

The Armenian Case Today



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"... The Armenian population did and do constitute a people whose fundamental rights, both individual and collective, should have been and shall be respected in accordance with international law."

The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal

Paris, April 16, 1984



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... a right for self-determination

The Armenian Case today is based on the right of nations for self-determination. This right is asserted by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples, and other national and international conventions which aim to establish principles of justice and the rule of law in relations between peoples.

Today, as during the past century, the Armenian people expect that the world community will recognize its right for justice and equality. Although dispersed throughout the world, Armenians share a common vision based on their right for self-determination.

The Armenian people lived in their ancestral homeland in Asia Minor and the Caucasus for millennia. They continue to enjoy a collective existence only on a small portion of its historic lands, in Eastern Armenia. Armenians in Western provinces became the victims of the first, still unpunished genocide of the twentieth century between 1915 and 1923; the small number of survivors were deported and are now dispersed throughout the world. Eastern Armenia, briefly an independent republic (1918-1920), is now a constituent member of the USSR.

International laws and conventions have come to reinforce the belief Armenians have in the necessity for just solutions to just causes — a belief that has evolved from their long history.

The Armenian Case today is the struggle of the Armenian people to participate again in the making of its own future and thus contribute to the development of a just and free world community.



Charter of the UN

Article 1, Section 2

The purposes of the United Nations are:

... To develop friendly relations among nations based on the respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace.

Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples

Section II

- Article 1.* All peoples have the right to exist.
- Article 2.* All peoples have the right for the respect of their national and cultural identity.
- Article 3.* All peoples have the right for the peaceful possession of their territory and to return there in case of expulsion.
- Article 4.* No person can be subjected to massacre, torture, persecution, deportation, expulsion or to conditions of life which compromise the identity or integrity of the people to which he/she belongs based on the person's national or cultural identity.
- Article 5.* All peoples have an imprescriptible and inalienable right for self-determination. All peoples must determine their political status in liberty, without any external alien interference.

(Algiers, 1976)

. . . a struggle for democracy and human dignity

During the past century, when their homeland was partitioned between the Ottoman Turkish and Russian empires, Armenians sought to maintain their cultural and political autonomy as a basis for self-determination. These efforts toward a free and more equitable society culminated in the development of a liberation movement which struggled against Ottoman Turkish oppression in Western Armenia and Russian tsarist autocracy in Eastern Armenia

This national movement was led by young idealist leaders educated in the western values of progress and enlightenment, and the dignity of human life. Armenian political parties sought the cooperation of all ethnic groups around them to bring about democratic reforms in both empires, reforms which would create equality among nations and establish political and economic justice for all citizens.

Particularly important was the establishment of the rule of law in the Ottoman Empire, where an arbitrary government encouraged pogroms and occasionally organized massacres of Armenians. The armed struggle of Armenian and other freedom fighters between 1885 and 1908 reasserted the right of a people to self defense and it aimed at an alternative to the government's policy of inspiring racial, ethnic and religious hatred in order to preserve an autocratic regime.

In 1908 a group of Young Turks took the initiative for a revolution in the Ottoman Empire that reinstated a discarded constitution.

Armenians put an end to their armed resistance and joined hands with liberal Turks, Greeks, Jews, Arabs, and Kurds in building a new society. Their hopes were crushed soon when a chauvinistic and reactionary group of Young Turks usurped power and established personal rule; in 1914 the now reactionary Ittihad ve Terakki party eliminated the last vestiges of a parliamentary government in the Empire by joining Imperial Germany in war against the Allies without the consent of Parliament.

The rise in chauvinism and delusions of imperial grandeur were accompanied by the pursuit of racist and anti-democratic policies; Armenians became the victims of their dehumanized and dehumanizing policies.



Analysis by the Hunchakian Party, *Program of 1887-1888:*

"Currently the political and economic status of Armenians in Turkish Armenia consists of a variety of forms of enchained slavery."

"Economically, the people are burdened by numerous and weighty direct and indirect taxes, which are being doubled and tripled during the frequent financial crises of a bankrupt government. The farms of peasants are being forcibly expropriated from them by the government; the fruits of peoples' hard labor is being confiscated by government officials and a privileged class . . ."

"Politically the people are altogether disenfranchised, condemned to slavery, to silence, and to unquestioned obedience. People are denied rights in the courts; it is a crime to defend oneself when attacked. The government considers it a crime to bemoan one's own fate. Persecuted as a religious group, without any security of life or property . . . the people have reached new levels of political and physical disintegration and financial ruin."



Goals of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation or Dashnaktsutiune, from the *Program of 1892:*

- 1) Creation of a popular-democratic government based on free elections;
- 2) Security of life and the right to work;
- 3) Equality of all nationalities and religions before the law;
- 4) Freedom of speech, press, and assembly;
- 5) Distribution of land to the landless;
- 6) Taxation according to ability to pay;
- 7) Elimination of compulsory and uncompensated labor;
- 8) Abolition of the military exemption fee and its replacement with equal conscription;
- 9) Establishment of compulsory education and promotion of national intellectual progress;
- 10) Reinforcement of communal principles as a means to greater production and distribution.



From the Preamble to the ADL Program, 1968

"The worldview of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Organization [ADL or Ramgavar Party] is based on the principles of the supremacy of popular will, the application of individual and collective natural rights, and social evolution."

"The ADL believes that all citizens are equal under the law and their person and civil rights are inalienable, and must be defended from encroachments by groups or the government."

. . . the path to homogeneization of a population

The destruction of representative government by the Ittihad ve Terakki triumvirate of Talaat, Enver and Jemal was followed by the systematic destruction of the Armenian people. A premeditated and comprehensive plan to annihilate the Armenian population was put into effect throughout historic Armenia and other Armenian populated regions of the Empire between 1915 and 1917. This plan was realized through deportations and massacres of the total population.

Between 1915 and 1917, one and one half million Armenians were killed, starved to death, burned or buried alive, or otherwise murdered. The remainder were either Turkified (200,000) or deported (1,000,000).

German diplomats friendly to the Turkish government, neutral American diplomats, conscientious Turkish officials, and missionaries and reporters from many countries witnessed the death marches. They recorded the methods of annihilation used by the regular army and gendarmes; they watched as units of the "Special Organization" supervised the murder of a whole nation, including children, women, and the elderly.

From the Turkish government's point of view, the genocide of the Armenian nation was the final solution to many problems it failed to resolve peacefully: equality of all citizens, justice for all, land reform, recognition of aspirations of non-Turkish groups — problems which continue to plague the Turkish state today.

Through this genocide the Ittihadist government strengthened its hold over historic Armenian territories by producing a more homogenous population in today's Turkey.



"It was at first communicated to you that the Government, by order of the Jemiet [Ittihad ve Terakky party leadership], had decided to destroy completely all the Armenians in Turkey. Those who oppose this order and decision cannot remain on the official staff of the Empire. An end must be put to their existence however criminal the measures taken may be, and conscientious scruples."

*Minister of Interior of the Ottoman Government,
Talaat [Pasha]*



"When the Turkish authorities gave the orders 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 the fact . . . I have by no means told the most terrible details, for a complete narration of the sadistic orgies of which these Armenian men and women were the victims can never be printed in an American publication. Whatever crimes the most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and whatever refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination can conceive, became the daily misfortunes of this devoted people"

*U.S Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire
Henry Morgenthau in
"Ambassador Morgenthau's Story"*



. . . the most fundamental of all assaults on the right of peoples

For the Armenian people, this first example of a modern day genocide meant the loss of the right to exist, to exist collectively, to have the opportunity to develop as a community. The genocide meant the creation of a dispersion which continues to suffer the consequences of the tragedy and of unstable conditions in neighboring countries where most had settled.

The genocide is threatening the end of a culture, with its distinctive language, traditions and vision, at least as it was known to a large portion of the Armenian people.

The genocide brought to a halt the Armenian drive toward a more egalitarian society. By providing a "radical" solution to the problem of relations with Armenians, the Turkish government frustrated the development of a system in the Near East where various nationality, ethnic and religious groups could have coexisted on the basis of equality and shared principles of justice and progress.

Despite its promises then, the world community remains largely indifferent to the plight of the Armenian people today; there is a willingness to accept the realities created by genocide. Inspired by "realistic" concerns, this willingness has only encouraged other genocides, it has also frustrated attempts by Armenian organizations who have been using peaceful means for seven decades to bring about a recognition of the genocide and appropriate reparations.



