

LETTERS TO DIGNITARIES AND PUBLICATIONS ON THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE ISSUE AND THEIR RESPONSES (PART I)

Zaven Messerlian

Soon after my graduation with an MA in Middle Eastern History in 1963, whenever I noticed any wrong facts about Armenia and her history, the Armenian Genocide, I started to write letters to authors, editors or publishers and later to statesmen and political leaders. In 1972 when I had access to the British Public Record Office archives, I saw letters addressed to government leaders and the Foreign Office remarks on them and learnt much from there.

Over the years I wrote many letters to personalities holding high offices in their countries or organizations. Many replied, some others did not. As these correspondence is not of a personal nature and may interest students of Armenian history, I have decided on their publication. As a good number of letters to *Newsweek*, the United Nations Secretary Generals or to high officials, the Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2001,¹ and the Imperial War Museum of London² have already been published in relevant articles in the *Haigazian Armenological Review*. These letters are not included in the present publication.

Since most of the letters concern omissions of the Armenian Genocide and the need for its recognition, naturally the content of the letters occasionally are identical, as they were sent to different dignitaries or organizations, they are given here in full.³

1.

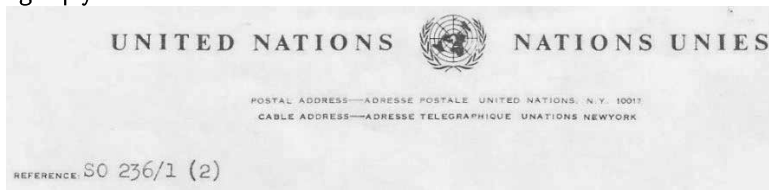
I had sent a letter to the United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, dated 18 December 1972, requesting his intervention for the inclusion of the

¹ Զավեն Մսրըլեան, «Հայկական պահանջներուն մասին Նիւզուիքին 1967ի նամակս եւ հետեւանքները» (My letter to *Newsweek* in 1967, regarding the Armenian demands and its consequences), *Haigazian Armenological Review*, 33:1993, pp. 351-7; Ibid., «ՄԱԿի 30րդ պարբերութեան ծննդոցը» (The Genesis of UN 30th paragraph) Zaven Messerlian, *Haigazian Armenological Review*, 11:1991, pp. 10-27; «Զանքեր ՄԱԿի 30րդ պարբերութեան վերահաստատման ուղղութեամբ» (Efforts towards the restoration of the 30th paragraph of the study of the Question of the prevention and punishment of the Crime of Genocide), *Haigazian Armenological Review*, 32:2012, pp. 431-65.

² Zaven Messerlian, "The Imperial War Museum and the Armenian Genocide," *Haigazian Armenological Review*, 36:2016, pp. 573-80.

³ I had used Armenian Evangelical College Principal's Office letterhead paper, inscribing my letter as "personal" and had signed as Zaven Messerlian, M.A.

Armenian Genocide in the preliminary report of the Crime of Genocide. This letter was published facsimile in the *Haigazian Armenological Review*.⁴ I received the following reply:



22 January 1973

Dear Mr. Messerlian,

I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 18 December 1972, addressed to the Secretary-General, and to thank you for the information which it contains. The report on the study of the question of the prevention and punishment of the Crime of Genocide to which you refer (E/CN.4/Sub.2/L.565) is the first report on this study. Its purpose was to review briefly the historical origins of the concept of genocide and of United Nations activities relating to its prevention and punishment, and to outline the future course of the study.

The information you have sent us will be kept in mind in the preparation of the next report on the study which will probably include a chapter on the historical background of genocide.

Sincerely,
George Brand
Chief
Section on Prevention of Discrimination
and Protection of Minorities
Division of Human Rights

Mr. Zaven Messerlian, M.A.
Armenian Evangelical College
P.O. Box 3672
Beirut
Lebanon

The result of my letter was the inclusion of the Armenian Genocide in the preliminary report⁵ on the prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities Division of Human Rights as follows:

⁴ Հաւէն Մարլեան, «ՄԱԿի 30րդ պարբերութեան ծննդոցը» (The Genesis of UN 30th paragraph), p. 17.

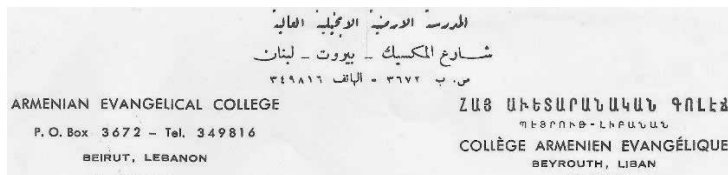
⁵ For full details see Հաւէն Մարլեան, «ՄԱԿի 30րդ պարբերութեան ծննդոցը» (The Genesis of the UN 30th Paragraph) *Haigazian Armenological Review*, 11:1991, pp. 10-27. Both letters were given in Armenian, also the clichés of the original letters.

“30. Passing to the modern era, one may note the existence of relatively full documentation dealing with the massacres of Armenians, which have been described as “the first case of genocide in the twentieth century”.⁶

The Turkish government was alarmed by this preliminary report and its representative in the United Nations Osman Olçay, secured the assistance of NATO allies and co-religionists, and succeeded in the suppression and omission of paragraph 30 of the preliminary report in the final report dated July 4, 1978.

2.

Then I began to write letters to UN authorities,⁷ some government officials, Armenian community leaders as well as to the newly elected Pope John Paul II. I have given below only the letter to the Pope and the reply received.



October 24, 1978

His Holiness
Pope John-Paul II
Supreme Pontiff
Vatican

Your Holiness,

On the happy occasion of Your Holiness' election to the throne of St. Peter, may I extend my congratulations and best wishes for the success of Your Holiness' most noble task of leading the Catholic Church.

Your Holiness' message at the end of the Conclave touched our hearts particularly when Your Holiness mentioned that He will offer help to those who are oppressed by any injustice or discrimination.

Permit me to depart from the protocol of a congratulatory letter to address Your Holiness as a humble son of an oppressed nation, victim of injustice and discrimination, with the hope that this petition of a letter will be passed to Your Holiness' attention for possible consideration. I am encouraged to do so deeply impressed by your message.

As you are aware the United Nations Committee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has prepared a Report on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (E/CN.4/Sub.2/416). This final report has omitted paragraph 30 of one of its initial reports (E/CN.4/Sub.2/L.583) which concerned the “first case of genocide in the twentieth century.”

The paragraph in question made the following very general statement about the massacres of Armenians, without mentioning the guilty party (the Ottoman Turkish

⁶ E/CN.4/Sub.2/L.583.

⁷ For full details, Մարդիկ, «Զանգեր», pp. 431-65.

government of 1915) nor the number of victims (more than 1 ½ million innocent Armenians). "Passing to the modern era, one may note the existence of relatively full documentation dealing with the massacres of Armenians which have been described as the "first case of genocide in the twentieth century."

Yet the above paragraph has been omitted in the final report due to political pressures, in a report which is supposed to have emerged from a non-political committee of experts, of one of the world's highest moral authorities.

Even during the implementation of the genocide of the Armenians the Holy See took diplomatic action and the late Pope Benedict XV spoke on the atrocities committed on the Armenians at the Consistory of December 6, 1915 and on other occasions.

This question is no longer a current problem, and many have forgotten it, yet it should be remembered that it was this oblivion of the facts concerning the unpunished genocide perpetrated on the Armenians that encouraged no other person than Adolph Hitler, who a few days before the German invasion of Poland, on August 22, 1939, in Obersalzbourg declared to his generals and S.S. Death squads. "I have given orders to my Death Units to exterminate without mercy or pity men, women, and children belonging to the Polish-speaking race. It is only in this manner that we can acquire the vital territory which we need. After all, who remembers today the extermination of the Armenians?" (Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Office of the United States Chief Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Washington, 1946, vol. VII, p. 753). Then the holocaust of the Polish people, the European Jews and other peoples began.

After World War II not only this precedent was taken into account at the suggestion of the French delegation in the Nuremberg Trials, but the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal (Article 6 (c) defined "crimes against humanity" as follows: 'Murder, exterminations, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war.'

Furthermore, article I (b) of the Convention on Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity, used the words "whether committed in time of war or in time of peace," is the same as the wording used in the article I of the genocide convention.

Whereas, the genocide perpetrated on the Armenians, claimed the lives of more than two thirds of the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire, and the great majority of the rest were deported.

Whereas, during its commission the Allied powers considered the massacres of Armenians as "crimes against humanity" and said would hold its perpetrators personally responsible,"

Whereas, these "crimes against humanity" not only satisfy the norms set by the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, but served as a legal precedent during the formulation of the Nuremberg Charter,

Whereas the oblivion of the first case of genocide of the 20th century (i.e. of the Armenians) led according to the very admission of the Adolph Hitler to the second case of genocide in our century,

I implore Your Holiness's instructions for the intervention of the Holy See with the U. N. Secretary General to re-include in the Final Report on Genocide the paragraph

concerning the massacres of Armenians, so that the least justice can be done to the Armenian people and that other humans do not suffer what our fathers suffered.

