

# The Armenian Genocide Resolution

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Calling upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide, and for other purposes.

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# Reasons to Support Armenian Genocide Recognition

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## **Summary:**

### **1) To Stand for American Values and Human Rights**

The United States should always take the lead in condemning all genocides.

### **2) To End U.S. Complicity in the Last Stage of Genocide: Denial**

It's long past time that the U.S. rejected the lies, threats, and political blackmail that Turkey has used to make America complicit in its denials.

### **3) To Help Prevent Future Genocides**

Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide sets a dangerous precedent that makes future genocides more likely. Perhaps the most chilling evidence of this is that, on ordering his military commanders to attack Poland without provocation in 1939, Adolf Hitler dismissed objections by asking: "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"

### **4) To Reject a Foreign "Gag Rule"**

We should never allow a foreign country to block America's recognition of genocide. No nation has the right to impose a "gag rule" on America.

### **5) To Join with 42 U.S. States, 11 NATO Allies, & the European Parliament**

Forty-two U.S. states have recognized the Armenian Genocide, as have 11 NATO allies, and the European Parliament.

### **6) To Support Turkish Voices who Stand Against Genocide Denial**

The U.S. government should support the growing number of Turkish scholars who are risking their lives to write about the Armenian Genocide.

### **7) To Set a Foundation for Durable Peace and Stability**

The U.S. can contribute to lasting peace by urging Turkey to accept a truthful and just resolution of the Armenian Genocide.

# Reasons to Support Armenian Genocide Recognition

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## **1) To Stand for American Values and Human Rights**

In keeping with the humanitarian spirit of the American people, the U.S. government should be the international leader in recognizing and condemning all genocides – past and present.

We should honor, as a proud chapter in U.S. history, the unprecedented American diplomatic protests and relief efforts for the survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

Turkey's denials seek to erase the history of America's emergence as a global humanitarian power.

## **2) To End U.S. Complicity in the Last Stage of Genocide: Denial**

The last stage of genocide is denial – a “double killing,” which encourages future genocides.

Over the past nine decades, Turkey has used lies, threats, and political blackmail to impose a gag-rule on the United States, effectively making U.S. policy-makers complicit in Ankara's state-sponsored campaign of genocide denial. It's long past time for this complicity to end.

To this day, U.S. government officials are prevented from speaking honestly about the Armenian Genocide. In fact, a former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia, John Evans, was fired in 2006 after the Turkish government objected to his truthful statements on the Armenian Genocide, even though they were made in the United States and before an American audience. As a Senator, Barack Obama protested the unfair firing of Ambassador Evans.

The Turkish government-imposed prohibition on American recognition of the Armenian Genocide undermines the ability of the U.S. government to properly apply the lessons of this atrocity in preventing future genocides.

# Reasons to Support Armenian Genocide Recognition

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## 3) To Help Prevent Future Genocides

Turkey's ongoing denial of the Armenian Genocide sets a dangerous precedent that makes future genocides more likely.

On ordering his military commanders to attack Poland without provocation in 1939, Adolf Hitler dismissed objections by saying:

*"Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"*

Many of the genocidal tactics, and even the denials, employed by Ottoman Turkey against defenseless Armenians are being used again today by Sudan in Darfur. In 2008, as a U.S. Senator, Barack Obama stated:

*"Tragically, we are witnessing in Sudan many of the same brutal tactics - displacement, starvation, and mass slaughter - that were used by the Ottoman authorities against defenseless Armenians back in 1915."*

Turkey's Prime Minister has defended Turkey's growing economic and military ties with Sudan by saying "a Muslim could not commit genocide."

## 4) To Reject a Foreign "Gag Rule"

We should never allow Turkey – or any foreign country – to block America's recognition of human rights violations – especially genocide.

No nation has the right to impose a "gag rule" on America.

Turkey criminalizes even the discussion of the Armenian Genocide, prosecuting writers, including Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk. Hrant Dink, a Turkish-Armenian editor, was assassinated in 2007 because of his writings on the Armenian Genocide. Police took turns posing for pictures with the accused killer, and there still has not been a conviction for Dink's murder.

We should not allow Turkey to export its "gag rule" to the U.S.

## Reasons to Support Armenian Genocide Recognition

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### **5) To Join with 42 U.S. States, 11 NATO Allies, & the European Parliament**

Forty-two U.S. states have recognized the Armenian Genocide, including Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Oregon, North Dakota, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Washington.

Eleven NATO allies have recognized the Genocide, including Canada, Italy, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Lithuania. The European Parliament has passed resolutions on the Armenian Genocide, including one insisting that Turkey's recognition of the Armenian Genocide should be a prerequisite for its E.U. membership.

### **6) To Support Turkish Voices who Stand Against Genocide Denial**

A growing number of Turkish scholars, including Taner Akcam, Nobel Laureate Orhan Pamuk, and journalist Ragip Zarakoglu, are risking their lives to write about the Genocide. Many have faced prosecution and the noted journalist Hrant Dink actually paid with his life.

Akcam wrote recently that the resolution is needed to democratize Turkey:

*"The United States should stop being a gridlock that prevents resolution...  
If the United States declares what it believes to be the truth and stands behind it, not only will it gain some self-respect on the subject, but it will liberate both Turks and Armenians and itself in the process."*

The U.S. Congress should support, not undermine the brave Turkish voices calling for Armenian Genocide recognition and a more democratic Turkey.

### **7) To Set a Foundation for Durable Peace and Stability**

The U.S. can remove a source of regional instability and contribute to lasting peace by urging Turkey to come to terms with its past and accept a truthful and just resolution of the Genocide. True reconciliation must be built upon a foundation of truth.

# Broad-based Support for Armenian Genocide Recognition

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## **Summary:**

### **1) Bipartisan Congressional:**

The resolution, which enjoys bipartisan support, was adopted by the Foreign Affairs Committee in 2000, 2005, 2007 and 2010.

Congress has a tradition of condemning genocide, including the Holocaust and the Ukrainian, Cambodian, Rwandan, Bosnian, and Darfur genocides.

### **2) Obama Administration Officials:**

As Senators, President Obama, Vice President Biden, and Secretary of State Clinton recognized the Armenian Genocide and called upon the Congress to adopt the Armenian Genocide Resolution.

### **3) U.S. States:**

Forty-two U.S. states have recognized the Genocide.

### **4) Ethnic, Religious, and Human Rights:**

The Armenian Genocide Resolution is backed by a diverse coalition of human rights, ethnic, religious, and grassroots civic organizations.

### **5) International:**

The Armenian Genocide has been officially recognized by more than 20 nations, including 11 NATO allies.

### **6) Academic:**

The Armenian Genocide is settled history. The International Association of Genocide Scholars, the top group of Holocaust and genocide experts, endorses the Armenian Genocide Resolution.

### **7) Turkish Civil Society:**

Despite threats of prosecution and even assassination, a growing number of Turkish academics are calling on Turkey to recognize the Genocide.

# Broad-based Support for Armenian Genocide Recognition

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## 1) U.S. States

The Armenian Genocide has been officially recognized, through legislation or proclamation, by 42 U.S. states.

Alaska	Louisiana	North Carolina
Arizona	Maine	North Dakota
Arkansas	Maryland	Ohio
California	Massachusetts	Oklahoma
Colorado	Michigan	Oregon
Connecticut	Minnesota	Pennsylvania
Delaware	Missouri	Rhode Island
Florida	Montana	South Carolina
Georgia	Nebraska	Tennessee
Hawaii	Nevada	Utah
Kansas	New Hampshire	Vermont
Kentucky	New Jersey	Virginia
Idaho	New Mexico	Washington
Illinois	New York	Wisconsin

# Broad-based Support for Armenian Genocide Recognition

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## 2) Ethnic, Religious, and Human Rights

These human rights, ethnic, and religious groups have gone on record publicly supporting Congressional recognition of the Armenian Genocide:

American Federation of Jews from Central Europe (New York, NY)  
American Hellenic Council of CA (Los Angeles, CA)  
American Hellenic Institute (Washington, DC)  
American Hungarian Federation (Washington, DC)  
American Jewish World Service (New York, NY)  
American Latvian Association in the U.S. (Rockville, MD)  
American Values (Washington, DC)  
Americans for Peace Now (Washington, DC)  
Arab American Institute (Washington, DC)  
Belarusan-American Association (Jamaica, NY)  
Bulgarian Institute for Research and Analysis (Bethesda, MD)  
Center for Holocaust and Genocide, University of Minnesota  
(Minneapolis, MN)  
Center for Russian Jewry with Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry  
(New York, NY)  
Center for World Indigenous Studies (Olympia, WA)  
Christian Solidarity International (Washington, DC)  
Congress of Romanian Americans (McLean, VA)  
Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (Lafayette, LA)  
Estonian American National Council (Rockville, MD)  
Genocide Intervention Network (Washington, DC)  
Global Rights (Washington, DC)  
Grace Community Church (Sun Valley, CA)  
Hmong National Development, Inc. (Washington, DC)  
Hungarian American Coalition (Washington, DC)  
Institute on Religion and Public Policy (Washington, DC)  
International Association of Genocide Scholars (New York, NY)  
Jewish Social Policy Action Network (Philadelphia, PA)

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## Broad-based Support for Armenian Genocide Recognition

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These human rights, ethnic, and religious groups have gone on record publicly supporting Congressional recognition of the Armenian Genocide:

Jewish War Veterans of the USA (Washington, DC)  
Jewish World Watch (Encino, CA)  
Joint Baltic American National Committee (Rockville, MD)  
Leadership Council for Human Rights (Washington, DC)  
Lithuanian American Community (Philadelphia, PA)  
Lithuanian American Council (Rockville, MD)  
National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (New York, NY)  
National Council of Churches USA (New York, NY)  
National Federation of American Hungarians (Washington, DC)  
National Federation of Filipino American Associations (Washington, DC)  
National Lawyer's Guild (New York, NY)  
Polish American Congress (Chicago, IL)  
Progressive Jewish Alliance (Los Angeles, CA)  
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (Wyncote, PA)  
Slovak League of America (Passaic, New Jersey)  
The Georgian Association in the USA (Washington, DC)  
The Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring (New York, NY)  
U.S. Baltic Foundation (Washington, DC)  
Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (New York, NY)  
Ukrainian National Association (Parsippany, NJ)  
Ukrainian National Museum of Chicago (Chicago, IL)  
Union for Reform Judaism (Washington, DC)  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (Washington, DC)  
United Hellenic American Congress (Chicago, IL)  
Washington Chapter Czechoslovak National Council of America  
(Washington, DC)  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Philadelphia, PA)  
Zionist Organization of America (New York, NY)

## 3) International

The Armenian Genocide has been officially recognized by more than 20 nations and international bodies.

Eleven of Turkey's NATO allies have already recognized the Armenian Genocide.

Argentina	Lithuania (NATO)
Belgium (NATO)	Netherlands (NATO)
Bulgaria (NATO)	Poland (NATO)
Canada (NATO)	Russia
Chile	Slovakia (NATO)
Cyprus (NATO)	Sweden
France (NATO)	Switzerland
Greece (NATO)	Uruguay
Italy (NATO)	The Vatican
Lebanon	Venezuela

Other International Affirmation includes:

European Parliament

U.N. Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and  
Protection of Minorities

## 4) Academic

The Armenian Genocide is settled history among scholars and academics.

The Armenian Genocide Resolution has been endorsed by the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS), the leading group of experts in Holocaust and genocide studies. In a series of letters to the U.S. and Turkish governments they have raised the following points:

-- "In passing this resolution the U.S. Congress is not adjudicating history but instead would be affirming the truth about a genocide that has been overwhelmingly established by decades of documentation and scholarship."

-- "Just as it would be unethical for Germany to interfere with the historical memory of the Holocaust, we feel it is equally unethical for Turkey to interfere with the memory of the Armenian Genocide."

-- "We are aware that you [in Congress] may be pressured by a small number of academics who support Turkey's denialist stance for often self-interested reasons. Such academics willingly falsify, distort, and manipulate the evidence in sometimes subtle ways to present a false view of history. These academics violate the ethical obligations of historical scholarship.

-- We have noted that academics who deny the Armenian Genocide are no different than academics who deny the Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide, or the Cambodian Genocide. The recent conference in Tehran devoted to Holocaust denial is a case in point."

-- "The historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous and documented by overwhelming evidence. It is proven by foreign office records of the U.S., France, Great Britain, Russia, and perhaps most importantly, of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as by the records of the Ottoman Courts-Martial of 1918-1920. . ."

-- "The Armenian Genocide is not controversial, but rather is denied only by the Turkish government and its apologists."

## 5) Turkish Civil Society

**“The United States should stop being a gridlock that prevents resolution... If the United States declares what it believes to be the truth and stands behind it, not only will it gain some self-respect on the subject, but it will liberate both Turks and Armenians and itself in the process.”**

Taner Akcam, Ph.D., Armenian Weekly Magazine, April 2009

**“The Armenian Genocide was a crime against humanity by the Ottoman Turkish state against part of their own citizens. To deny it, is an insult to the memory of those who died and to those who survived. To deny it poisons each generation, not just the Armenians, but also the Turks who take part in denial.”**

Ragip Zarakolu, Public lecture at the CUNY Graduate Center, April 8, 2006  
Turkish publisher (Prosecuted by the Turkish government)

**“I find it sad that some Turks can’t talk about 1915, that ours is a society with collective amnesia. We haven’t come to grips with our past, nor have we recognized how bitter the Armenians are because their grief goes unacknowledged. I would like Armenians to forgive and forget one day, too, but we Turks need to remember first.”**

Elif Shafak, “Writers on Trial,” The Washington Post, September 24, 2006,  
Turkish novelist (Prosecuted by the Turkish government)

**“Thirty thousand Kurds and a million Armenians were killed in these lands and nobody but me dares to talk about it.”**

Orhan Pamuk, Interview, Das Magazin, February 6, 2005  
Nobel Prize-winning Turkish novelist (Prosecuted by the Turkish government)

**“Of course I’m saying it’s a genocide, because its consequences show it to be true and label it so. We see that people who had lived on this soil for 4,000 years were exterminated by these events.”**

Hrant Dink, Reuters, July 14, 2006  
Turkish Armenian journalist (Prosecuted by Turkish government, assassinated in 2007)

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## Myths and Facts regarding Armenian Genocide Recognition

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**Myth #1: The resolution will hurt Turkey-Armenia relations.**

**Fact: U.S. recognition should not be held hostage by Turkey's foot-dragging on the Protocols.**

The lack of diplomatic ties between Armenia and Turkey has nothing to do with the U.S. stand on the Armenian Genocide. There is, in fact, only one reason behind the last closed border in Europe:

**Ankara's unilateral refusal to normalize ties  
or to end its blockade of Armenia.**

w The recently signed, but still unratified, Turkey-Armenia Protocols, were actively supported by the Obama Administration as a means of moving Turkey toward establishing ties and opening its border with Armenia.

w These accords, which inspired such high hopes in Washington, DC and Yerevan, are, unfortunately, viewed very differently from Ankara's perspective. For Turkey, the process of the Protocols, not their realization, was simply a new tactic intended, initially, to enlist the complicity of the new Obama Administration in its campaign of denial and, now, to extend U.S. silence on the Armenian Genocide from one April 24th to the next.

w More than a year after the Protocols were signed, Ankara has made it clear that it has no intention of normalizing ties or ending its blockade.

w Rather than taking these steps, as required by its own commitments, international law and the terms of its European Union candidacy, Turkey's leaders continue to add new preconditions, moving the goalposts farther down the field after every Armenian concession. For its part, Armenia's leaders have shown unprecedented flexibility, at the cost of widespread protests both from within Armenia and among her worldwide Diaspora.

w U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide should not be contingent on the state of Armenia-Turkey relations, nor should our moral stand against this atrocity be held hostage to Turkey's ongoing denial of this crime.

# Myths and Facts regarding Armenian Genocide Recognition

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**Myth #2: We shouldn't upset a reliable ally.**

**Fact: Turkey has shown that it's no longer a reliable ally.**

America's true friends don't attack us for standing up for the truth; America's "reliable" allies don't turn their back on us when we need them.

Very simply, Turkey is no long a reliable ally of the United States:

**w Turkey defends Iran's nuclear program:** Turkish leaders have spoken in defense of Iran's nuclear program, while sharply criticizing Israel's possession of nuclear arms.

**w Turkey has turned against Israel:** Turkey is increasingly anti-Israel, as illustrated by Prime Minister Erdogan's public attack and walk-out on Israeli President Peres during the 2009 Davos Economic Forum.

**w Turkey refused to send combat forces to Afghanistan:** Turkey has refused U.S. requests that it send combat troops to Afghanistan.

**w Turkey is strengthening its ties to Sudan:** Turkey denies the Darfur Genocide, provides arms to Khartoum, and is strengthening its military, economic, and political ties with Sudan's genocidal al-Bashir regime.

**w Turkey blocked a northern Coalition front against Iraq:** In 2003, Turkey blocked a northern front against Iraq, which added materially to both the insurgency and the level of ongoing sectarian violence.

**w Turkey promotes instability in the region:** Turkey contributes to regional instability by blockading Armenia, continuing to occupy Cyprus, and by launching cross-border attacks into Kurdish areas of Northern Iraq.

**w Turkey is stirring anti-American sentiment:** Among the best selling books in Turkey is Hitler's Mein Kampf. One of their most popular films, Valley of the Wolves, features a Turkish nuclear attack on Washington, DC.

## Myths and Facts regarding Armenian Genocide Recognition

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**Myth #3: It's "not the right time" to pass this resolution.**

**Fact: It's always the right time to defend human rights.**

Nine decades after the Armenian Genocide, there are still those who say its "not the right time" to speak honestly about this crime.

This argument has been used for far too long to block a Congressional vote on this long-overdue human rights measure.

When opponents of this resolution, citing any of a variety of recent developments, argue that "Now is not the right time," what they are really saying is that "It's never the right time to recognize the Armenian Genocide."

Year after year, in session after session of Congress, appeals for delays in the consideration of the Armenian Genocide Resolution have resulted in the countless deferrals and the eventual defeat of this human rights legislation.

- w It's always the right time for America to take a stand against genocide.
- w It's never the right time to compromise our nation's morality by outsourcing our government's policy on genocide to a foreign government.
- w The time has come to end Turkey's gag rule and for America's leaders to speak honestly about the Armenian Genocide.
- w The sooner Congress adopts this legislation, the sooner U.S. policy-makers can begin using the lessons of the Armenian Genocide to help prevent future genocides.

**Myth #4: The Armenian Genocide is still the subject of historical debate.**

**Fact: The Armenian Genocide is settled history.**

The Turkish government, using tactics similar to Holocaust deniers, seeks to create artificial controversy and confusion regarding an established historical event.

<sup>w</sup> The truth, of course, is that the Armenian Genocide, like the Holocaust, is a thoroughly documented fact.

<sup>w</sup> The International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS), the leading group of experts on Holocaust and genocide studies, unanimously adopted a resolution, as early as their 1997 conference in Montreal, Canada affirming that:

**“[T]he mass murder of Armenians in Turkey in 1915 is a case of genocide which conforms to the statutes of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.”**

**The IAGS “condemns the denial of the Armenian Genocide by the Turkish government and its official and unofficial agents and supporters.”**

<sup>w</sup> In a March 7, 2007 letter urging Members of House and Senate to support the adoption of the Armenian Genocide Resolution, the IAGS asserted that:

**“The historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous and documented by overwhelming evidence.”**

**Myth #5: The Armenian massacres don't meet the definition of genocide.**

**Fact: They represent a clear, textbook case of genocide.**

The Armenian Genocide clearly meets the definition established by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The U.S., Turkey, and Armenia are all parties to this landmark treaty.

- w **Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin**, who coined the term genocide in 1944, cited Turkey's massacres of the Armenians and the Nazi extermination of the Jews as defining examples of genocide.
- w In 1997 the **International Association of Genocide Scholars**, an organization of the world's experts on genocide, unanimously passed a formal resolution affirming the Armenian Genocide.
- w **126 leading scholars of the Holocaust** including Elie Wiesel and Yehuda Bauer placed a statement in the *New York Times* in June 2000 declaring the "incontestable fact of the Armenian Genocide" and urged western democracies to acknowledge it.
- w **The Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide** (Jerusalem), and the **Institute for the Study of Genocide** (NYC) have affirmed the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide, as does the **Encyclopedia of Genocide**, edited by Professor Israel Charney.
- w Leading texts in the international law of genocide such as William A. Schabas's *Genocide in International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) cite the Armenian Genocide as a precursor to the Holocaust and as a precedent for the law on crimes against humanity.
- w A study facilitated by the **International Center for Transitional Justice** in 2003 concluded that the Armenian Genocide meets the definition of genocide established by the Genocide Convention.

## Myths and Facts regarding Armenian Genocide Recognition

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**Myth #6: Congress shouldn't address historical issues.**

**Fact: Congress has a long record of recognizing genocide.**

The U.S. House of Representatives has a long and proud tradition of reaffirming America's moral stand against all genocides - past and present.

- w **Holocaust:** The U.S. House has adopted a number of resolutions on the Holocaust. Among these was H.Res.30, adopted on January 25, 2005, which urged educators to teach the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help prevent future genocides.
- w **Cambodian Genocide:** On November 19, 2003, the U.S. House passed H.Con.Res.83, which commemorated the Cambodian Genocide, by a vote of 420 to 1.
- w **Darfur Genocide:** Among many pieces of legislation enacted regarding the Darfur Genocide, on July 11, 2005, the U.S. House adopted a resolution, H.Res.333, condemning the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.
- w **Ukrainian Genocide:** On November 16, 2005, the U.S. House adopted a resolution, H.R.562, recognizing the Ukrainian Famine Genocide and authorizing for the creation of a monument honoring its victims.
- w **Bosnian Genocide:** On June 27, 2005, the U.S. House adopted a resolution, H.Res.199, regarding the genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995.

In each of these instances, the Congress did not legislate history, but rather used the facts and lessons of history to strengthen the resolve of the American people and the U.S. government in opposing all genocides.

**Myth #7: This is only an issue for Armenians living in the U.S.**

**Fact: Armenia “absolutely” wants U.S. recognition.**

All Armenians, including the government and people of Armenia, are profoundly committed to a truthful and just resolution of the Armenian Genocide, as illustrated by the following examples:

<sup>w</sup> **Armenia’s President**

The President of Armenia, Serzh Sarkisian, in a February 12, 2010 televised interview with journalist David Frost, said that he “absolutely” wants President Obama to honor his pledge to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide.

<sup>w</sup> **The Armenian People**

Each April 24th, upwards of a million people, fully one-third of Armenia’s entire population, visit the Armenian Genocide Memorial in Yerevan.

<sup>w</sup> **Armenia’s Declaration of Independence**

Armenia’s Declaration of Independence, adopted in 1990, establishes that:

**“The Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving international recognition of the 1915 Genocide in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia.”**

<sup>w</sup> **Armenia’s Foreign Ministry**

Armenia’s Foreign Minister, wrote, in a 2007 letter to Speaker Pelosi, that:

**“To view acknowledgement of the truth as an obstacle to political relations is cynical. A resolution that addresses matters of human rights and genocide cannot damage anyone’s bilateral relations - neither yours with Turkey, nor ours.”**

**Myth #8: Turkey is showing new flexibility on the Armenian issue.**

**Fact: Turkey is escalating its domestic denial campaign.**

The sad reality is that Turkey is using the pretense of dialogue with Armenia as cover to move farther away from an honest discussion of the Armenian Genocide, as these examples illustrate:

<sup>w</sup> **Article 301**

Article 301 and other provisions of the Turkish criminal code continue to mandate prison terms for even the mention of the Armenian Genocide.

<sup>w</sup> **Hrant Dink**

More than three years after his prosecution, official intimidation, and brutal assassination in 2007, the Turkish government has yet to convict even one person for this crime.

<sup>w</sup> **Orhan Pamuk**

The fact that Turkey would prosecute Orhan Pamuk – a Nobel Prize-winning author – demonstrates that it remains willing to silence even its most prominent citizens who speak about the Armenian Genocide.

<sup>w</sup> **Education Ministry**

Turkey's Minister of Education has required that Turkey's schoolchildren be taught to deny the Armenian Genocide.

<sup>w</sup> **Armenian Patriarch**

The ailing spiritual leader of the remaining Armenian community in Istanbul, Patriarch Mesrob II, faces constant death threats, intimidation, and government restrictions on religious freedom.

## Myths and Facts regarding Armenian Genocide Recognition

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**Myth #9: Let's wait for Armenia and Turkey's joint historical commission.**

**Fact: The historians have already spoken: the Armenian Genocide is settled history.**

Turkey's offer of a commission to jointly study this issue rings hollow.

Rather than honestly confronting and coming to terms with its past, Ankara is using this "Commission" tactic to attempt to delay or derail the rising international tide of Genocide recognition - including here in the United States.

There is no serious historical debate on the reality of the Armenian Genocide beyond the reach of Turkey, its paid agents, and its Washington lobbyists.

The historians have spoken: The Armenian Genocide is settled history.

Turkey continues to try to roll back decades of scholarship by using lies, bribes, and blackmail to open up for debate a long-established historical fact.

Turkey's offer is akin to:

- w The Iranian government cynically offering to participate in a commission on whether there was a Holocaust.
- w A tobacco firm suggesting that it sit on a panel called to determine if "accusations" that cigarettes are harmful are true.
- w The flat-earth society setting up a joint committee with NASA to study the shape of our planet.

**Myth #10: This resolution will lead to Turkish backlash.**

**Fact: Turkey's crying wolf, again.**

The Turkish government has long made hollow threats that it will disrupt ties with the U.S. if the U.S. Congress recognizes the Armenian Genocide. Despite harsh warnings, Turkey has only taken token steps against Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and other states that have recognized the Genocide.

**w The U.S. example**

**Between 1980 and 2006, U.S.-Turkey trade grew by 957%**, despite President's Reagan's 1981 mention of the Armenian Genocide in a Presidential Proclamation, the adoption of a 1984 House resolution marking April 24th, and the passage of two amendments in the House, in 1996 and 2004, concerning the Armenian Genocide.

**Between 1996 and 2006, U.S. military sales to Turkey grew by 1540%** (annualized 32% growth), despite the adoption by the U.S. House of two measures on the Armenian Genocide.

Turkey's trade with individual U.S. states that have affirmed the Genocide continues to rise. California annually recognizes the Genocide and yet trade increased from \$220 million in 2001 to over 300 million in 2006.

**w International examples**

Despite Turkey's threats against France in 2001 in an unsuccessful bid to prevent the French Parliament's recognition that year of the Armenian Genocide, **trade between France and Turkey grew 22% the following year, and grew by 131% over the next five years.**

Turkey's bilateral trade increased significantly with other countries following their recognition of the Armenian Genocide, among them **Belgium** (167%), **Canada** (22%), **Greece** (266%), **Italy** (109%), **Lebanon** (126%), and **Russia** (351%).

**Myth #11: This resolution will destabilize the region.**

**Fact: It will help move the region toward greater stability.**

U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide will help encourage Turkey to finally come to terms with the Armenian Genocide and the ongoing legacy of this crime against humanity.

Ending America's silence on this atrocity will provide powerful moral support to brave voices within Turkey that are, at the risk of their own lives, moving Turkish society toward an honest understanding of the Armenian Genocide.

Turkey, by accepting a truthful resolution of the Armenian Genocide, would materially help to advance a number of U.S. interests in this strategically important region of the world:

- w Removing an enduring source of distrust of Turkey, lowering regional tensions, and promoting economic integration.
- w Lifting a barrier to Turkey's acceptance into the European family of nations.
- w Eliminating a pretext for Turkey's refusal to lift its blockade and normalize ties with Armenia.
- w Fostering greater respect within Turkey for its Christian, Kurdish, Jewish, and other minorities.
- w Ending Turkey's international status as state-denier of genocide.
- w Reinforcing the international community's respect for the aims of the Genocide Convention.

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Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution

HRES 252 IH  
111th CONGRESS  
1st Session

Calling upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
March 17, 2009

Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. WATSON, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. WU, Mr. SIRES, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WEINER, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PETERS, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. COSTA, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. WOLF, Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mrs. CAPPAS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. HIMES, Mr. BACA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. FATTAH, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. SPACE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. POLIS of Colorado, Mr. LANCE, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. OLVER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. TITUS, Mr. STARK, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. TSONGAS, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. DREIER, Mr. NUNES, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. TIERNEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calling upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide, and for other purposes.

Resolved,

SHORT TITLE

Sec. 1.

This resolution may be cited as the 'Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution'.

## FINDINGS

## Sec. 2.

The House of Representatives finds the following:

- (1) The Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, resulting in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, 500,000 survivors were expelled from their homes, and which succeeded in the elimination of the over 2,500-year presence of Armenians in their historic homeland.
- (2) On May 24, 1915, the Allied Powers, England, France, and Russia, jointly issued a statement explicitly charging for the first time ever another government of committing 'a crime against humanity'.
- (3) This joint statement stated 'the Allied Governments announce publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold personally responsible for these crimes all members of the Ottoman Government, as well as those of their agents who are implicated in such massacres'.
- (4) The post-World War I Turkish Government indicted the top leaders involved in the 'organization and execution' of the Armenian Genocide and in the 'massacre and destruction of the Armenians'.
- (5) In a series of courts-martial, officials of the Young Turk Regime were tried and convicted, as charged, for organizing and executing massacres against the Armenian people.
- (6) The chief organizers of the Armenian Genocide, Minister of War Enver, Minister of the Interior Talaat, and Minister of the Navy Jemal were all condemned to death for their crimes, however, the verdicts of the courts were not enforced.
- (7) The Armenian Genocide and these domestic judicial failures are documented with overwhelming evidence in the national archives of Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, the United States, the Vatican and many other countries, and this vast body of evidence attests to the same facts, the same events, and the same consequences.
- (8) The United States National Archives and Record Administration holds extensive and thorough documentation on the Armenian Genocide, especially in its holdings under Record Group 59 of the United States Department of State, files 867.00 and 867.40, which are open and widely available to the public and interested institutions.
- (9) The Honorable Henry Morgenthau, United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1913 to 1916, organized and led protests by officials of many countries, among them the allies of the Ottoman Empire, against the Armenian Genocide.
- (10) Ambassador Morgenthau explicitly described to the United States Department of State the policy of the Government of the Ottoman Empire as 'a campaign of race extermination,' and was instructed on July 16, 1915, by United States Secretary of State Robert Lansing that the 'Department approves your procedure . . . to stop Armenian persecution'.

(11) Senate Concurrent Resolution 12 of February 9, 1916, resolved that 'the President of the United States be respectfully asked to designate a day on which the citizens of this country may give expression to their sympathy by contributing funds now being raised for the relief of the Armenians', who at the time were enduring 'starvation, disease, and untold suffering'.

