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GULF TIMES

## Turkish premier slams European xenophobia



Davutoglu: disturbed by a recent rise of Islamophobia in Europe.

**DPA**

**Dusseldorf**

Xenophobia is one of the “biggest dangers for the whole of Europe”, warned Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu speaking in the western German city of Dusseldorf yesterday. He made his comments during the opening of a new Turkish consulate, a speech which also served as a chance to drum up the vote from Turks abroad ahead of June 7 Turkish legislative elections.

He said it was critical that “we live together” regardless of faith.

He said he was disturbed by a recent rise of Islamophobia in Europe.

Davutoglu’s ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is mildly Islamist.

Its members have made frequent references to worries that Europe is becoming unwelcoming to Islam as worries grow about radicalised individuals returning to Europe after fighting in the Syrian civil war, or because of January's attack upon a French satirical newspaper by self-described Islamists.

Leaders like Davutoglu have insisted that Europe needs to remember the contributions Islam has made to European culture and have noted the high number of peaceful Muslims living in their countries.

Germany has a high number of Turkish Muslims, descended from labourers who travelled to the country last century to help it rebuild after World War II.

Davutoglu reminded yesterday that ties between Turkey and Germany are strong because of that migration.

He also urged people with Turkish backgrounds in Germany to hold on to their Turkish identity, to integrate but not to assimilate.