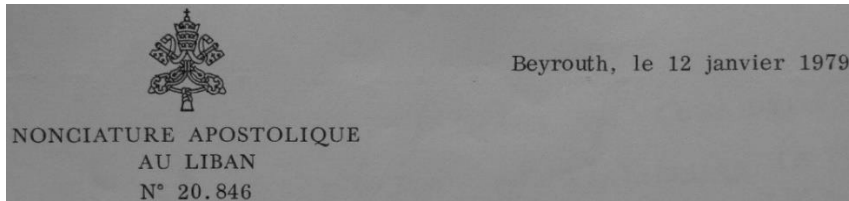
Most respectfully,

Zaven M. Messerlian, M.A.

Principal

ZMM/ss

3.



Monsieur le Principal,

Cette Nonciature Apostolique a l'avantage de porter à votre connaissance que Sa Sainteté Jean-Paul II a pris connaissance avec particulier intérêt de la lettre que vous Lui avez adressée en date du 24 Octobre 1978.

Je suis chargé de vous assurer que le Saint-Siège porte à l'Eglise Arménienne une constante sollicitude, à ses chefs spirituels une déférente et cordiale amitié, à ses fils et à tous les problèmes qui les concernent une spéciale bienveillance.

Je saisis volontiers cette occasion pour vous assurer, Monsieur le Principal, de mes sentiments les plus distingués.

Alfio Rapisarda
Chargé d'Affaires a. i.

Monsieur ZAVEN M. MESSERLIAN
Principal de l' "Armenian Evangelical College"
BEYROUTH

4.

I also wrote letters of commendement, encouragement or solicitation of assistance to the issue of the restoration of the eliminated paragraph 30 of the UN preliminary report on the prevention and punishment of the Crime of Genocide. One such letter to an American Congressman and his reply is given below.

April 18, 1979

Personal

Mr. George E. Danielson
Member of Congress
House of Representatives
Washington D. C. 20515
U. S. A.

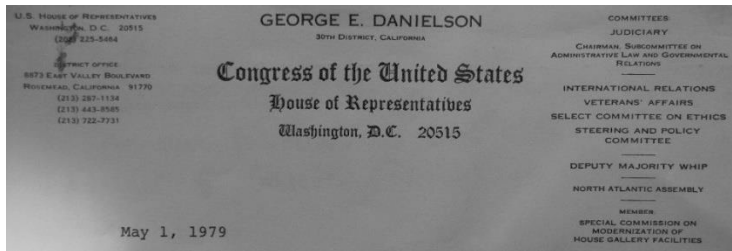
Dear Sir,

As the person who had the main role, in 1972-73, in the initial inclusion of paragraph 30, in the U.N. *Study of the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, I was very pleased to read your remarks in the Congressional Record of March 7, 1979, which my brother Haig Messertlian, Executive Director of the A.G.B.U. of America Inc. had sent to me. I wish to commend you for your efforts in the endeavors to re-include paragraph 30 in the final report.

Yours Sincerely,
Zaven Meserlian, M.A.
Principal

ZMM/ss

5.



Zaven M. Messerlian, M.A.
Principal
Armenian Evangelical College
P. O. B. 3672
Beirut, Lebanon

Dear Mr. Messerlian:

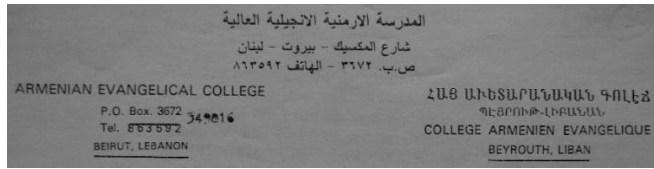
Thank you very much for your note of April 18, 1979, expressing your appreciation for my efforts to include Paragraph 30 in the final report of the United Nations study on genocide.

It was kind of you to take the trouble to write to me and I am especially pleased to receive that comment from a person who has worked long and hard with respect to the inclusion of Paragraph 30.

Sincerely yours,
George E. Danielson
Member of Congress
GED:gm

6.

Letters were written on the recognition issue of the Armenian Genocide. One such letter is the letter I addressed to Baroness Caroline Cox and the reply I received.



September 5, 1998

Personal

Baroness Caroline Cox
 1 Arnellan House
 144/146 Slough Lane
 Kingsbury NW9 8XI
 England

Dear Baroness Cox,

I have followed with admiration your relentless efforts for Mountainous Karabakh, our Artsakh. You have secured a permanent place in the hearts of the Armenians, all over the world.

I read in the Armenian newspapers that on August 21, 1998 in a press conference you have announced your intention to present further documentation to your government, so that they too officially recognize the fact of the Armenian Genocide.

As a historian, I have written two articles *The Premeditated Nature of the Genocide Perpetrated on the Armenians*, and *A United Nations Report in 1948 related to the Armenian Genocide*, and I think they can be useful. I have enclosed herewith photocopies of both.

I should note that, the U.N. restricted document of 1948 finds that the "crimes against humanity" in relation to the Armenian massacres of 1915 (which in fact was a genocide) and the subsequent Allied warning to the perpetrators in May 1915 and Article 230 of the Treaty of Sevres, constitute the legal basis for articles 6(c) and 5(c) of the Nurnberg and Tokyo Charters, for trying the World War II war criminals (see page 475 of my article).

Respectfully yours
 Zaven Messerlian
 Principal

7.



Zaven M Messerlian
 Principal
 Armenian Evangelical College
 PO Box 3672

BEIRUT
Lebanon

10 September 1998

Dear Principal,

Thank you very much for your letter of September 5. I greatly appreciated the material you sent me and am pleased to enclose for your information the Written Answer to my question to HMG's Government on this subject earlier this year.

I am afraid that I cannot move forward with this matter until Parliament has resumed in the autumn. However, when I start working on it I will find your information very valuable.

Next week I am due to go back to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh on my 40th visit and I enclose a copy of a previous visit report for your interest.

I may be in Lebanon at the Human Rights Conference in December and I hope that perhaps we might be able to meet there.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

[Signed] Caroline Cox

Encs.

WRITTEN ANSWER

Baroness Cox: asked Her Majesty's Government whether, in view of the recent recognition by the Government of France of the genocide of Armenians in 1915 and in view of the historical records of that genocide available in the United Kingdom, they will also recognise the Armenian genocide. (HL2325) [16 June]

BARONESS SYMONS OF VERNHAM DEAN

The British Government condemned the 1915 massacres at the time, and views the sufferings of the Armenian people then as a tragedy of historic proportions. However, in the absence of evidence to show that the Turkish Government took a specific decision to eliminate the Armenians under their control at that time, the British Government has not recognised the events of 1915 as a genocide.

The French Government has not recognised the 1915 massacres as a genocide. The French National Assembly adopted a draft law on 29 May stating that "France recognises publicly the genocide of the Armenians in 1915".

[signed] Symons of Vernham Dean
30 JUNE 1998

8.

The British government decided to mark the Holocaust of the Jewish people in a public Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration. The famed English journalist Robert Fisk, in the *Independent* newspaper informed with indignation that the Armenian Genocide was left out.

In protest, I decided to write the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, Chris Henderson UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Head of the Holocaust Day Steering Committee, Neil Frater Race Equality Unit, Holocaust Memorial Day,

Kim Darroch, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Lord Avebury, Vice-chairman of the Human Rights Group of the British Parliament. Also I wrote letters of commendation to Simon Kelner, editor of the *Independent* and to Robert Fisk.

I give below some of my letters and the replies I received on behalf of the Prime Minister from the Race Equality office and Lord Avebury.

A few years later Robert Fisk whom I had met personally and had given him my book *The Premeditated Nature of the Genocide Perpetrated on the Armenians*, in his book, *The Great War for Civilization* wrote “the principal of the Armenian Evangelical College in Beirut, deploring [Neil] Frater’s committee decision, argued powerfully that “any serious commemoration must include the aetiology of Genocide, particularly those of the twentieth century, especially if the oblivion of one encouraged the next one.”⁸

ZAVEN M. MESSERLIAN, B. A., M. A. P. O. B. 129, BEIRUT - LEBANON
January 12, 2001

The Rt. Honourable
Mr. Tony Blair
Prime Minister of United Kingdom
10 Downing Street
London

Your Excellency,

It is with deep regret that I became aware from the articles of Mr. Robert Fisk, in *The Independent*, and of Mr. Charles Gless, in the *New York Press*, and from Armenian daily newspapers, that the genocide perpetrated on the Armenians, will be left out of the Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration, on January 27, 2001.

1.5 million Armenians perished during the course of the Armenian genocide, 1914 - 1922, according to the declaration of one of your predecessors David Lloyd George on October 14, 1922. My maternal uncle, was one of those victims, he was a 14 year old student in Smyrna and was cold bloodedly slaughtered by Turks in 1922.

I want to express my strong protest for this exclusion, apparently done for political reasons, and base my objections on the following points:

- a) The Polish Jew author Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term genocide and who is commonly regarded as the father of the Genocide Convention, frequently invoked the Armenian experience as an example of genocide. *The History of the Holocaust, a handbook and dictionary* (ed. Abraham J. Edelheit and Hershel Edelheit, San Francisco, Oxford, 1994) clearly states "World War I also witnessed the first modern act of genocide" (p. 16), referring to the Armenian Genocide.

⁸ Robert Fisk, *the Great War for Civilization*, New York, 2005, p. 424, the footnote on page 1038 mentions my name.

- b) Any serious commemoration must include the mention of the first act of genocide of the 20th century, *especially if the oblivion of one encouraged the next one*. Adolph Hitler was definitely encouraged by the Armenian genocide's oblivion in committing the Holocaust. Hitler's phrase "After all who remembers today the extermination of Armenians" when he gave orders to annihilate countless innocents in Obersalzberg on August 21, 1939 is well documented. Within three days on 25 August 1939, a short account of the speech, smuggled out of the meeting, was transmitted to the British government by the British Embassy in Berlin (*Documents of British Foreign Policy 1919 -- 1939*, edited by E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler, Third Series, vol. VII, 1939, (London 1954), p. 257 -- 260). The same document was made public in the U.S.A on 17 October 1942 and *The New York Times* reported the story and excerpts from the document on the following day. In the summer of 1945 the document was in the possession of the prosecution of Nuremberg, and used in the prosecution of war criminals (*Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, office of the United States Chief Council for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Washington D.C, 1946, vol. VII, p. 753).
- c) The Armenian genocide was termed as "crimes against humanity" in 1915, in an Allied (including the British) warning to the Ottoman government on May 24, 1915. This Allied warning and Article 230 of the Treaty of Sevres, constituted the legal basis of articles 6(c) and 5(c) of the Nuremberg and Tokyo charters for trying the World War II criminals (see UN restricted document E/CN.E/W.20 and F.O. 371/72810).
- d) The genocide perpetrated on the Armenians was exposed to the world, essentially by the British *Blue Book, The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire* (Miscellaneous No. 31, (1916). The genocide was successful in that there are no Armenians left on the Armenian plateau, our ancestral home for three millenniums. The native Armenians were either massacred, starved to death, burnt alive, and deported. One of your famous predecessors, Sir Winston Churchill, wrote: "In 1915, the Turkish government began and ruthlessly carried out the infamous general massacre and deportation of Armenians in Asia Minor... the clearance of the race from Asia Minor was about as complete as such an act, on a scale so great, could well be ... There is no reasonable doubt that the crime was planned and executed for political reasons." (W. Churchill, *The World Crisis; The Aftermath*, (London, 1929), p. 405).
- e) The Ottoman Turkish government officially promulgated the Deportation Law on May 26, 1915, after the massacres had already begun and continued after the above law. British intelligence found out from an Ottoman prisoner of war, Lt. Sayied Ahmed Moukhtar Ba'aj, that "deportation" meant "massacre" (F.O. 371/2781/264888 Secret Arabian Report of the Foreign Office, dated December 27, 1916).
In a letter dated October 3, 1918, and addressed to Lord Bryce, Robert Cecil, British assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs wrote: "The Ottoman Armenians were systematically murdered by the Turkish Government in 1915. Two-thirds of the population were exterminated by the most cold blooded and fiendish methods ..."
- f) Even the ambassadors of the war time allies of the Ottoman Empire, Imperial Germany and the Austria-Hungarian Empire sent secret reports respectively to Berlin and Vienna clearly stating the terrible premeditated plan of the extermination of a subject people of

the Ottoman Empire. Below is such a report by ambassador Hohenlohe "The systematic butchery of the uprooted and deported Armenians have assumed such a scope... It wasn't only tolerated but openly promoted by the government. It meant the extermination of the Armenians" (Die Ausrottung der Armenier) Türkei 183/38, A 24507, 12 August 1915). The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador Pallavicini, informed Vienna, "The Armenian population which is being expelled from its homeland is not only being subjected to the greatest misery but also to a total extermination"(12 Türkei/209/, No. 50/P.C. 27 June 1915).

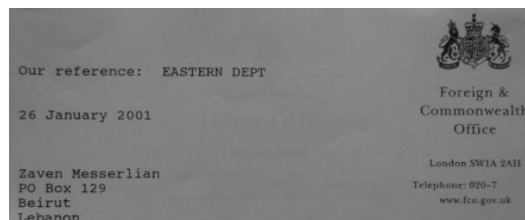
I ask, Your Excellency, how can the well documented genocide perpetrated on the Armenians be left out of the Holocaust Memorial Day? In my opinion, the Armenian Genocide, for the above historical, legal and moral considerations, should be included in the Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration. Political considerations should not overrule historical accuracy. Future genocides should be prevented and this can come by the full awareness of past genocides, especially those of the 20th century. One can only hope for a brighter future of humanity by accepting, recognizing and condemning past genocides, not ignoring "the first case of genocide in the twentieth century", as a UN report (E/CN. 4/Sub. 2/L. 583) termed the Genocide perpetrated on the Armenians.

I hope you can consider to have the Armenian Genocide mentioned in the planned Holocaust Memorial Day.

Yours respectfully,

Zaven M. Messerlian, M.A.
Principal of the Armenian
Evangelical College of Beirut

9.



ARMENIAN MASSACRES AND HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Thank you for your letter addressed to The Prime Minister regarding the Armenian massacres and Holocaust Memorial Day. It has been passed to me as I am one of the officers who deal with issues relating to Armenia.

The British Government understands the strength of feeling about this terrible episode in history and we fully endorse the view of the British Government of the day in condemning the massacres. Neither this Government or previous British Governments have judged that the evidence is sufficiently unequivocal to persuade us that these terrible events should be categorised as genocide as defined by the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide. The question remains a matter of debate amongst historians.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the descendants of the victims and our assurance that the massacres will not be forgotten.

Holocaust Memorial Day is focused on learning the lessons of the Holocaust and other more recent atrocities that raise similar issues. The Home Office undertook a wide ranging consultation exercise before drawing up plans for the Holocaust Memorial Day, in the course of which many suggestions were made for including earlier atrocities, among them the massacres of the Armenians. But the government was not keen to dilute the focus on the Holocaust.

Paul Eason

Eastern

0207 270 2427

10.



Our Ref

Your Ref

Date 18 January 2001

Zaven M. Messerlian

P.O.B.129

Lebanon

Dear Zaven M. Messerlian

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY - ARMENIAN MASSACRES

Thank you for your recent letter about acknowledging the massacre of Armenians in 1915-16 on Holocaust Memorial Day. Your letter has been forwarded to the Home Office as the Government Department holding lead responsibility for this matter.

Home Office Minister Mike O'Brien set out the Government's position in reply to a Parliamentary Question on 30 November. (House of Commons Hansard Columns 916/7W). He explained that Holocaust Memorial Day is focused on learning the lessons of the Holocaust and other more recent atrocities that raise similar issues. The Government took a conscious decision to focus on events around the Holocaust and thereafter, although it did examine requests to consider other atrocities and events that preceded the Holocaust. Examples include the Crusades, slavery, colonialism, the victims of Stalin and the Boer War. It is always difficult to draw a line and wherever it is drawn it runs the risk of being misinterpreted.

The Government recognises the strength of feeling in the Armenian community about the massacres of 1915-16. It was an appalling episode in twentieth century history, condemned by the British Government of the day and now. The Government continues to extend its sympathies to the descendants of the victims, along with all assurance that the massacres will never be forgotten.

The focus on events of the period 1939-45 and thereafter should not be seen as failing to acknowledge, sympathise and respect the concerns about events prior to the Second World War like the massacre of Armenians. Indeed, the particular focus to Holocaust Memorial Day does not prevent recollection by the Armenian community in the UK of the appalling events of 1915-16.

Others may also seek to highlight other atrocities.

Yours sincerely

Gregory J. Lane

11.



January 18, 2001

Dear Mr. Messerlian

Thank you for your letter of January 12, about the Armenian Genocide. I am familiar with the facts, and have a number of reference works in my own library, including the Bryce Blue Book, Ara Sarafian's republication of the Blue Book with all the references reinserted (I hosted the launch at the House of Lords), Vahakn N Dadrian's *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, Richard Hovanissioan's [t]he Armenian Genocide in Perspective, K B Bardakian's *Hitler and the Armenian Genocide*, and Robert Melson's *Revolution and Genocide*, as well as a number of general works on genocide which refer to the Armenian Genocide among others.

I am chairing a meeting in the House of Lords on January 24, at Which the Government's attitude to the Armenian Genocide will be discussed, and their decision to omit any reference to it as part of the Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration will be challenged.

[in handwriting] yours sincerely
[signed] L. Avebury

Mr Zaven Messerlian BA MA,
PO Box 129, Beirut,
Lebanon

Armenians in Britain, and elsewhere by their letters and protests put pressure on the British government. The latter decided to invite an Armenian delegation to the Holocaust Memorial Day but avoid any reference to the Armenian Genocide.