(12) President Woodrow Wilson concurred and also encouraged the formation of the organization known as Near East Relief, chartered by an Act of Congress, which contributed some \$116,000,000 from 1915 to 1930 to aid Armenian Genocide survivors, including 132,000 orphans who became foster children of the American people.

(13) Senate Resolution 359, dated May 11, 1920, stated in part, 'the testimony adduced at the hearings conducted by the sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations have clearly established the truth of the reported massacres and other atrocities from which the Armenian people have suffered'.

(14) The resolution followed the April 13, 1920, report to the Senate of the American Military Mission to Armenia led by General James Harbord, that stated '[m]utilation, violation, torture, and death have left their haunting memories in a hundred beautiful Armenian valleys, and the traveler in that region is seldom free from the evidence of this most colossal crime of all the ages'.

(15) As displayed in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Adolf Hitler, on ordering his military commanders to attack Poland without provocation in 1939, dismissed objections by saying '[w]ho, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?' and thus set the stage for the Holocaust.

(16) Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term 'genocide' in 1944, and who was the earliest proponent of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, invoked the Armenian case as a definitive example of genocide in the 20th century.

(17) The first resolution on genocide adopted by the United Nations at Lemkin's urging, the December 11, 1946, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 96(1) and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide itself recognized the Armenian Genocide as the type of crime the United Nations intended to prevent and punish by codifying existing standards.

(18) In 1948, the United Nations War Crimes Commission invoked the Armenian Genocide 'precisely . . . one of the types of acts which the modern term 'crimes against humanity' is intended to cover' as a precedent for the Nuremberg tribunals.

(19) The Commission stated that '[t]he provisions of Article 230 of the Peace Treaty of Sevres were obviously intended to cover, in conformity with the Allied note of 1915 . . . , offenses which had been committed on Turkish territory against persons of Turkish citizenship, though of Armenian or Greek race. This article constitutes therefore a precedent for Article 6c and 5c of the Nuremberg and Tokyo Charters, and offers an example of one of the categories of 'crimes against humanity' as understood by these enactments'.

(20) House Joint Resolution 148, adopted on April 8, 1975, resolved: '[t]hat April 24, 1975, is hereby designated as 'National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man', and the President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day as a day of remembrance for all the victims of genocide, especially those of Armenian ancestry . . . '.

(21) President Ronald Reagan in proclamation number 4838, dated April 22, 1981, stated in part 'like the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians, which followed it—and like too many other persecutions of too many other people—the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten'.

(22) House Joint Resolution 247, adopted on September 10, 1984, resolved: '[t]hat April 24, 1985, is hereby designated as 'National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man', and the President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day as a day of remembrance for all the victims of genocide, especially the one and one-half million people of Armenian ancestry . . . '.

(23) In August 1985, after extensive study and deliberation, the United Nations SubCommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities voted 14 to 1 to accept a report entitled 'Study of the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,' which stated '[t]he Nazi aberration has unfortunately not been the only case of genocide in the 20th century. Among other examples which can be cited as qualifying are . . . the Ottoman massacre of Armenians in 1915-1916'.

(24) This report also explained that '[a]t least 1,000,000, and possibly well over half of the Armenian population, are reliably estimated to have been killed or death marched by independent authorities and eye-witnesses. This is corroborated by reports in United States, German and British archives and of contemporary diplomats in the Ottoman Empire, including those of its ally Germany'.

(25) The United States Holocaust Memorial Council, an independent Federal agency, unanimously resolved on April 30, 1981, that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum would include the Armenian Genocide in the Museum and has since done so.

(26) Reviewing an aberrant 1982 expression (later retracted) by the United States Department of State asserting that the facts of the Armenian Genocide may be ambiguous, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in 1993, after a review of documents pertaining to the policy record of the United States, noted that the assertion on ambiguity in the United States record about the Armenian Genocide 'contradicted longstanding United States policy and was eventually retracted'.

(27) On June 5, 1996, the House of Representatives adopted an amendment to House Bill 3540 (the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1997) to reduce aid to Turkey by \$3,000,000 (an estimate of its payment of lobbying fees in the United States) until the Turkish Government acknowledged the Armenian Genocide and took steps to honor the memory of its victims.

(28) President William Jefferson Clinton, on April 24, 1998, stated: 'This year, as in the past, we join with Armenian-Americans throughout the nation in commemorating one of the saddest chapters in the history of this century, the deportations and massacres of a million and a half Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in the years 1915-1923.'

(29) President George W. Bush, on April 24, 2004, stated: 'On this day, we pause in remembrance of one of the most horrible tragedies of the 20th century, the annihilation of as many as 1,500,000 Armenians through forced exile and murder at the end of the Ottoman Empire.'

(30) Despite the international recognition and affirmation of the Armenian Genocide, the failure of the domestic and international authorities to punish those responsible for the Armenian Genocide is a reason why similar genocides have recurred and may recur in the future, and that a just resolution will help prevent future genocides.

#### DECLARATION OF POLICY

Sec. 3.

The House of Representatives—

(1) calls upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide and the consequences of the failure to realize a just resolution; and

(2) calls upon the President in the President's annual message commemorating the Armenian Genocide issued on or about April 24, to accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide and to recall the proud history of United States intervention in opposition to the Armenian Genocide.

## U.S. Diplomatic Recognition of the Armenian Genocide

### U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau

In a July 1915 report to the Department of State, U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., reported:

**“a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion.”**

Ambassador Morgenthau, in his memoirs, “Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story,” offered the following chilling description:

**“When the Turkish authorities gave the order for these deportations, they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and, in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal this fact. . . I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915.”**

### U.S. Consul Jesse Jackson

In June 5, 1915, U.S. Consul in Aleppo, Jesse Jackson, wrote to Ambassador Morgenthau:

**It is without doubt a carefully planned scheme to thoroughly extinguish the Armenian race.”**

### U.S. Consul Leslie Davis

On July 24, 1915, in a report to Ambassador Morgenthau, U.S. Consul in Harput, Leslie Davis, reported:

**“It has been no secret that the plan was to destroy the Armenian race as a race . . . Everything was apparently planned months ago.”**

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## Statements by Scholars and Human Rights Leaders

### Elie Wiesel

Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate, Elie Wiesel, in a September 12, 2000 letter sent to Congressional leaders during consideration of a similar legislation (H.Res.398), called for the adoption of the Armenian Genocide Resolution:

**“It is my hope that the House will go on record calling upon the President to make sure that all U.S. officials dealing with human rights are educated about the memory of the Armenian Genocide and also urging the President to incorporate into his April 24<sup>th</sup> address a statement calling on our nation to remember the Armenian massacres.”**

### Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in the Preface to the Encyclopedia of Genocide, published in 1999 by the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem, wrote:

**“It is sadly true what a cynic has said, that we learn from the history that we do not learn from history. And yet it is possible that if the world had been conscious of the genocide that was committed by the Ottoman Turks against the Armenians, the first genocide of the twentieth century, then perhaps humanity might have been more alert to the warning signs that were being given before Hitler’s madness was unleashed on an unbelieving world.”**

### Deborah Lipstadt

Professor Deborah Lipstadt, Director of the Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory University, stated in a September 12, 2000 letter to the International Relations Committee that:

**“Denial of genocide strives to reshape history in order to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators. Denial of genocide is the final stage of genocide; it is what Elie Wiesel has called ‘double killing.’ Denial murders the dignity of the survivors and seeks to destroy the remembrance of the crime.”**

### **Samantha Power**

Samantha Power, founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University, writes, in her Pulitzer Prize-winning book *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, about the story of Raphael Lemkin, who coined the word “genocide” and relied on the Armenian massacres as a definitive example of genocide. In this same book, she stressed that:

**“Very few of those killed were plotting anything other than survival. The atrocities were carried out against women, children and unarmed men. They were not incidental ‘by-products’ of the war but in fact resulted from carefully crafted decisions by Turkey’s leaders.”**

### **Israel Charny**

Israel Charny, a noted genocide and Holocaust scholar and the editor of the respected *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, has written extensively about the psychology of genocide denial. He has stressed that to deny the countless deaths of a known event of genocide is to celebrate the deaths and to intimate that the doctrine of power that brought about the destruction is still in force to be used when opportunity permits. To seek to erase agonizing memories is to mock the sensibilities of the victims and their descendents – to once again victimize the victims.

