UN SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON CORRECTED POPE FRANCIS

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Last Sunday, on 12 April 2015, a Holy Mass was led by Pope Francis at St. Peters Basilica to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1915 events. During the ceremony, Pope Francis declared Saint Gregory of Narek, a tenth-century monk and the author of the Book of Prayers / Book of Lamentations, a Doctor of the Universal Church. The President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I, Patriarch of Cilicia of Armenian Catholics Nerses Bedros XIX and Catholicosates of the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Patriarchate of the Armenian Catholic Church were also present in the liturgy.

In the liturgy, Pope Francis stated: This faith also accompanied and sustained your people during the tragic experience one hundred years ago *in what is generally referred to as the first genocide of the twentieth century*.

Pope Francis usage of the term genocide raised cheerful approval of the Armenians and the strong reaction of Turkey. Popes controversial statement also initiated some debates in different countries such as Italy and Germany.

A day after the Liturgy in Vatican, On 13 April 2015, Associated Press (AP) reported that the UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric made some comments on this liturgy. The AP quoted Dujarric saying that the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon isnt supporting Pope Francis' description of the killings as the first genocide of the 20th century.

The AP reported that[1]:

> [Dujarric] said the secretary-general firmly believes that the commemoration and continuing cooperation between Armenians and Turks "with a view to establishing the facts about what happened should strengthen our collective determination to prevent similar atrocity crimes from ever happening in the future.
>
> Dujarric said in response to a question that Ban did not envision an international commission to examine the facts, saying: "There've been discussions with the countries concerned, and communities concerned and I think it's important that those discussions continue."
>
> He sidestepped several questions on whether the secretary-general agreed with the pope's(SIC!) characterization, and whether Francis was right to raise the issue.

The AP also reported that the spokesperson of the EU Foreign Affairs Maja Kocijancic said the EU encourages the countries to consider additional, meaningful steps that would pave the way toward full reconciliation.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moons comment constitutes an important correction to Pope Franciss ill-informed statements during a Holy Mass.

[1] http://bigstory.ap.org/article/eafc8e0518c441f380e4dbf50ae2aeba/un-chief-1915-slaughters-armenians-are-atrocity-crimes

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