The diplomatic editor of *The Times* of London in its issue of January 25, 2001 under the title of "Turkey prepares for diplomatic row" wrote the following on the subject.-

"Britain runs the risk of a diplomatic split with Turkey after the Government's belated decision to invite an Armenian delegation to this weekend's Holocaust Memorial Day.

With only 48 hours to go before the Prince of Wales and the Prime Minister remember the millions who died in the worst atrocities of the past century, the event has become embroiled in controversy.

The Armenian question had already split Whitehall and now it threatens to damage important relations between London and Ankara.

Historians believe that up to 1.5 million Armenian civilians were killed in 1915. The Foreign Office accepts that the massacres took place, but insists that they do not qualify as genocide. Turkey has refused to acknowledge that there were any massacres of Armenian civilians, despite compelling evidence from the time.

The invitation to the Armenians to take part in an event alongside other victims of genocide is being regarded, therefore, as an important victory that could signal a change in British government policy.

Originally the Armenians were excluded from the ceremony on Saturday on the ground that it was intended only to commemorate events during and after the Second World War. Most of the ceremony will be dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews killed by Hitler. Speakers will also remember those who died in the genocides of Cambodia and Rwanda, and in the Balkans.

However, an angry response from Armenians and their influential supporters persuaded the Home Office to reconsider. In the past few days it has invited a delegation of about 20 Armenians, including two survivors of the 1915 massacres, Yerevan Shekerdenian and Anig Bodossian. Although invited as members of the "community" and not direct participants, there is little doubt that they will make their presence felt.

Such recognition is unlikely to pass without reaction from Turkey, particularly because it had been assured by the Foreign Office that the Armenians were being excluded.

Britain is concerned that it could become involved in a costly dispute, similar to the one being waged between Paris and Ankara. The French parliament passed a Bill this month recognising the 1915 massacres as genocide. Turkey responded by recalling its ambassador from Paris, cancelling a spy satellite contract with a French company and threatening to ban French companies from other government tenders.

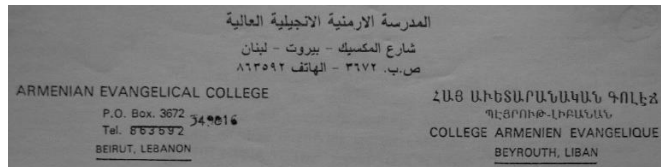
Turkish officials said that they would be watching events in London closely and would respond accordingly."

12.

The British Ambassador to Armenia Miss Thorda Abbott-Watt declared in Yerevan that what took place concerning the Armenians during 1915-1923 are just massacres, an atrocity condemned by the British government, but the evidence was not sufficiently unequivocal to be categorized as genocide.

I wrote her a letter of protestation and received her brief reply. Both are given below. It is interesting to note that the Ambassador's reply was dispatched by the British Foreign Office from London, by air mail service and not directly from Yerevan.

By an ironic turn of events, after I had dispatched my letter to the Ambassador from Beirut, I was introduced to her in the lobby of the Armenia-Marriott hotel in Yerevan⁹ by Archbishop Datev Sarkissian on 15 April 2004. The Archbishop and myself and my brother Haig had agreed to meet there and by chance the British Ambassador was there. I was introduced by the Archbishop to her and we had a brief polite conversation, either party avoiding any reference to the letter I had sent. I had the impression she realized I was the person who had addressed her the letter.



April 7, 2004

H.E. Thorda Abbott- Watt
British Ambassador to Armenia
British Embassy
Yerevan, Armenia

Madam Ambassador,

Your recent declaration that the Genocide perpetrated on the Armenians during 1915-1923 are just massacres, an atrocity condemned by H.M. Government but "the evidence was not sufficiently unequivocal that what took place could be categorized as genocide under the 1948 United Nations Convention as Genocide ..." was deeply hurtful to all Armenians, particularly when you state it in Yerevan, where the memorial to the Genocide stands at Dzidzernagapert.

Naturally you reflect your government's position which is political and it does not stand on historical, legal and moral grounds.

The following is why the Armenian Genocide should be considered as such.

⁹ I was in Yerevan to receive the honorary Ph.D. diploma in Armenology that the Armenian National Academy of Sciences had granted me in 2003.

(a) The Polish-Jewish author Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term genocide and who is commonly regarded as the father of the Genocide Convention, frequently invoked the mass-killings of Armenians as an example of genocide.

(b) *The History of the Holocaust, a handbook and dictionary* (ed. Abraham J. Edelheit and Hershel Edelheit, San Francisco, Oxford, 1994, p. 16) clearly states "World War I also witnessed the first modern act of genocide" referring to the Armenian Genocide.

(c) The Armenian genocide was termed as "crimes against humanity" in 1915, in an Allied (including the British) warning to the Ottoman government on May 24, 1915. This Allied warning and Article 230 of the Treaty of Sevres, constituted the legal basis of articles 6(c) and S(c) of the Nuremberg and Tokyo charters for trying the World War II criminals (see UN restricted document, E/CN.E/W.20 and F.O.371/72810).

(d) The United Nations in the report on the "Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" prepared by Mr. Benjamin Whitaker recognized the Armenian Genocide. The report said "The Nazi aberration has unfortunately not been the only case of genocide in the twentieth century. Among other examples which can be cited as qualifying are the Ottoman massacre of Armenians in 1915-1916." The report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985, S.R.39, Add 2, pp.4-5, pt. 33) was voted by a majority in the 38th session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, August 5-30, 1985, Geneva, and remains as the official U.N. position.

(e) The Genocide perpetrated on the Armenians was exposed to the world, essentially by the British *Blue Book. The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire* (miscellaneous No. 31, (1916). The genocide was successful in that there are no Armenians left on the Armenian plateau, (officially called the Armenian province, by the Ottoman Government, until 1844), our ancestral home for three millenniums. The native Armenians were either massacred, starved to death, burnt alive, and deported. Former British prime minister, Sir Winston Churchill, wrote: "In 1915, the Turkish government began and ruthlessly carried out the infamous general massacre and deportation of Armenians in Asia Minor... the clearance of the race from Asia Minor was about as complete as such an act, on a scale so great, could well be ... There is no reasonable doubt that the crime was planned and executed for political reasons." (W. Churchill, *The World Crisis: The Aftermath* (London, 1929), p. 405).

Former British Prime Minister Lloyd George termed the genocide perpetrated on the Armenians as "the holocausts of 1915" (see his *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*.)

(f) The Ottoman Turkish government officially promulgated the Deportation Law on May 26, 1915, after the genocide had already begun and continued after the above law. British intelligence found out from an Ottoman prisoner of war, Lt. Sayied Ahmed Moukhtar Ba'aj, that "deportation" meant "massacre" (F.O. 371/2781/264888 Secret Arabian Report of the Foreign Office, dated December 27, 1916).

In a letter dated October 3, 1918, and Addressed to Lord Bryce, Robert Cecil, British Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs wrote: "The Ottoman Armenians were systematically murdered by the Turkish Government in 1915. Two-thirds of the population were exterminated by the most cold blooded and fiendish methods ... "

(g) Even the ambassadors of the war time allies of the Ottoman Empire, Imperial Germany and the Austria-Hungarian Empire sent secret reports respectively to Berlin and Vienna clearly stating the terrible premeditated plan of the extermination of a subject people of the Ottoman Empire. Below is such a report by Ambassador Hohenlohe

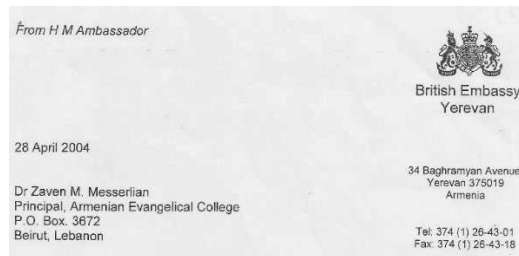
"The systematic butchery of the uprooted and deported Armenians have assumed such a scope...It wasn't only tolerated but openly promoted by the government. It meant the extermination of the Armenians" (Die Ausrottung der Annenier) Türkei 183/38, A 24507, 12 August 1915). The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador Pallavicini, informed Vienna, "The Armenian population which is being expelled from its homeland is not only being subjected to the greatest misery but also to a total extermination" (12 Türkei/209/, No. 50/P.C. 27 June 1915).

I have enclosed herewith my recent book *The Premeditated Nature of the Genocide Perpetrated on the Armenians* for your perusal.

The Genocide conventions of December 9, 1948 clearly defines genocide "Killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group the conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." All the above apply to the Armenian Genocide. The deportations were done to annihilate the Armenian men, women and children (please read the testimony on pp. 34-36 of my book). Two-Thirds of the Armenian living in the Ottoman Empire, i.e. 1.5 million people were killed, 50% of the world's Armenians. There are no more Armenians in the Eastern provinces which were for 3000 years the homeland of Armenians. The Armenian homeland was appropriated. Armenian children were abducted, forcibly Turkified, later many were killed (see p. 69 of my book). This is purely genocide. The parliaments of Greece, Cyprus, Uruguay, Argentina, Russia, Bulgaria, Belgium, France, Sweden, Lebanon, Italy, Switzerland, Serbia, Vatican, the Senate of Canada and the U.S.A. House of Representatives and the European Parliament have recognized and condemned the Genocide perpetrated on the Armenians. I hope the United Kingdom will be among them in the future.

Sincerely
Zaven M. Messerlian, Hon. Ph.D.
Principal
Armenian Evangelical College

13.



28 April 2004

Dr Zaven M. Messerlian
Principal, Armenian Evangelical College
P.O. Box. 3672
Beirut, Lebanon

Thank you for your letter of 7 April and for the copy which you enclosed of your book, which I will keep in the Embassy library.

I am sorry that the way in which my Government describe the events of 1915-16 causes you personal distress. I regret that we hold a different view. Please accept that this no way diminishes my sympathy for the descendants of the victims of the massacres and my personal sadness at the loss which so many Armenian families sustained.

Yours sincerely

Thorda Abbott-Watt (Miss)

14.

In late December 2014, I received via internet a British Foreign and Commonwealth office report *Armenia's Diaspora – Its Role and Influence*. I do not know how such a report could be placed on the internet, perhaps it was cleared for publication after more than two decades had passed from Armenia's independence. Perhaps it was a WikiLeaks release. Although on the whole the report prepared for the British officials was balanced and objective, the section on Armenian Genocide was completely false, almost an acceptance of the Turkish negationist view. I wrote a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Naturally as it concerned an internal assessment of the Armenian Genocide for political reasons, I did not receive any reply. For its importance I have given below first the F.O.C. report as it appeared on the internet followed by my letter.

Armenia's Diaspora – Its Role & Influence

KEY POINTS

Armenia has, in proportional terms, the largest Diaspora of any former Soviet state, much of it concentrated in Russia, the US and France. This has been a huge source of support for the Armenian state. But it's also periodically acted as a brake on Yerevan's scope for manoeuvre, particularly over the Nagorny Karabakh dispute and relations with Turkey. This is likely to remain the case in future.

The most politically active Armenian Diaspora community is the US one, whose focus on achieving official US recognition of the 1915 'genocide' is likely to intensify over the coming two years. By contrast, the Armenian community in Russia remains largely disengaged from political lobbying - but might we see this change over time? -

DETAIL

'We live different lives, Armenia and the Diaspora. Here it is real politics, while the Diaspora lives with the ideas of unreal politics, and they cannot change their ideas so quickly.' (Levon Ter-Petrosyan, then-President of Armenia, 1993)

Of all the former Soviet states, Armenia has the largest global Diaspora community, in proportion to the size of its national population, by some margin. Whilst precise figures are open to debate (given in particular the tendency of some



Diaspora activists to inflate the numbers), it is generally reckoned that there are around 8-10 million people of Armenian descent currently living outside Armenia (whose own population is currently estimated at around 2.9 million). The largest Armenian communities are based in Russia (2.3 million), the US (1.5 million), France (400,000) and the Lebanon (230,000), with sizeable populations (80,000 or more), also residing in Ukraine, Syria, Argentina, Poland, Turkey, Iran and Canada.

The 'gap' between the size of the Diaspora and Armenia's own population is growing. It's estimated that Armenia's population has shrunk by almost 1 million since 1992 as a result of an exodus of Armenians to join these Diaspora communities. Most (70%) of these are believed to have gone to Russia and other CIS countries, with only 10% joining the Armenian community in the US. The latter remains largely comprised of descendants of former residents of the Ottoman Empire who fled the territory of Modern-day Turkey during and after the inter-communal violence of 1915 - this was supplemented by a 'second wave' of Armenian immigration into the US from the Middle East (Syria, Lebanon, Iran) in the 1970s-80s.

Estimates of the true size of the Armenian population of Turkey are particularly problematic, given the reluctance of some ethnic Armenians there to identify themselves as such, and also in view of the seasonal fluctuations in the size of the Armenian migrant workers' community in Turkey (often based there illegally).

Britain's Armenian Diaspora remains fairly small (around 18,000), and drawn from a wide number of other Diaspora communities (Cyprus, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Lebanon).

What role does the Diaspora play in Armenian society?

Diaspora support has played a crucial role in Armenia's economic survival and development. Since 1991 Armenia has received several billion dollars' worth of financial support from US-based Diaspora Armenians alone. Among the most prominent donors has been the Lincy Foundation run by California-based magnate Kerk Kirkorian, which on its own has invested nearly \$300 million in Armenia since independence. More recently, however, it has been the Diaspora community in Russia that has provided the most significant financial flows into the Armenian economy - as of 2008, remittances from Armenians working in Russia accounted for 15% of Armenia's official GDP (some believe the real figure, taking into account 'shadow' payments outside the official banking system, may in fact be twice as high).

But the Diaspora's contribution cannot be measured purely in terms of investment and aid levels. It has arguably played an even greater, although less easily quantifiable, role in terms of developing Armenia's 'human capital stock', providing generations of young Armenians with training & study opportunities in the West, and exposing them to a world outside the confines of the former USSR. Diaspora Armenians have also made significant 'in-kind' contributions to improving the Armenian economy, health and education systems through technical advice and support. This also extends to the unrecognised 'Nagorny Karabakh Republic', which has received proportionally very high levels of Diaspora support since 1992 in the form of both funding and technical assistance (e.g. Armenian Diaspora doctors, teachers, engineers, etc. undertaking voluntary secondments to institutions in NK).

The Diaspora plays a key role in leveraging

The Diaspora plays a key role in leveraging support for Armenia from foreign governments - nowhere more so than in the US, which has provided \$2 billion in aid

to Armenia since 1992, making it one of the largest recipients of US aid per capita in the world. Lobbying of the US government and Congress by Armenian Diaspora groups has been crucial to securing this outcome. The most active of these are the Armenian Association of America (AAA) and the larger Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), the latter being affiliated to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaks), a nationalist Armenian political party currently in opposition to the ruling regime.

These lobbying organisations are highly instrumental in maintaining international political support for the 'Armenian cause', particularly in the US, where their goal remains to secure official US government recognition of the 1915 'Genocide' against ethnic Armenians in the Ottoman empire.

Relatively small numbers of Diaspora Armenians have returned to Armenia to live permanently, and of these few have risen to prominence in politics. The most notable exceptions are Raffi Hovannisian (Californian-born leader of the opposition Heritage party) and Vartan Oskanyan (Syrian-born Harvard graduate, Armenia's Foreign Minister From 1998-2008, now Head of the Civiltas think-tank in Yerevan).

Is the Diaspora's influence welcome within Armenia?

Yes and no. Successive Armenian governments have been fully conscious of the vital asset that the global Armenian Diaspora represents for a country lacking in mineral resources. Under President Sargsyan, a separate Ministry for Diaspora Issues has been created, charged with promoting even greater interaction between the Republic of Armenia and the global Armenian Diaspora. **Significantly Armenian Diaspora organisations have shown relatively little interest to date in internal governance/democracy-building issues** within Armenia. However, a view among some members of the global Diaspora is that the Armenian government over the last ten years has signally failed to harness the Diaspora's potential to rebuild the economy or promote democratisation. Economic policy in particular has remained parochial and oligarch-bound, and some significant Diaspora investors have retreated with fingers burned. The political elite have also been dominated by a narrow group of largely Karabakh veterans, whose main international links are mostly focused on Russia (through previous service in the Soviet military, for example).

In the area of foreign policy, there have periodically been pronounced tensions between ruling administrations in Armenia and the global Diaspora, most notably over policy towards Turkey and the NK conflict. This was most visible under the leadership of Armenia's first President, Levon Ter-Petrosyan (1991-1998), whose relationship with the more nationalist elements in the Diaspora was always an uncomfortable one, given the latter's distrust of his perceived readiness to make excessive concessions on these issues (in particular his refusal to prioritise 'genocide' recognition by Turkey as a pre-condition for the normalisation of bilateral relations).

Under Ter-Petrosyan, the Dashnak party was banned in Armenia, and his eventual downfall in 1998 was at least in part triggered by furious Diaspora criticism of his support for an 'unacceptable' compromise solution on NK. For his part, Ter Petrosyan criticised the Diaspora's 'unrealistic' view of Armenia's policy priorities, and more recently, in his reincarnation as an opposition leader, has bemoaned the Diaspora's lack of focus on Armenia's retreat from democracy under his successors. President Sargsyan has, by contrast, attracted less ire from the Diaspora (in part in recognition of his Karabakhi roots and his direct role in securing NK's 'liberation'): whilst the ANCA

strongly opposed his signing of the abortive Protocols with Turkey in 2009 on the normalisation of relations, the main focus of their criticism was the US (for allegedly 'pressurising' Yerevan into joining), rather than Sargsyan himself.