### **Michael Oren**

Noted Israeli historian, in a review in the May 10, 2007 *New York Review of Books*, “The Mass Murder They Still Deny,” wrote:

**“In contrast to Germany, which has publicly and often obsessively accepted culpability for the Holocaust, paid restitution to its victims, and released documents attesting to its guilt, the Republic of Turkey has never admitted its part in the mass murder of Armenians, much less compensated the survivors. Rather than encourage research on its past butchery, the Turkish government has promoted publications that exonerate it from any wrongdoing and portray the Armenians as traitors to the state who allied themselves with Russia and executed thousands of Turks.”**



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March 7, 2009

Dear President Obama:

We write this open letter to you as the leading international organization of scholars who study genocide. As April approaches, we urge you to "refer to the mass slaughter of Armenians as genocide in your commemorative statement," as you urged President George W. Bush to do in a letter dated March 18, 2005.

On January 19, 2008 you voiced your conviction "that the Armenian Genocide is not an allegation, a personal opinion, or a point of view, but rather a widely documented fact supported by an overwhelming body of historical evidence." We hope that you will be able to affirm that conviction this April.

We are confident that you know and value the historical record on the Armenian Genocide, but want to underscore that this human rights history was a watershed for the modern age because:

- 1) it was the template for all modern genocide --Adolph Hitler was so impressed with the Turkish extermination of the Armenians that it figured in his own genocidal plans, as he exhorted his military advisors in 1939, "who today, after all, remembers the annihilation of the Armenians?";
- 2) Raphael Lemkin, who created the concept of genocide as a crime of international law, did so in large part on the basis of what happened to the Armenians in 1915;
- 3) the 94-year denial of the Armenian Genocide has emboldened perpetrators ever since;
- 4) American efforts to rescue the Armenians from massacre from the 1890s through the 1920s set the stage for the modern era of human rights activism, and is a proud and important chapter in U. S. history.

We are concerned that Turkey's lobbying efforts, which are now in full force, will lead to a repetition of the H. Res. 106 debacle of late 2007, when the President, as usual, got the resolution blocked from a House vote. A merely symbolic commemorative resolution, which looked like it would pass in the House, was subverted by unethical pressure, coercion, and cajoling by Turkey, a member of NATO and home of an important airbase. The intellectual freedom of our country cannot be held hostage by a foreign government, particularly by one with the worst human rights record in NATO. Twenty other nations, including NATO members France, Poland, Greece, and Germany, have disregarded Turkey's coercion, issued commemorative statements, and proven that Turkey's threats are nothing more than threats.

By acknowledging the Armenian Genocide, you would demonstrate that you

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are that “leader” you referred to on January 19, 2008, who “speaks truthfully about the Armenian Genocide and responds forcefully to all genocides.” You would signal a new chapter in U.S. diplomacy. You would also honor the truth of our own valiant history, which saw brave and selfless Foreign Service Officers risk their lives rescuing Armenians during the Genocide and compiling the more than 40,000 pages of documentation now housed in the National Archives.

Turkey’s call for an “historical commission” to study the events of 1915 is an attempt to put genocide deniers on an equal level with genuine scholars. The IAGS passed a resolution in 1997 unanimously recognizing the Ottoman massacres of Armenians as genocide. Turkey’s latest proposal for an “historical commission” is just another red herring of denial drawn across the bloody scent of the Armenian genocide.


Hayk Demoyan, Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum & Institute in the Republic of Armenia, recently wrote: “International activism for the recognition of the Armenian genocide would be regarded as a humanitarian rather than a political act, the culmination of which is targeting the global prevention of new crimes against humanity. This is the highest value for humankind, much higher than any strategic partnership.”

We believe that acknowledgments of the Armenian Genocide are an important step toward ending the final stage of every genocide, denial, which continues to inflict suffering on the group that has been victimized—an inhuman assault on memory perpetrated by the Turkish government for more than 90 years.

We also believe that it is in the interest of the Turkish people and their future as participants in international, democratic discourse to acknowledge the responsibility of a previous government for the genocide of the Armenian people, just as the German government and people have done in the case of the Holocaust. Over the past decade a growing number of Turkish scholars, writers, intellectuals, and publishers have been risking imprisonment and assassination to tell the truth about the Armenian Genocide. They understand that facing and accepting the history of one’s country, however dark, is an essential part of growing a healthy democracy.

We believe that security and historical truth are not in conflict, and it is in the interest of the United States to support the principles of human rights that are at the core of American democracy.

Sincerely,



Gregory Stanton, President  
International Association of Genocide Scholars

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## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS

October 5, 2007

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The Honorable Tom Lantos, Chairman  
 The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member  
 House Foreign Affairs Committee  
 US House of Representatives  
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lantos and Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen:

We write to you as the leading international organization of scholars who study genocide. We strongly urge you to pass H. Res. 106.

In passing this resolution the US Congress would not be adjudicating history but instead would be affirming the truth about a genocide that has been overwhelmingly established by decades of documentation and scholarship.

Truth of the Scholarly Record

It is disingenuous of the government of Turkey to use the red herring of a "historians" commission," half of whose members would be appointed by the Turkish government, to "study" the facts of what occurred in 1915. As we have made clear in our Open Letters to Prime Minister Erdogan (6/13/05 and 6/12/06), the historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous. It is proven by foreign office records of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia, and perhaps most importantly, of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as by the records of the Ottoman Courts-Martial of 1918-1920, and by decades of scholarship. A "commission of historians" would only serve the interests of Turkish genocide deniers.

The abundance of scholarly evidence led to the unanimous resolution of the International Association of Genocide Scholars that the Turkish massacres of over one million Armenians from 1915 to 1918 was a crime of genocide.

America's Own Record

The Joint Congressional Resolution recognizing and commemorating the Armenian Genocide will honor America's extraordinary Foreign Service Officers (among them Leslie A. Davis, Jesse B. Jackson, and Oscar Heizer)

who often risked their lives rescuing Armenian citizens in 1915. They and others left behind some forty thousand pages of reports, now in the National Archives, that document that what happened to the Armenian people was government-planned, systematic extermination—what Raphael Lemkin (the man who coined the word genocide) used in creating the definition.

By passing this resolution, the U.S. Congress would also pay tribute to America's first international human rights movement. The Foreign Service Officers and prominent individuals such as Theodore Roosevelt, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, and Cleveland Dodge, who did so much to help the Armenians, exemplify America's legacy of moral leadership.

The parliaments of many countries have affirmed the fact of the Armenian Genocide in unequivocal terms, yet H. Res. 106, a commemorative, non-binding resolution, has faced opposition from those who fear it would undermine US relations with Turkey. It is worth noting that, notwithstanding France's Armenian Genocide legislation, France and Turkey are engaged in more bilateral trade than ever before. We would not expect the US government to be intimidated by an unreliable ally with a deeply disturbing human rights record, graphically documented in the State Department's 2007 International Religious Freedom Report on Turkey. We would expect the United States to express its moral and intellectual views, not to compromise its own principles.

The Armenian Genocide is not a controversial issue outside of Turkey. Just as it would be unethical for Germany to interfere with the historical memory of the Holocaust, we feel it is equally unethical for Turkey to interfere with the memory of the Armenian Genocide. Elie Wiesel has repeatedly called Turkey's denial a double killing, as it strives to kill the memory of the event. We believe the US government should not be party to efforts to kill the memory of a historical fact as profound and important as the genocide of the Armenians, which Hitler used as an example in his plan to exterminate the Jews.

