CONFERENCE 4

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In this one-day symposium, under six sessions, twenty-five speeches were delivered regarding all aspects of the Armenian question. These speeches would later be published as a book.

In the evaluation session presided by Prof. Dr. Mehmet Saray, the President of Atatürk Research Center, Prof. Dr. Hikmet Özdemir from the Turkish Historical Society commented on the success of this symposium and argued that annual organization of this symposium would be useful and wanted the Organization Committee continuously work for this purpose. He declared his content for the presentations produced from original researches and argued for the neccessity of original researches for such kind of meetings. He also offered establishment of a committee for funding similar conferences, enlisting other topics for extensive research and providing continuous communication by establishing an internet group.

Yusuf Sarınay, The Director-General of the State Archives, said that it was the time for abandoning defensive psychology in approaching the Armenian question. He touched upon the importance of determination of the responsibilities of all, including the Great Powers, in these researches. He added that we should work in foreign archives, not only in the Ottoman archives. He also told that besides general studies, analytical researches as well as detailed studies would be quite useful.

I stipulated that in foreign countries Armenian allegations found many followers and the main reason for this was the lack of announcement of the Turkish opinions abroad. I argued that writing books in Turkish would not suffice; it was necessary to write books in other languages and these books should be spread effectively throughout the world. What is more, I added that it was necessary to analyze some issues more in detail and gave the example that a book written twenty years ago had refuted the Armenian allegation that there are some telegraphs written by Talat Pasha ordering genocide. Moreover, I said that the number of scholars who were specifically studying Armenian question was not sufficient and both universities and Higher Education Institution had some responsibilities regarding that matter.

The symposium ended with the wishes of Prof. Saray on making more research on this matter and establishing more coordination between scholars and scientific institutions.