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ATAA: AN OPEN LETTER TO US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

14.04.2021

Assembly of Turkish American Associations - ATAA (12 April 2021)

WARTIME TRAGEDY SUFFERED BY ALL PEOPLES, NOT JUST ARMENIANS

ARMENIAN TERRORISM, REVOLTS, AND TREASON TRIGGERING THIS TRAGEDY STILL NOT ACKNOWLEDGED

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA), a leading voice of over a half million proud Americans of Turkish heritage and many more Americans who support the U.S. - Turkey model partnership, I am urging you to consider the Turkish American perspective when formulating your commemorative April 24 message as requested each year by the Armenian American community.

For decades, the Armenian American public advocacy network has employed a narrow, propagandized view of history and broad definition of genocide, while agitating for federal and state proclamations or resolutions defining the tragic events in the waning hours of the Ottoman Empire during WWI as the crime of genocide. Each attempt has caused great damage to the Turkish American community and the U.S. - Turkey partnership.

We, the Turkish Americans, appreciate former U.S. presidents maintaining impartiality on the sensitive historical issue of the Ottoman Armenian Tragedy and would like to ask that, this year, in your annual April 24th address, you remember all those who perished due to Armenian revolts, inter-communal fighting, relocation, disease, and malnutrition in the Ottoman Empire before and during WWI.

As early as 1885, the Ottoman Armenians started a revolt aiming to create an ethnically and politically homogeneous Armenian nation in several eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Over the years, village-by-village, the Armenian militants massacred civilians loyal to the Ottomans. These atrocities culminated in the slaughter of 40,000 Turks, Arabs, Kurds and Jews in the province of Van in 1915. The Armenian militias also collaborated with invading Czarist-Russian and French armies. Faced with foreign invasion, treason, and armed revolt, the Ottoman

government responded by relocating the Ottoman Armenians from the war zones. The Armenian population outside the war zones was not affected.

By the end of WWI, over 4,000,000 Ottoman Muslims, approximately 600,000 Ottoman Armenians, and about 100,000 Ottoman Jews had perished. Ignoring the Turkish, Arab, Jewish and Kurdish victims of the massacres perpetrated by the Armenian terrorists of the time, the Armenian lobby groups have been agitating the United States and other countries around the world to politically convict the Turkish nation of having committed atrocities against the Armenians.

Turkish Americans and Turks all over the world are offended by these efforts that misconstrue and manipulate history and stain their nation. These allegations harm not only Turks, who suffer from prejudice and harassment, but also generations of Armenians who are taught to hate and seek revenge from the Turkish and Turkic peoples. This mentality has led to numerous terrorist acts all over the world (over 20 of which in the United States). During the 1970s and 1980s, Armenian terrorist groups committed over 230 armed attacks, killing 71 civilians, including 31 Turkish diplomats, and seriously wounding over 520 people in a campaign of blood revenge.

The same mentality has justified California Governor Gavin Newsom's grave decision not to oppose the release of Armenian terrorist Hampig Sassounian who was convicted of first degree murder and sentenced to life imprisonment without parole for the heinous assassination of Turkish Consul General Kemal Arikan on January 28, 1982.

Governor Newsoms decision was condemned by U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken in a press release on March 11, 2021, in which Secretary Blinken stated that the Department of State is deeply disappointed by the expected grant of parole. Attacking a diplomat is not only a grave crime against a particular individual, it is also an attack on diplomacy itself.

Historical and legal controversies, such as the Ottoman Armenian Tragedy, should be resolved by open and rigorous historical and legal scholarship. The Turkish government has proposed a joint Turkish - Armenian committee of experts to study the tragedy, and called upon Armenia to open its archives. Regrettably, the Armenian government rejected this proposal. World leaders should encourage Armenia to be more open to research, the Armenian community to be open to dialogue, and both communities to be open to reconciliation, without prejudicing a country, its people, or a particular American community of Ottoman heritage.

We, the Turkish Americans, look to the future and raise our children with this mentality. In the Turco-Armenian conflict, we believe that a foundation for dialogue between the two peoples must be created in an atmosphere that lends itself to healing. Healing can only take place when all sides are ready to face the truth. It is to this end that my organization will continue to work with all genuine groups to further dialogue and strive to reach a common understanding and some degree of closure to our communities on a history that is now more than 100 years old.

Turkish American community sincerely hopes that you, Mr. President, will provide moral leadership for all of us in this issue, as you have done in many others that affect us as Americans.

Thanking you for your consideration of our views and concerns, I remain,

Respectfully Yours,

Mazlum Kosma

President

Kaynak/Source: