the Turkish Math. Soc.
and, Prof. of Math, Koç University

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Attila Aşkar is in New York at this time. You may reach him at (917) 832-2509.
Burak Özbağcı is in Istanbul. You may reach him at +90 (212) 338-1731.

CC.

Philip M. Duxbury, Dean of College of Natural Sciences, MSU
Satish Upda, Acting President of MSU
Jill C. Pipher, President of AMS
Kenneth A. Ribet, Immediate Past President of AMS