We also believe that security and historical truth are not in conflict, and it is in the interest of the United States to support the principles of human rights that are at the core of American democracy.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gregory H. Stanton  
President  
International Association of Genocide Scholars

Cc: Members of Congress

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March 7, 2007

Dear Members of the United States Congress:

We write to you as the international organization of scholars who study genocide. We strongly urge you to co-sponsor H. Res. 106, the House Resolution recognizing and commemorating the Armenian Genocide.

In three previous statements of the International Association of Genocide Scholars—first, a unanimous resolution declaring that the Turkish massacres of Armenians in 1915-1918 constituted genocide; second, an Open Letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan calling upon him to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide; and third, an Open Letter concerning scholars who deny the Armenian Genocide—we have made our position clear: the historical record on the Armenian Genocide is unambiguous and documented by overwhelming evidence. It is proven by foreign office records of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia, and perhaps most importantly, of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as by the records of the Ottoman Courts-Martial of 1918-1920, and by decades of scholarship.

We believe it is important for Members of Congress to understand that Turkey's nine-decade-long campaign to deny the facts of the Armenian Genocide is driven by a government that has yet to engage in the honest historical self-critique that is a vital part of the democratic process. The numerous trials and imprisonments of Turkish intellectuals and journalists and the assassination of the Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink in January make this clear. It should be noted that there are Turkish scholars who are urging their government to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide, and many parts of Turkish society share this pro-democratic perspective. We would note, however, that a government that still encourages extreme, uncritical nationalism has created a false narrative about the Armenian Genocide in order to absolve its predecessors of responsibility for the extermination of the Armenian people and their culture in the Ottoman Empire in 1915.

We are aware that you may be pressured by a small number of academics who support Turkey's denialist stance for often self-interested reasons. Such academics willingly falsify, distort, and manipulate the evidence in sometimes subtle ways to present a false view of history. These academics violate the ethical obligations of historical scholarship. We have noted that academics who deny the Armenian Genocide are no different than academics who deny the Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide, or the Cambodian Genocide. The recent conference in Teheran devoted to Holocaust denial is a case in point. "Where scholars deny genocide in the face of decisive evidence . . . they contribute to false consciousness that can have the most dire reverberations. Their message, in effect, is . . . mass murder requires no confrontation, but should be ignored, glossed over. In this way scholars lend their considerable authority to the acceptance of this ultimate crime" (Roger Smith, Eric Markusen, Robert Jay Lifton "Professional Ethics and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide" *Journal of Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol.9, Spring, 1995).

We urge you to reject the Turkish campaign of denial, as you may be meeting with groups and individuals who are ardent deniers. We would underscore that the Armenian Genocide is not controversial, but rather is denied only by the Turkish government and its apologists.

... / ...

IAGS page 2

We urge you to pass H. Res. 106:

- 1) It is a recognition of an historical turning point in the twentieth century, the event that inaugurated the era of modern genocide. In spite of its importance, the Armenian Genocide has gone unrecognized until recently, and warrants a symbolic act of moral commemoration. The Armenian-American community first arrived in the United States as refugees and survivors of this great catastrophe and of earlier massacres in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2) Congress will honor America's extraordinary foreign service officers (among them Leslie A. Davis, Jesse B. Jackson, Oscar Heizer, and Ambassador Henry Morgenthau) who often risked their lives rescuing Armenian citizens in 1915. These courageous American diplomats left behind some 4,000 reports totaling 37,000 pages, now in the National Archives, documents that prove the Armenian mass murders were government-planned, systematic extermination—what Raphael Lemkin named genocide. By this resolution the U.S. Congress would demonstrate that the moral principles and courage of those foreign service officers continues to represent a powerful example of American leadership. It is in the interest of the United States to support the principles of human rights that are at the core of American democracy.
- 3) Inasmuch as the popular effort in the United States to rescue and bring relief to the Armenians, first from massacres in the 1890s and then from genocide in 1915, set the stage for the era of modern human rights activism, H. Res. 106 would honor this significant contribution to United States history.
- 4) We expect that the United States would not permit foreign governments to intrude on its own legislative process. We also expect that the U.S. government would not be influenced by threats to close American military bases or cut off sales of military hardware, especially when that pressure comes from a country with a deeply disturbing human rights record today, including violence and repressive measures against writers, minorities, intellectuals, and scholars.
- 5) As crimes of genocide continue to plague the world, Turkey's policy of denying the Armenian Genocide gives license to those who perpetrate genocide everywhere. Just as we would not sanction denying the Holocaust, we cannot give credence to Turkey's falsification of the facts of 1915. Denial is the final stage of genocide, as it seeks to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators.

We believe that it is in the interest of the Turkish people and their future as proud participants in the international democratic community to acknowledge the responsibility of a previous government for the genocide of the Armenian people, just as the German government has done in the case of the Holocaust.

We would be happy to meet with you in person, and would gladly supply you with the scholarly evidence that has led to the unanimous resolution of the International Association of Genocide Scholars that the Turkish massacre of over one million Armenians from 1915 to 1918 was a crime of genocide.

Sincerely,  
Israel Charny, Ph.D.  
President  
International Association of Genocide Scholars

Gregory H. Stanton, J.D., Ph.D.  
Vice President  
International Association of Genocide Scholars

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS**

**President**  
Israel Charny  
(Israel)

**First Vice-President**  
Gregory H. Stanton  
(USA)

**Second Vice-  
President**  
Linda Melvern (UK)

**Secretary-Treasurer**  
Steven Jacobs (USA)

June 13, 2005

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
TC Easbakanlik  
Bakanlikir  
Ankara, Turkey

FAX: 90 312 417 0476

Dear Prime Minister Erdogan:

We are writing you this open letter in response to your call for an “impartial study by historians” concerning the fate of the Armenian people in the Ottoman Empire during World War I.

We represent the major body of scholars who study genocide in North America and Europe. We are concerned that in calling for an impartial study of the Armenian Genocide you may not be fully aware of the extent of the scholarly and intellectual record on the Armenian Genocide and how this event conforms to the definition of the United Nations Genocide Convention. We want to underscore that it is not just Armenians who are affirming the Armenian Genocide but it is the overwhelming opinion of scholars who study genocide: hundreds of independent scholars, who have no affiliations with governments, and whose work spans many countries and nationalities and the course of decades. The scholarly evidence reveals the following:

On April 24, 1915, under cover of World War I, the Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire began a systematic genocide of its Armenian citizens – an unarmed Christian minority population. More than a million Armenians were exterminated through direct killing, starvation, torture, and forced death marches. The rest of the Armenian population fled into permanent exile. Thus an ancient civilization was expunged from its homeland of 2,500 years.

The Armenian Genocide was the most well-known human rights issue of its time and was reported regularly in newspapers across the United States and Europe. The Armenian Genocide is abundantly documented by thousands of official records of the United States and nations around the world including Turkey’s wartime allies Germany, Austria and Hungary, by Ottoman court-martial records, by eyewitness accounts of missionaries and diplomats, by the testimony of survivors, and by decades of historical scholarship.

The Armenian Genocide is corroborated by the international scholarly, legal, and human rights community:

- 1) Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin, when he coined the term genocide in 1944, cited the Turkish extermination of the Armenians and the Nazi extermination of the Jews as defining examples of what he meant by genocide.
- 2) The killings of the Armenians is genocide as defined by the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
- 3) In 1997 the International Association of Genocide Scholars, an organization of the world's foremost experts on genocide, unanimously passed a formal resolution affirming the Armenian Genocide.
- 4) 126 leading scholars of the Holocaust including Elie Wiesel and Yehuda Bauer placed a statement in the *New York Times* in June 2000 declaring the "incontestable fact of the Armenian Genocide" and urging western democracies to acknowledge it.
- 5) The Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide (Jerusalem), and the Institute for the Study of Genocide (NYC) have affirmed the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide.
- 6) Leading texts in the international law of genocide such as William A. Schabas's *Genocide in International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) cite the Armenian Genocide as a precursor to the Holocaust and as a precedent for the law on crimes against humanity.

We note that there may be differing interpretations of genocide—how and why the Armenian Genocide happened, but to deny its factual and moral reality as genocide is not to engage in scholarship but in propaganda and efforts to absolve the perpetrator, blame the victims, and erase the ethical meaning of this history.

We would also note that scholars who advise your government and who are affiliated in other ways with your state-controlled institutions are not impartial. Such so-called "scholars" work to serve the agenda of historical and moral obfuscation when they advise you and the Turkish Parliament on how to deny the Armenian Genocide. In preventing a conference on the Armenian Genocide from taking place at Bogacizi University in Istanbul on May 25, your government revealed its aversion to academic and intellectual freedom—a fundamental condition of democratic society.

We believe that it is clearly in the interest of the Turkish people and their future as a proud and equal participants in international, democratic discourse to acknowledge the responsibility of a previous government for the genocide of the Armenian people, just as the German government and people have done in the case of the Holocaust.

Approved unanimously at the sixth biennial meeting of  
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GENOCIDE SCHOLARS (IAGS)  
June 7, 2005, Boca Raton, Florida

Contacts: Israel Charny, IAGS President  
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Gregory H. Stanton, IAGS Vice President  
President, Genocide Watch;  
James Farmer Visiting Professor of Human Rights, University of Mary Washington;  
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**126 HOLOCAUST SCHOLARS AFFIRM THE INCONTESTABLE FACT OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND URGE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES TO OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZE IT**

At the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches convening at St. Joseph University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 3-7, 2000, one hundred twenty-six Holocaust Scholars, holders of Academic Chairs and Directors of Holocaust Research and Studies Centers, participants of the Conference, signed a statement affirming that the World War I Armenian Genocide is an incontestable historical fact and accordingly urge the governments of Western democracies to likewise recognize it as such. The petitioners, among whom is Nobel Laureate for Peace Elie Wiesel, who was the keynote speaker at the conference, also asked the Western Democracies to urge the Government and Parliament of Turkey to finally come to terms with a dark chapter of Ottoman-Turkish history and to recognize the Armenian Genocide. This would provide an invaluable impetus to the process of the democratization of Turkey.

Below is a partial list of the signatories:

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Prof. Yehuda Bauer, Distinguished Professor</b><br>Hebrew University<br>Director, The International Institute of Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem | <b>Prof. Zev Garber,</b><br>Los Angeles Valley College<br>University of King's College,<br>Halifax, Nova Scotia | <b>Prof. Richard Libowitz,</b><br>Temple University<br>Exec. Director, Scholar's Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches      | <b>Center for Holocaust Studies,<br/>City University of New York</b>   |
| <b>Prof. Israel Charny, Director,</b><br>Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, Jerusalem<br>Professor of Hebrew University                                 | <b>Prof. Dorota Glowacka</b><br>University of King's College,<br>Halifax, Nova Scotia                           | <b>Dr. Marcia Litrell,</b> Stockton College.<br>The Holocaust and the Churches<br>Litrell, Emeritus Professor<br>Temple University | <b>Dr. Philip Rosen, Director,</b><br>Holocaust Education Center of the Delaware Valley                        |
| <b>Prof. Ward Churchill, Ethnic Studies</b><br>The University of Colorado, Boulder  | <b>Dr. Irving Greenberg, President</b><br>Jewish Life Network   | <b>Prof. Hubert G. Locke, Washington Univ.</b><br>Co-founder of the annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches  | <b>Prof. Alan S. Rosenbaum</b><br>Department of Philosophy,<br>Cleveland State University                      |
| <b>Prof. Stephen Feinstein, Director,</b><br>Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies,<br>University of Minnesota  | <b>Prof. Herbert Hirsch,</b><br>Virginia Commonwealth University  | <b>Dr. Elizabeth Maxwell,</b><br>Executive Chair, International Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust, London, England             | <b>William L. Shulman, President</b><br>Association of Holocaust Organizations,<br>City University of New York |
| <b>Prof. Saul Friedman, Director,</b><br>Holocaust and Jewish Studies,<br>Youngstown State University, Ohio   | <b>Prof. Irving L. Horowitz</b><br>Rutgers University, NJ<br>Hannah Arendt Distinguished Professor              | <b>Prof. Erik Markusen,</b><br>Southwest State University, MN  | <b>Prof. Samuel Totten,</b><br>The University of Arkansas  |
| <b>Prof. Edward Gaffney,</b><br>Valparaiso University Law School  | <b>Dr. Steven Jacobs, Rabbi,</b><br>Temple Beth Shalom, Huntsville, AL  | <b>Prof. Saul Mendelovitz,</b><br>Dag Hammarskjöld Chair, Professor of<br>International Law, Rutgers University                    | <b>Assoc. Editor of Encyclopedia of Genocide</b>   |
|   | <b>Prof. Steven Katz,</b><br>Distinguished Professor<br>Director, Center of Judaic Studies, Boston University   | <b>Prof. Jack Needle, Director,</b>  | <b>Prof. Elie Wiesel</b><br>Nobel Laureate for Peace   |

I hereby declare that the originals of these one hundred and twenty-six signatures are on file in my office.  
All affiliations supplied are for identification purposes only.

Dr. Stephen Feinstein, Director,  
Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, University of Minnesota.

PAID FOR BY DESCENDANTS OF SURVIVORS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND THE JEWISH HOLOCAUST

Boston University

ELIE WIESEL  
*University Professor and  
Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities*

745 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts 02215  
617/353-4566



September 12, 2000

TO: The Honorable Chris Smith, Chair  
And Members of the House International Operations Subcommittee

FAX: (202) 225-7768

FROM: Professor Elie Wiesel

RE: Armenian Genocide Resolution (H. Res. 398)

I am writing to urge you, Chairman Smith, and the members of the International Operations Subcommittee to speak and vote in favor of the Armenian Genocide Resolution (H. Res. 398). This legislation is to come before you on Thursday, September 14, 2000. It is my hope that the House will go on record calling upon the President to make sure that all U.S. officials dealing with human rights are educated about the memory of the Armenian Genocide and also urging the President to incorporate into his April 24<sup>th</sup> address a statement calling on our nation to remember the Armenian massacres.

It is crucial that the President provide appropriate materials and training for all Foreign Service officers, U.S. Department of State officials and any executive branch employees involved with issues of human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elie Wiesel".

ELIE WIESEL

## Turkey's Empty Threats

Turkey continues to threaten America with economic retaliation if the Congress speaks honestly about the Armenian Genocide. The historical record, however, shows that these threats are hollow:

According to Census data, U.S. trade with Turkey increased by more than 10 times since Ronald Reagan, on April 22, 1981, cited the Armenian Genocide in a Presidential proclamation.

This chart tracks the increase in bilateral trade between Turkey and other countries following their recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

<b>Post-Armenian Genocide Recognition Bilateral Trade with Turkey</b>		
	Armenian Genocide recognition	Trade with Turkey since recognition
Belgium	March 26, 1998	<b>+167%</b>
Canada	April 21, 2004	<b>+22%</b>
France	January 29, 2001	<b>+135%</b>
Greece	April 25, 1996	<b>+266%</b>
Italy	November 17, 2000	<b>+109%</b>
Lebanon	May 11, 2000	<b>+126%</b>
Netherlands	December 21, 2004	<b>+24%</b>
Russia	April 14, 1995	<b>+351%</b>
Sweden	March 29, 2000	<b>+48%</b>
Switzerland	December 16, 2003	<b>+32%</b>
Slovakia	November 30, 2004	<b>+46%</b>
Uruguay	March 26, 2004	<b>+85%</b>

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - Trade in goods

Through 2007  
www.anca.org