Another important impact of Armenia's Diaspora, of particular relevance at present, is on its stance towards regimes such as Iran and Syria, where sizeable Armenian minorities remain. The vulnerability of these minorities is felt keenly by the Armenian government. In addition to Armenia's need, as a small, blockaded country to remain on good terms with other neighbours, this explains why it has been found voting against, abstaining or absenting itself during voting for UNGA or Human Rights Council resolutions on Iran and Syria.

Outlook & Conclusions

The positives in Armenia's relationship with its global Diaspora will continue to outweigh the negatives from Yerevan's standpoint. The support the Diaspora provides will remain crucial to Armenia's economic survival in a hostile neighbourhood. On foreign policy, however, sentiment within elements of the Diaspora will remain a significant obstacle to achieving compromise-based solutions over the NK dispute and Armenia's relations with Turkey.

An interesting issue to track will be the position of the Armenian Diaspora in Russia, by some margin the largest Armenian community outside the country itself. In contrast to the longer-established Diaspora communities in the US and Europe, Russia's Armenians have hitherto shown little interest in lobbying their host country's authorities to take a stronger line on e.g. 'Genocide' recognition. Given the nature of the Russian regime, its relationships with Turkey and Azerbaijan, and the generally 'apolitical' nature of many Armenian labour migrants working in Russia, it is unlikely that this picture will change soon. Over time, the possibility that this community could also be mobilised as a political lobbying force in support of the Armenian 'cause' should not be entirely discounted. However, for the time being the public stance of organised Armenian groups in Russia is focused on proving its loyalty to the Russian state - a similar dynamic for a vulnerable minority as in Iran and Syria.

15.



January 23, 2015

H. E. Philip Hammond
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London, U.K.

Your Excellency,

1. As a historian, I have used the open archives of the British Foreign Office and I have found that most reports prepared for the Cabinet, Ministers or some other authorities, are on the whole balanced and objective.
2. Recently I became aware of the FCO's report *Armenia's Diaspora - Its Role and Influence*, which follows the above mentioned pattern, with the notable exception of

what the report says about the Armenian Genocide, the root cause of the existence of the Armenian Diaspora, and the attitude of those diasporan Armenians towards Turkey.

3. The report puts quotation marks on the word genocide and simplifies it as follows: that most diasporan Armenians "are descendants of former residents of the Ottoman Empire who fled the territory of modern day Turkey during and after the inter-communal violence of 1915."
4. FCO's description is not objective as to why most diasporan Armenians are outside of their 3000 years old homeland occupied by the Ottomans in 1534 (see F.O. 371/48795, pt. 11), and other parts of the former Ottoman Empire. Armenians were forcibly deported by an official decree issued on May 22, 1915. The British intelligence found out that "deportation" meant massacre (see F.O. 371/2781/201201, pp 7-8, Secret Arabian Report of September 27, 1916). The British government published the *Blue Book* in 1916, *The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire* showing the deportations and massacre were government policy. In a letter dated October 3, 1918 and addressed to Lord Bryce, Robert Cecil, Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote "The Ottoman Armenians were systematically murdered by the Turkish government in 1915. Two-thirds of the population were exterminated by the most cold blooded and fiendish methods ..." 1.5 million Armenians perished thus, in what the U.N. preliminary report on the prevention and punishment of Genocide termed the "first case of genocide in the twentieth century." (E/CN.4/Sub.2/L.583 paragraph 30) and later confirmed by the U.N. in 1985 (Benjamin Whitaker's report, E/CN.4/Sub.2/1985/86, paragraph 24).
5. In 1946 the F.O in a confidential report intended for the British Cabinet, F.O. Research Dept. wrote "It would also be unwise to overlook the strength of the claim of territorial indemnification which might be based on the massacres perpetrated by the Turks on Armenians. These massacres were so atrocious and have left such a lasting mark on the memory of the world." (F.O. 371/59247 pt. 46 of confidential report dated 4 April 1946).
6. It is worth mentioning that the British government along with other Allied powers issued a warning to the members of the Ottoman Turkish government on May 22, 1915 that they would personally be held responsible for the massacres then termed as crimes against humanity (F.O. 371/2488). It is important to note that this warning constituted a precedent for Article 6c and 5c of the Nuremberg and Tokyo Charters, allowing the Allies to bring to justice the War criminals of World War II (E/CN.41 W.20, pp. 7-15).
7. As to the espousal of the point of view of Turkish negationists, i.e. "intercommunal violence of 1915" that caused Armenians "to flee" Turkey, I shall quote a renowned Turkish historian, Taner Akçam, to denounce it. Akçam is the author of the book *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity, The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*, Princeton and Oxford, 2012) and has based his book on the Ottoman Prime Ministerial Archives, he writes "not a single top secret document at the highest levels of the state makes the slightest allusion to a civil war or intercommunal warfare". On the contrary, Ottoman documents show that the Armenian areas were evacuated under tight government control." (p. 228).

8. If one wishes to know why the Armenians of the Diaspora feel in a certain way towards Turkey, one has to be objective, to say the least, and not to distort the facts.
9. I hope the paragraph I have contested in my pt. 3 above, shall be rectified in the F.C.O.'s said report.

Sincerely,
Dr. Zaven M. Messerlian
Principal of the Armenian
Evangelical College
Foreign Member of the National
Academy of Sciences of the
Republic of Armenia

16.

The Turkish government in a bid to overshadow the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, prepared on a state level in Yerevan, decided to coincide the Gallipoli campaign's 100th anniversary with the April 15, 2015 commemorations. Much ahead of time, almost a year earlier, the Turkish Government invited the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, three countries that do not yet recognize the Armenian Genocide as a genocide, to the Turkish commemoration. Indignant over the high level of representation by the United Kingdom, who intended to send the British Crown Prince, Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, I decided to share my indignation with the Prince.

Below is my letter and the reply I received on his behalf.

ZAVEN M. MESSERLIAN, B. A., M. A. P. O. B. 129, BEIRUT - LEBANON

February 12, 2015

His Royal Highness
Prince Charles
Prince of Wales
St. James's Palace
London SW1A 1BS

Your Royal Highness,

From Turkish newspaper reports we became aware that Your Royal Highness along with British dignitaries shall be present to the Gallipoli campaign's 100th commemoration on April, 24, 2015, in Turkey. That is Your Royal Highness's privilege and a UK government decision.

I wish to point out that the Gallipoli commemorations in the recent past were done on March 18th, while the actual attacks began on April 25th. This year the Turkish government brought forth the commemoration date from April 25th to April 24th, the day of the Centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, to cast a shadow on it and to shift attention from the Centennial commemoration in Yerevan and all over the world where Armenians live.

It was indeed on the eve of the Gallipoli campaign that on April 24, 1915, all the eminent and influential Armenian leaders residing in Constantinople including journalists, professors, clergymen, poets, the intelligentsia of the Armenian community were arrested by the Ottoman Turkish authorities without any sound reason and sent to the interior of Anatolia, where they were massacred by the most atrocious means. The same procedure was repeated in the towns of the provinces. April 24 marks the commemoration day of 1.5 million Armenians, including my maternal uncle.

The British failure at Gallipoli was detrimental to the Armenians. Lord Kinross, author of Ataturk and four books on Turkey, has written "The British failure at Gallipoli gave a breathing space to the Young Turk triumverate, leaving it free to pursue, without external interference, a premeditated internal policy for the final elimination of the Armenian race. Their proximity to the Russians on the Caucasian front furnished a convenient pretext for their persecution, on a scale far exceeding the atrocities of Abdul Hamid, through deportation and massacre..." (Lord Kinross, The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire, New York, 1977, p. 607).

It is one thing to commemorate ANZAC Day in the actual location of the campaign, its another thing to partake in a Turkish ploy to diminish the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on the day it has been celebrated since 1919, i.e. April 24.

As a diasporan of Armenian descent, whose brothers are British subjects, I wanted to express my point of view to Your Royal Highness.

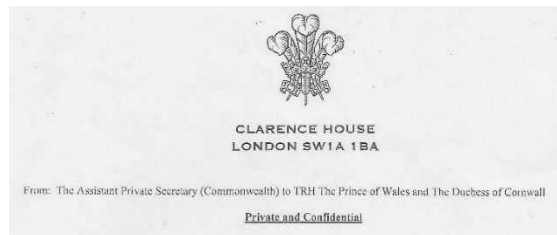
Most respectfully,

Dr. Zaven M. Messerlian

Principal

Armenian Evangelical College

17.



12th May, 2015

The Prince of Wales has asked me to thank you for your recent letter regarding the Gallipoli Commemorations. Please do accept my apologies for a somewhat belated response.

I would like to begin by assuring you that Armenia is a country very dear to His Royal Highness. The Prince of Wales visited Armenia in 2014 and maintains a close relationship with the Armenian community in the United Kingdom.

His Royal Highness attended the commemorations on the Gallipoli Peninsula to commemorate the centenary of the campaign in which some 45,000 Commonwealth troops died and twice that number were wounded, and to pay respects to the memory of the casualties of all nations. It may be of interest to you to know that, as in past years,

there were services for Commonwealth and Irish dead on 24th April. Indeed, services have been held on both the 24th and 25th April for some years now. This comes with His Royal Highness's best wishes.