“... In its attempt to carry out its purpose to resolve the Armenian question by the destruction of the Armenian race, the Turkish Government has refused to be deterred neither by our representations, nor by those of the American Embassy, nor by the delegate of the Pope, nor by the threats of the Allied Powers, nor in deference to the public opinion of the West representing one-half of the world.”

Count Wolff-Metternich,
Germany's Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, in telegram to German Chancellor, July 10, 1915

“The victims of twentieth-century premeditated genocide — the Jews, the Gypsies, the Armenians — were murdered in order to fulfill the state's design for a new order. War was used in both cases to transform the nation to correspond to the ruling elite's formula by eliminating groups conceived of as alien, enemies by definition”

Helein Fein in *“Accounting for Genocide”*

UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide Adopted on December 9, 1948 by UN General Assembly Ratified by Turkey on July 31, 1950.

Article I

Genocide is a crime under international law . . . whether committed in time of peace or in time of war.

Article II

Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) killing members of the group;
- (b) causing serious bodily harm or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Article III

The following acts shall be punishable:

- (a) Genocide;
- (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
- (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
- (d) Attempt to commit genocide;
- (e) Complicity in genocide.

. . . a republic, and a new victim

The liberation struggle of the Armenian people acquired a different character in Eastern Armenia. The withdrawal of Russian armies from the Caucasian front in 1917 created a dangerous vacuum which gave Turkey an opportunity to "solve" the "Armenian problem" on the other side of the border as well. However, guerrilla fighters and other patriots joined hands with survivors and local inhabitants to repel Turkish armies from Eastern Armenia and establish an independent republic in May 1918.

Armenians erected a republican form of government. A parliamentary republic was proclaimed; and within one year elections ensured the participation of all citizens in the affairs of the country, including non-Armenian minorities and women. The Republic was unable to extend its authority over Western Armenian lands, however. Although the Treaty of Sevres in 1920 between the Allies, Armenia and, Turkey opened the door for such a reunification of lands, the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 reduced the Armenian Case to an issue of the protection of minorities.

The Republic was also incapable of resisting the pressures from the Red Army, victorious in the Russian Civil War, to reincorporate Eastern Armenia in a reconstituted Soviet Russian

Empire. The collaboration of Nationalist Turks under Mustafa Kemal and Bolshevik leaders in Russia forced the Armenian Republic to capitulate and turn power over to Armenian Bolsheviks at the end of 1920.

In the process of sovietization, Armenia lost integral parts of the homeland to other Soviet republics in the Caucasus. While Soviet Armenia has recorded remarkable progress in the economic, cultural, and scientific fields, its record on human and political rights leaves much to be desired. In addition, Soviet Armenia is incapable of assuming responsibility for the pursuit of Armenian claims, as foreign policy is made in Moscow, the USSR capital, which pursues its own foreign policy agenda.



The Treaty of Sevres

Article 88

Turkey, in accordance with the action already taken by the Allied Powers, recognizes Armenia as a free and independent State.

Article 89

Turkey and Armenia as well as the other High Contracting Parties agree to submit to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the frontier to be fixed between Turkey and Armenia in the Vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis . . .

Article 141

. . . all persons who were non-Moslems before November 1, 1914, will be considered as still remaining such, unless, after regaining their liberty, they voluntarily perform the necessary formalities for embracing the Islamic faith.

In order to repair so far as possible the wrongs inflicted on individuals in the course of the massacres perpetrated in Turkey during the war, the Turkish government undertakes to afford all the assistance in its power or in that of the Turkish authorities in the search for and deliverance of all persons, of whatever race or religion, who have disappeared, been carried off, interned or placed in captivity since November 1, 1914 . . .

Article 144

The Turkish Government recognizes the injustice of the law of 1915 relating to Abandoned Properties (Emvali-i-Metroukeh), and of the supplementary provisions thereof, and declares them to be null and void, in the past as in the future . . .

*Signed on August 10, in Sevres, France, by
Turkey, Armenia, and Allied Powers*

Treaty of Lausanne

Article 38

The Turkish Government undertakes to assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all inhabitants of Turkey without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race, or religion.

All inhabitants of Turkey shall be entitled to free exercise, whether in public or private, of any creed, religion or belief . . .

Article 39

Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities will enjoy the same civil and political rights as Moslems.

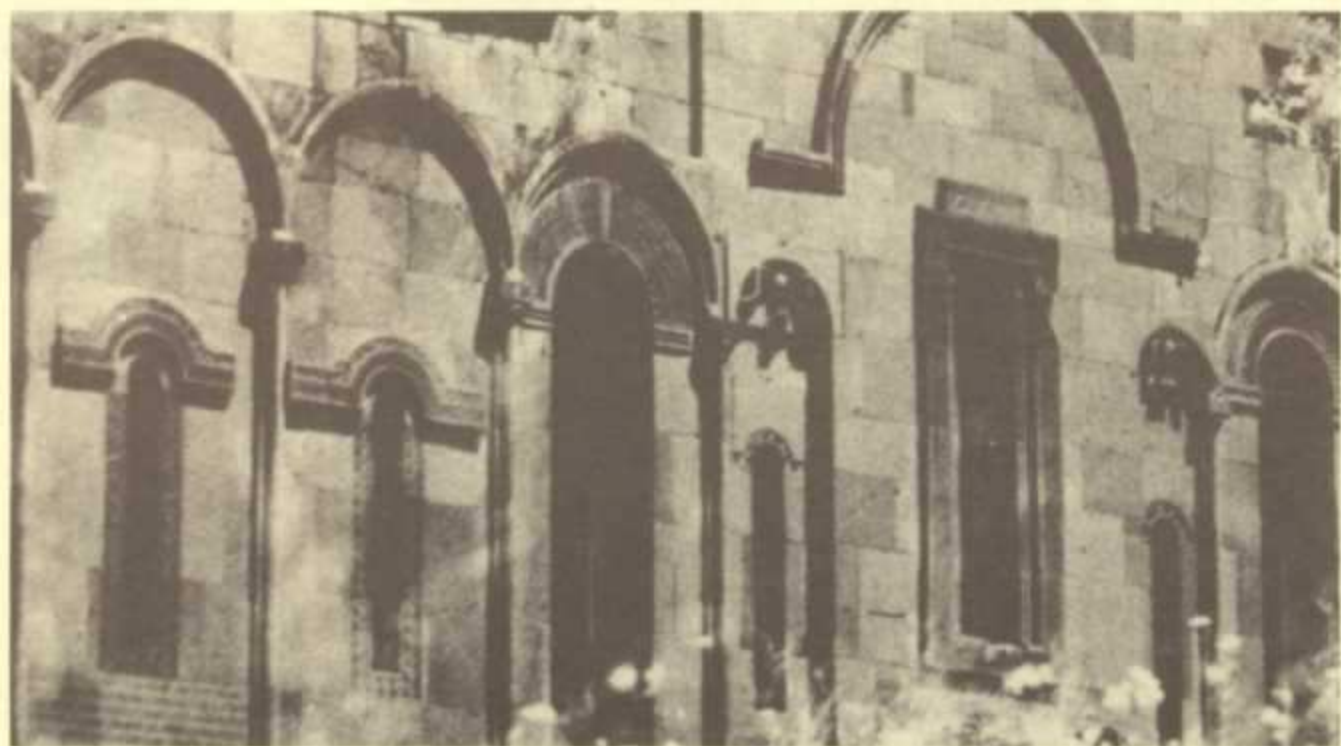
All the inhabitants of Turkey, without distinction of religion, shall be equal under the law . . .

. . . a new agenda

The genocide and the dispersal, the Republic and its sovietization have changed the agenda of the Armenian people. In addition to issues related to Soviet Armenia, political and territorial issues remain unresolved as far as the rights of Western Armenians are concerned.

For Western Armenians in the dispersion, the problems are much more immediate: alienation from ancestral lands, increasingly untenable conditions for those still living in Turkey, continued destruction of Armenian monuments in historic Western Armenia to obliterate even the memory of an Armenian culture, the real threat of total loss of cultural identity, the subjection to ethnic and political discrimination in various host countries, and continued harassment and deprivation of civil and human rights even in Western countries under pressure from Turkish diplomats.

Throughout Armenian communities in the world, the genocide of 1915-1920 remains the most determining factor. Equally critical have been the denial by the Turkish state of that genocide and the unwillingness of international institutions to render justice to the victim people, to deny Turkey the fruits of its crime.



. . . moments of hope for justice

By mid-1915, when the extent and scope of atrocities came to be known in Europe, Western governments issued a clear warning to Turkish leaders that they would be held personally responsible for the deportations and massacres of the Armenian population.

The defeat of Turkey in the First World War forced the Ittihadists to flee. A new government, sensitive to the crime of its predecessor, undertook a drastic series of investigations of war crimes by members of the Ittihadists.

In successive sessions in Constantinople, courts-martial viewed the overwhelming evidence and found most of the leaders, some in absentia, guilty of crimes against the Armenian population as charged. Talaat and his companions were condemned to death in absentia. These trials were suspended due to the onslaught of Turkish nationalists.

Similarly, British authorities, as the main occupying power, undertook their own investigation and compiled detailed files on many of the national and provincial leaders, listing the crimes and evidence against each. The "Malta trials" were never completed, however, due to political considerations by the British government which placed good relations with the growing nationalists in Turkey more important than accounting for genocide.

Thus ended the brief quest for justice by the world community on behalf of the first case of genocide in our century. While various governments or government officials have recognized the fact of the genocide itself in recent years, pressure from the Turkish government has been effective in denying Armenians reparations and, in some cases, in covering up the crime through the effective use of diplomats and academics.

“... In view of this new crime against humanity and civilization, the Allied Governments make known publicly to the Sublime Porte [the Ottoman Government] that they will hold all the members of the Turkish government as well as those officials who have participated in these massacres, personally responsible”.

Great Britain, France, Russia-Entente nations,
on May 24, 1915

“... The testimony adduced at the hearings conducted by the subcommittee 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.”

US Senate Resolution 359, May 13, 1920



From the minutes of the Turkish courts-martial, 1919

“Members and leaders of the Ittihad ve Terakki Party in Istanbul as well as in the provinces were deeply involved in the activities of “Teshkilat-i Mahsuse” [Special Organization]. They used the Special Organization to carry out massacres, for setting buildings and corpses on fire, for destruction of villages, and dishonoring and torturing women.

Therefore, they are accused of having committed crimes . . .

As is evident from the details of its correspondence, the Committee [Ittihad ve Terakki] had evolved and approved secret plans and special goals and had recourse to the imposition of tyrannical measures of every kind in order to have its programs accepted without exception . . .

It is evident that the Committee pre-planned and organized all the crimes which were committed. So, the Committee ruled against Ottoman subjects — individuals, communities and peoples, without exception, in order to attain its goals, and it took all measures necessary to remove, permanently, all resistance, from within the ranks of government officials . . .”

in Takvim-i Vekayi (Official Journal of the Ottoman Empire), Number 3571, May 26, 1919

. . . a new Turkey with old policies

In 1923 a republic replaced the old Empire in Turkey. But the policy of the new government has been the same toward Armenians and other non-Turkish groups. Mustafa Kemal, or Ataturk, was as adamant on "turkification" of the land as his predecessors, who had done most of the work.

Equally important has been the systematic policy of recent Turkish governments to use all available methods to campaign against the Armenian people. Diplomatic representatives of the Republic of Turkey have spent considerable time and energy to keep the Armenian genocide and the Armenian case from becoming a matter of interest to international diplomacy, international courts, and public opinion in any country.

Beginning in the 1930's, the Turkish government has campaigned against the making of movies, the publication of books, the holding of international conferences, the erection of memorial monuments related to the genocide. Using threats and blackmail —

Turkey's military importance for NATO, for example — they have been able to convince American and some Western governments to withdraw their participation even in symbolic gestures of respect toward the victims of genocide.

The Turkish government has also been able to infiltrate the academic field both in Turkey and elsewhere in quest of revising history.

A. IN TURKEY

1. Total denial of genocide of Armenians and justification of Young Turk policies (1915-1923) in official governmental statements, press, textbooks, universities, etc., since 1923.

ONGOING SUCCESSFUL

2. Persecution of Turkish students who recognize legitimacy of Armenian history.

ONGOING SUCCESSFUL

3. Destruction, conversion, or conscious ignorance of monuments of Armenian architecture in historic Western Armenia, now Eastern Turkey: includes fortresses, churches, palaces.

ONGOING SUCCESSFUL

4. Denial to members and institutions of Turkish Armenian community to preserve community institutions and life, to learn Armenian history.

ONGOING SUCCESSFUL

5. Imprisonment, unfair trial, and unduly harsh punishment of Armenian priest, Father Manuel Yergatian, for assisting Armenian children and carrying map of Armenia.

SUCCESSFUL

6. Impeding right of US and other citizens of Armenian ancestry to visit and/or photograph spots of historical interest to them.

ONGOING SUCCESSFUL

7. Suspected shooting of army draftees of Armenian ancestry in Turkish army, 1982. Confirmed by independent sources

SUCCESSFUL

Actions of successive governments of the Republic of Turkey since 1923 reflecting continued policy of persecution of Armenians

Partial Listing

B. IN COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD

1. Interference with US State Department to block filming of 40 Days of Musa Dagh by major producer. 1930's, 1940's, and later.

SUCCESSFUL

2. Interference in US and local Montebello, California authorities in the project of the erection of a monument to Armenian victims of genocide in Montebello. 1960's.

UNSUCCESSFUL

3. Interference with participation of US Marine Band in genocide commemoration activities in US. Early 1970s.

SUCCESSFUL

4. Similar interference in Marseilles, France, same time. Withdrawal of Turkish Ambassador in protest.

UNSUCCESSFUL

5. Interference in freedom of press of Armenian newspapers *Aztag* and *Zartonk* which had discussed Armenian genocide in Lebanon. 1970s

UNSUCCESSFUL

6. Suspected blow-up of Armenian martyrs monument in Lebanon. Late 1970s.

SUCCESSFUL

7. Diplomatic interference to curtail right of Armenians to commemorate genocide anniversaries and peaceful

demonstrations by Armenians in: the US, the USSR, France, Iran, Canada, etc.

OCCASIONALLY SUCCESSFUL

8. Intervention at UN to delete "Paragraph #30" [brief reference to genocide of Armenians] from UN Subcommittee report on genocides.

SUCCESSFUL SO FAR

9. Interference with New York State Board of Education to stop textbooks from mentioning genocide of Armenians.

ONGOING

10. Similar interference with state of Connecticut.

ONGOING

11. Suspected kidnapping of Armenian political leaders in Lebanon. 1983 and 1985.

SUCCESSFUL

12. Founding of Turkish Institute in Washington, D.C. to carry anti-Armenian propaganda in US, wholly financed by Turkish government. Turkish Ambassador is Honorary Chairman of the Board.

SUCCESSFUL

13. Interference with government of Israel to eliminate Armenian participation from International Conference on Holocaust and Genocide in Tel Aviv. 1982

SUCCESSFUL in forcing withdrawal of governmental and institutional support

14. Campaign to eliminate Armenian presence on US Holocaust Council.

ONGOING
UNSUCCESSFUL AS YET

15. Letter campaign by Turkish ambassador to US newspapers to distort case of genocide.

ONGOING
OFTEN SUCCESSFUL

16. Letter campaign by Turkish Ambassador directed at state legislatures and executives, (i.e., California, Massachusetts) to denigrate Armenian history and cover up genocide, with the purpose of convincing them not to recognize Commemoration day.

ONGOING
UNSUCCESSFUL AS YET

17. Suspected subsidy of "scholarly" works — papers, monographs covering up for the genocide or justifying it.

ONGOING

18. Suspected infiltration of legally constituted Armenian political and cultural associations by agents of the Turkish government.

ONGOING

19. Pressure on the Sorbonne University and the French government to create obstacles for the convening of the Permanent Peoples' tribunal in April 1984 to consider the Armenian genocide.

20. Visit to US by Prime Minister of Turkey to pressure US Congress not to pass House Joint Resolution on recognition of April 24 as "Man's Inhumanity to Man" and on commemoration of Armenian Martyrs' Day, April 85.

. . . genocide recognizes no statute of limitation

The Tribunal recalls that, as is the case with all other crimes against humanity, genocide is by definition a crime to which no statute of limitations can apply by virtue of general international law, as confirmed by the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutes of Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 26, 1968.

All those responsible for the massacres, whether "they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals" are thus subject to penalties, which states are under an obligation to apply in order to observe the guarantees attached to the exercise of the enforcement of justice.

Apart from the question of penalties, genocide is furthermore a violation of the law of nations for which the Turkish state must assume responsibility. Its first duty arising from this position lies in a basic incumbent upon it to admit the facts without seeking to dissemble and to deplore the commission of this act. This in itself would constitute minimal redress for the incalculable moral injury suffered by the Armenian nation.

The Tribunal wishes to draw special attention to the fact that international practice as applied to the Turkish state since the time of these events affords sufficient legal basis to establish that the identity and continuity of this state have not been affected by the upheavals in the country's history since the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Neither its

territorial losses nor the reorganization of its political system have been such as to detract from its continued identity as a subject of the law of nations. Consequently, it cannot be considered that successive Turkish governments since the constitution of a Kemalist republic are justified in refusing to assume a responsibility which remains with the state they represent in the international community.

The Tribunal further notes that nothing in the statements or conduct of the Armenian people or of states sharing the responsibility of safeguarding its rights can be interpreted as implying their waiver of the blame attaching to those guilty of the genocide. Like its predecessors, the present Turkish government is therefore bound to assume this responsibility.

Finally, it is incumbent upon the international community as a whole, and more especially through the United Nations Organization, to recognize the genocide and to assist the Armenian people to this end. Indeed, it cannot be considered entirely justified, neither in allowing a crime to be committed against one of its peoples which it is obligated to protect in the same way as any one of its states, nor in tolerating the wrongful denial of such a crime until today.

The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal, *Verdict*



U.N. Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity

Article I

No statutory limitation shall apply to the following crimes, irrespective of their date of commission:

- a) War crimes as they are defined in the Charter of the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, of 8 August 1946 . . .
- b) Crimes against humanity whether committed in time of war or in time of peace . . . , eviction by armed attack or occupation and inhuman acts resulting from the policy of *apartheid*, and the crime of genocide as defined in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, even if such acts do not constitute a violation of the domestic law of the country in which they were committed.

Article II

If any of the crimes mentioned in Article I is committed, the provisions of this Convention shall apply to representatives of the State authority and private individuals who, as principals or accomplices, participate in or who directly incite others to the commission of any of these crimes, or who conspire to commit them, irrespective of the degree of completion, and to representatives of the State authority who tolerate their commission.

From an Open letter to World Public Opinion —

"... The Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide acquired the force of law by its adoption and ratification by most UN member states. Yet it has remained ineffective because the International Criminal Court foreseen by this Convention was never published.

Another relevant Convention, signed in November 1968 on the imprescriptibility of war crimes and of crimes against humanity is ignored, and it has failed to become an effective instrument of international law.

This deplorable condition, and the silence of governments, has meant that the deportations and massacres leading to the genocide of the Armenian people by the Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire have never been acknowledged, let alone morally condemned . . .

Democratic states would be accomplishing an act of elementary justice by taking the issue of the genocide of the Armenians to the UN. This would in no way modify strategic alliances based upon mutual interests. It would, rather, end the silence which encourages other crimes against humanity."

Signed by twenty-two internationally recognized scholars, 1984

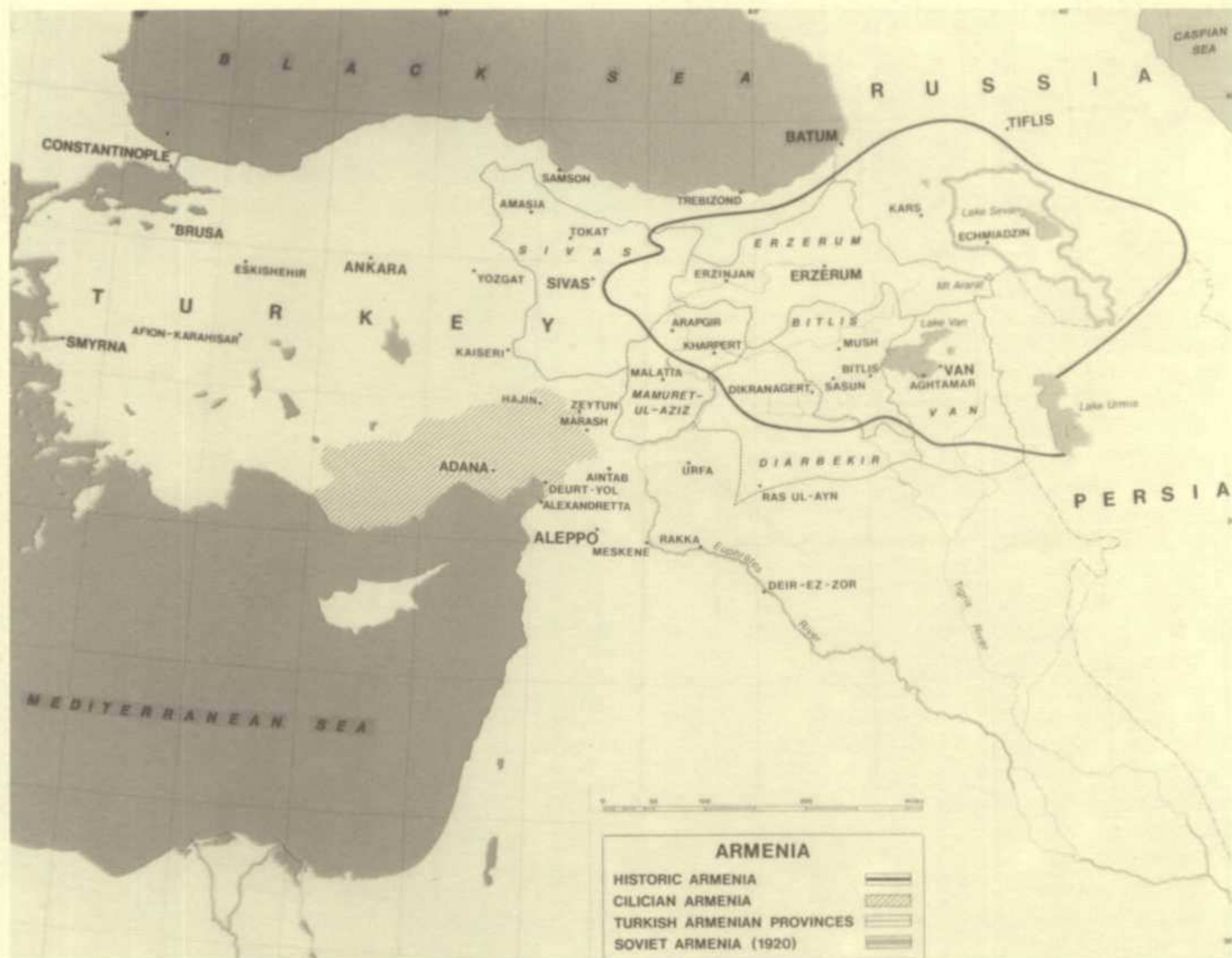
. . . what do Armenians want?

In the last decade Armenians have had a stronger sense of urgency regarding their current status as well as their future. They are unwilling to allow a crime against humanity remain unaccounted for or to let history be determined by genocides. After six decades of peaceful requests which have been disregarded by governments and media alike, new groups have emerged alongside existing political parties. These new groups have used political violence as a means to attract attention to and articulate Armenian claims.

Media and governments have generally condemned the actions of groups such as the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, while failing to propose alternative methods of pursuing what is generally regarded as a just cause. Media and governments have also come to realize, nonetheless, that the new militancy reflects deeply rooted convictions and serious historical claims; it will not therefore disappear merely because it inconveniences some segments of the world community. Many respectable, even conservative, writers and political leaders have now begun to wonder if Turkey does not in fact owe Armenians and the cause of international justice serious consideration of Armenian claims.

There are obviously variations in the expectations Armenians have. The most active and concerned within the older parties as well as members of the new organizations have articulated the following claims:

1. Turkey should be denied any territorial, material, or political fruits of the Genocide. The toleration of genocide and its acceptance as a "solution" to any problem only leads to its repeated use, just as the world's indifference to the Armenian Genocide and its aftermath led Hitler to cite it as a precedent and justification for his own crimes. The use of genocide as an instrument of national policy, by any nation at any time, is a crime against all humanity and it must be universally condemned. There can be no statute of limitations on genocide.
2. The eastern provinces of Turkey must be returned to the Armenian people — their rightful owners. These lands had been the home of the Armenian people for two thousand years before Turks entered that part of the world. Despite the murder and expulsion of the proprietor Armenian population, these territories are no less Armenian today.
3. The exile and dispersion of the Armenian people, a form of continued genocide, must come to an end and the Armenian people must be given their basic right of self-determination.





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