Yours Sincerely
Craig Kowalik

Dr. Zaven Messerlian

18.

In the Anglo-Saxon world, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom admit in 1915 “terrible events and massacres in the Ottoman Empire” but avoid to qualify these crimes as genocide for political considerations vis-a-vis their NATO ally Turkey.

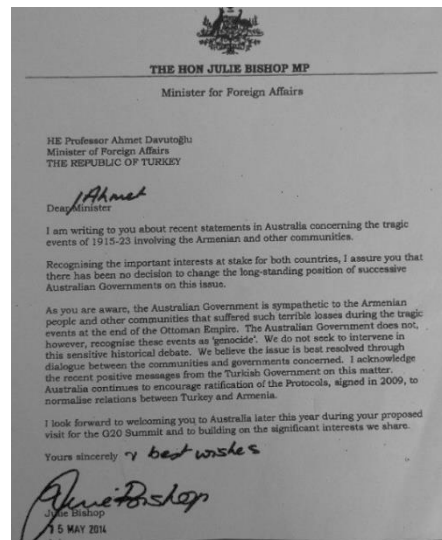
Julie Bishop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia had written a letter dated 15 May 2014 to the Turkish Minister of foreign Affairs, and it was made public. After my comments I have given her letter.¹⁰

Julie Bishop did not reply, as I assume in my letter I had referred to a quote by Geoffrey Robertson, QC, who in his book *An Inconvenient Genocide* had called her “the foolish Foreign Minister (or more likely, her foolish department advisors...)”¹¹

Successively I have given below my letters to Julie Bishop, Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand and Boris Johnson, British Prime Minister as well as the replies I received from the latter two. In case of the British PM I am also giving my letter addressed to the responding minister.

HE Professor Ahmet Davutoglu
Minister of Foreign Affairs
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

I am writing to you about recent statements in Australia concerning the tragic events of 1915-23 involving the Armenian and other communities.



¹⁰ “Les Petites Bassesses de l’Australie,” *Nouvelle d’Arménie*, 2014:215, p. 37.

¹¹ Geoffrey Robertson, QC, *An Inconvenient Genocide, Who Now Remembers the Armenians*, London, 2014, p. 153.

Recognising the important interests at stake for both countries, I assure you that there has been no decision to change the long-standing position of successive Australian Governments on this issue.

As you are aware, the Australian Government is sympathetic to the Armenian people and other communities that suffered such terrible losses during the tragic events at the end of the Ottoman Empire. The Australian Government does not, however, recognise these events as 'genocide'. We do not seek to intervene in this sensitive historical debate. We believe the issue is best resolved through dialogue between the communities and governments concerned. I acknowledge the recent positive messages from the Turkish Government on this matter. Australia continues to encourage ratification of the Protocols, signed in 2009, to normalise relations between Turkey and Armenia.

I look forward to welcoming you to Australia later this year during your proposed visit for the G20 Summit and to building on the significant interests we share.

Yours sincerely and best wishes.

[signed] Julie Bishop

15 May 2014

19.

ZAVEN M. MESSERLIAN, B. A., M. A. P. O. B. 129, BEIRUT - LEBANON

March 7, 2015

H.E. Julie Bishop
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Canberra, Australia

Your Excellency,

Your letter dated 15 May 2014 addressed to the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Davutoglu, is now common knowledge, as it was published. It represents your country's current stand on the Armenian Genocide.

However, as an Armenian historian, I feel it is my duty to remind Your Excellency of certain facts.

a) The Ottoman Turkish government officially promulgated the Deportation Law on May 24, 1915, after the massacres had already begun and continued after the above law. British intelligence found out from an Ottoman prisoner of war, Lt. Sayied Ahmed Moukhtar Ba'aj that "deportation" meant "massacre" (F.O. 371/2781/264888 Secret Arabian Report of the Foreign Affairs dated December 27, 1916). In a letter dated October 3, 1918 and addressed to Lord Bryce, Robert Cecil, British Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote: "The Ottoman Armenians were systematically murdered by the Turkish Government in 1915. Two-thirds of the population were exterminated by the most cold blooded and fiendish methods ..."

b) The Armenian genocide was termed as "Crimes against humanity" in 1915, in an Allied warning to the Ottoman government on May 24, 1915. This Allied warning and Article 230 of the Treaty of Sevres, constituted the legal basis of articles 6 (c) and 5 (c) of the Nuremberg and Tokyo charters for trying the World War II criminals (see UN restricted document E/CN.E/W.20 and F.O. 371/72810).

c) Even the ambassadors of the war time allies of the Ottoman Empire, Imperial Germany and the Austria-Hungarian Empire, sent secret reports respectively to Berlin and Vienna clearly stating the terrible premeditated plan of the extermination of a subject people of the Ottoman Empire. Below is such a report by Ambassador Hohenlohe "The systematic butchery of the uprooted and deported Armenians have assumed such a scope ... It wasn't only tolerated but openly promoted by the government. It meant the extermination of the Armenians" (*Die Ausrottung der Armenier*) Türkei 183/38. A 24507, 12 August 1915). The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador Pallavicini, informed Vienna, "The Armenian population which is being expelled from its homeland is not only being subjected to the greatest misery but also to a total extermination" (12 Türkei/209/, No. 50/P.C. 27 June 1915).

d) The genocide perpetrated on the Armenians was exposed to the world, essentially by the *British Blue Book, The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire* (Miscellaneous No. 31, (1916). The genocide was successful in that there are no Armenians left on the Armenian plateau, our ancestral homeland for three millenniums. The native Armenians were either massacred, starved to death, burnt alive, and deported. Sir Winston Churchill, wrote: "In 1915, the Turkish government began and ruthlessly carried out the infamous general massacre and deportation of Armenians in Asia Minor ... the clearance of the race from Asia Minor was about as complete as such an act, on a scale so great, could well be ... There is no reasonable doubt that the crime was planned and executed for political reasons." (W. Churchill, *The World Crisis; The Aftermath*, (London, 1929), p. 405).

If the above mentioned deportations, massacres ethnic cleansing, appropriation of land and property, destructions of patrimony, forced conversions to Islam of women and children, separation of children from their families and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, deliberately inflicting on the group the conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction, is not Genocide what is Genocide then? The creator of the term genocide Lemkin had the Armenian Genocide as an example in his writings.

Furthermore the Turkish attempts to overshadow the Centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, on April 24, 2015 by bringing forward the ANZAC commemoration from April 25 to 24, although for years they celebrated on March 18, is a dastardly way of dishonouring the memory of 1.5 million Armenian victims of the Genocide.

a) It was indeed on the eve of the British led Gallipoli campaign that on April 24, 1915, all the eminent and influential Armenian leaders residing in Constantinople including professors, lawyers, poets, journalists, medical doctors, clergymen, in short the intelligentsia of the Armenian community were arrested by the Ottoman Turkish authorities without any sound reason and sent to the interior of Anatolia, where they were massacred by the most atrocious means. The same procedure was repeated in the towns of the provinces. April 24 marks the commemorations day of 1.5 million Armenian martyrs.

b) The British failure at Gallipoli was detrimental to the Armenians, Lord Kinross, author of *Ataturk* and four books on Turkey, has written. "The British failure of Gallipoli gave a breathing space to the Young Turk triumvirate, leaving it free to pursue, without

external interference, a premeditated internal policy of the final elimination of the Armenian race. Their proximity to the Russians on the Caucasian front furnished a convenient pretext for their persecution, on a scale far exceeding the atrocities of Abdul Hamid, through deportation and massacre." (Lord Kinross. *The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire*, New York, 1977, p. 607).

It is one thing to commemorate ANZAC Day in the actual location of the campaign, its another thing to partake in a Turkish ploy to diminish the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on the day it has been celebrated since 1919, i.e. April 24.

Your Excellency and the Government of Australia, may go ahead taking into consideration "the important interests at stake" for Australia and Turkey, and disregard the Armenian Genocide and its centennial commemoration, thereby disregarding thousands of Australians of Armenian descent, as well as 10 million Armenians all over the world, the 21 countries who have officially recognized the genocide (France and 12 other European countries, Canada, the Vatican, 4 Latin American countries, and Lebanon, two Australian states, New South Wales and South Australia), the judgement of countless historians, human rights advocates, international jurists, etc. I am sure Your Excellency is aware of Geoffrey Robertson QC's book *An Inconvenient Genocide, Who Now Remembers the Armenians* (London, 2014) and his severe criticism of Yourself (pp. 153-154) and hence the government you represent.

Sincerely,
Dr. Zaven M. Messerlian
Principal of the
Armenian Evangelical College
Of Beirut

20.



November 1, 2018

Her Excellency
Mrs. Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister of New Zealand
Wellington. New Zealand

Your Excellency.

In early August 2018, newspapers echoed that you have declared your country believes that "In 1915 terrible events and massacres" took in the Ottoman Empire, but you avoided to qualify these as genocide, leaving the matter to be settled between Turkey and Armenia.

As an Armenian historian, I feel it is my duty to remind Your Excellency of certain facts that prove what took place was genocide.

a) The Ottoman Turkish government officially promulgated the Deportation Law on May 24, 1915, after the Armenian massacres had already begun and continued after the

above law. British intelligence found out from an Ottoman prisoner of war, Lt. Sayied Ahmed Moukhtar Ba'aj, that "deportation" meant "massacre" (F.O. 371/2781/264888 Secret Arabian Report of the Foreign Affairs dated December 27, 1916). In a letter dated October 3, 1918 and addressed to Lord Bryce, Robert Cecil, British Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote: "The Ottoman Armenians were systematically murdered by the Turkish Government in 1915. Two-thirds of the population were exterminated by the most cold blooded and fiendish methods ... ,.

b) The Armenian genocide was termed as "Crimes against humanity" in 1915, in an Allied warning to the Ottoman government on May 24, 1915. This Allied warning and Article 230 of the Treaty of Sevres, constituted the legal basis of articles 6 (c) and 5 (c) of the Nuremberg and Tokyo charters, for trying the World War II criminals (see UN restricted document E/CN.E/W.20 and F.O. 371172810).

c) Even the ambassadors of the war time allies of the Ottoman Empire, Imperial Germany and the Austria-Hungarian Empire, sent secret reports respectively to Berlin and Vienna clearly stating the terrible premeditated plan of the extermination of a subject people of the Ottoman Empire. Below is such a report by the German Ambassador Hohenlohe "The systematic butchery of the uprooted and deported Armenians have assumed such a scope ... It wasn't only tolerated but openly promoted by the government. It meant the extermination of the Armenians" (Die Ausrottung der Armenier) *Turkei 183/38. A 24507, 12 August 1915*). The Austro- Hungarian Ambassador Pallavicini, informed Vienna, "The Armenian population which is being expelled from its homeland is not only being subjected to the greatest misery but also to a total extermination" (12 *Turkei/2091, No. 501P.C. 27 June 1915*).

d) The genocide perpetrated on the Armenians was exposed to the world, essentially by the *British Blue Book, The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire* (Miscellaneous No. 31, (1916)). The genocide was successful in that there are no Armenians left on the Armenian plateau in Western Armenian (now Eastern Turkey), our ancestral homeland for three millenniums. The native Armenians were either massacred, starved to death, burnt alive, and deported. Sir Winston Churchill, wrote: "In 1915, the Turkish government began and ruthlessly carried out the infamous general massacre and deportation of Armenians in Asia Minor... the clearance of the race from Asia Minor was about as complete as such an act, on a scale so great, could well be ... There is no reasonable doubt that the crime was planned and executed for political reasons." (*W. Churchill, The World Crisis; The Aftermath*, (London, 1929), p. 405). The currently existing Republic of Armenia (Eastern Armenia), was under Czarist Russian domination in 1915. It first became independent in 1918 and after dissolution of the USSR, it regained its independence in 1991.

e) ANZAC survivors mentioned the Armenian massacres upon their return to their native lands, in eye witness reports.

It was on the eve of the Gallipoli campaign that on April 24, 1915, all the eminent and influential Armenian leaders residing in Constantinople including professors, lawyers, poets, journalists, medical doctors, clergymen, in short the intelligentsia of the Armenian community were arrested by the Ottoman Turkish authorities without any

sound reason and sent to the interior of Anatolia, where they were massacred by the most atrocious means. The same procedure was repeated in the towns of the provinces. April 24 marks the commemoration day of 1.5 million Armenians martyrs of the Genocide, while ANZAC memorial day is April 25.

The British failure at Gallipoli was detrimental to the Armenians. Lord Kinross, author of *Ataturk* and four books on Turkey, has written "The British failure at Gallipoli gave a breathing space to the Young Turk triumverate, leaving it free to pursue, without external interference, a premeditated internal policy of the final elimination of the Armenian race. Their proximity to the Russians on the Caucasian front furnished a convenient pretext for their persecution, on a scale far exceeding the atrocities of Abdul Hamid, through deportation and massacre..." (Lord Kinross, *The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire*, New York, 1977, p. 607).

If the above mentioned deportations, massacres ethnic cleansing, appropriation of land and property, destructions of patrimony, forced conversions to Islam of women and children, separation of children from their families and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, deliberately inflicting on the group the conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction, is not Genocide what is Genocide then? The creator of the term genocide Lemkin had the Armenian Genocide as an example in his writings.

The Holocaust of the Jews was committed by Hitler, who had said "After all who remembers the annihilation of Armenians". (*History of the First World War*, edited by Peter Young, Vol. 3 N#16, London, 1970).

The Genocides of Cambodia, Rwanda and of the Yezidis of Sinjar by DAESH, were done, as those perpetrators saw that the civilized nations of the world hesitated in condemning previous genocides or recognizing them as such.

Your Excellency and the Government of New Zealand should have the moral courage to recognize the Genocide of Armenians, so that your country can be along the 30 countries who have officially recognized the Armenian Genocide which includes France, Germany and 15 other European countries, Canada, the Vatican, 6 Latin American countries, and Lebanon, 48 states of the U.S.A. and the House of Representatives of the U.S.A., two Australian states (New South Wales and South Australia), the judgment of countless historians, human rights advocates, international jurists, etc. I am hopeful Your Excellency is aware of Geoffrey Robertson QC's book *An Inconvenient Genocide, Who Now Remembers the Armenians* (London, 2014). The genocide of the Armenians should be recognized for moral and legal reasons.

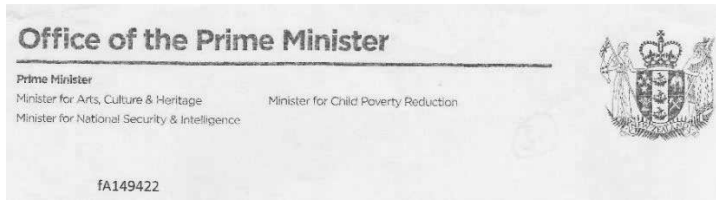
I am sure Dame Sayian Serpouhi Elias, your country's Chief Justice, of Armenian descent, would agree with me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Zaven Messerlian

Foreign Member of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
Honorary principal of the Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut

21.



30 November 2018

Dr. Zaven M Messerlian
Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut
P.O.Box 11-3672
Riad El Solh
Beirut 1107 2140
LEBANON

Dear Dr Messerlian

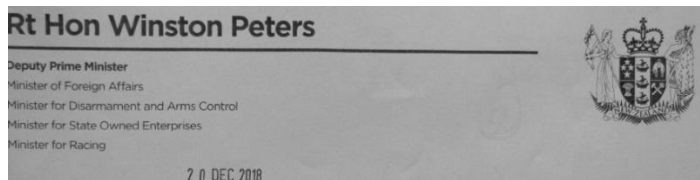
I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, to thank you for your letter of 1 November 2018 concerning aspects of the history of the Armenian people.

I am forwarding a copy of your letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt Hon Winston Peters, for his consideration.

Thank you for writing to Jacinda.

Best Wishes
Dinah Okeby
Correspondence Manager

22.



Dr Zaven M Messerlian
Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut
PO Box 11-3672
Riad El Solh
Beirut 1107 2140
LEBANON

Dear Dr Zaven M Messerlian

Your letter to the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, has been referred to me as the issue you raise falls within my portfolio responsibilities.

The New Zealand Government has not taken a position on the atrocities committed against Armenian people during the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. It is our view that the resolution of these issues between Armenia and Turkey, including appropriate terminology, is best left to the parties directly concerned to work through. New Zealand sincerely supports a process of normalisation of relations between Turkey and Armenia.

Yours Sincerely

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Հայոց Ցեղասպանության առնչությամբ նամակներ՝ բարձրաստիճան
անձնաւորութեանց եւ հրատարակչատուներու եւ անոնց պատասխանները**
(Ամփոփում)

Զաւէն Մսրըլեան

Հեղինակը՝ Պէյրութի Ամերիկեան Համալսարանէն Մագիստրոս Արուեստից վկայականը ստանալէն ետք, գիրքերու, պարբերականներու եւ օտար մամուլին մէջ Հայոց Ցեղասպանութեան եւ հայկական հարցերու մասին ակամայ թէ դիտում-նաւոր թերի թէ սխալ տեղեկութիւններու հակազդող նամակներու շարք մը յղած է անոնց: Ան նաեւ նախաձեռնած է նամակներ գրելու պետական անձնաւորութեանց ու մարմիններու, որոնցմէ ոմանք պատասխանած են, ուրիշներ՝ ոչ:

Այստեղ կը հրատարակուի այդ նամակներէն եւ անոնց պատասխաններէն փունջ մը, որոնց կցուած են անհրաժեշտ բացատրութիւններ:

Հայկազեան Հայագիտական Հանդէսը նախապէս (ԺԱ, ԻԲ, եւ ԻԶ հատորներ) հրատարակած է նման հրապարակումներ նոյն հեղինակէն: Ասոնք կու գան ամբողջացնելու այդ նամականին: