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**DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**  
**ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

**Replies**

**On the Commemoration of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide  
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1049th Meeting of the  
OSCE Permanent Council**

April 30, 2015

*First Reply*

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Delegations of United States, Russia, France, Greece, Cyprus and Germany for their statements and paying tribute to the memory of the innocent victims of the Armenian Genocide.

In reply to the statement of the distinguished Ambassador of Turkey we would like to convey some remarks:

We acknowledge that not only Armenians suffered hundred years ago in the Ottoman Empire. We can never agree to equalize premediated, massive and grave mass atrocities that completely annihilated indigenous population of Anatolia and Eastern Part of Ottoman Empire with lawful military casualties inflicted by war in which Ottoman Empire entered voluntarily.

We cannot agree with the claim of Turkish delegation that it is up to historians to define or condemn the crime perpetrated against Armenians. The Armenian Genocide has been reference case for the 1948 Genocide Convention and the name of Lemkin today was pronounced also by the US delegation today who presented the statement of the President Obama.

The whole body of genocide studies is established on the case of the Armenian Genocide as a first case of modern or industrial mass. It is a public knowledge. We just circulated references of leading specialists in the field of genocide studies on the Armenian Genocide. Hence there is no need for such discussions.

Genocide denial and justification lead to impunity and repetition of crimes again humanity. Hundred years after the Armenian Genocide Christians, including Armenians and Assyrians continue to face massacres in Middle East and their cultural heritage is being destroyed in an attempt to erase their civilization from the region.

It is not coincidence that the Independence Day of Armenia last year was marked by the destruction of the Saint Martyrs Armenian Church, the sanctuary for the remains of many victims of the Armenian Genocide in Syrian town of Deir el-Zor by terrorists in a sad, yet symbolic link between past and present crimes against humanity. And just next day of commemoration alt Armenian cathedral of Aleppo was destroyed.

We understand the desire of Azerbaijan to use the opportunity to yet again demonstrate its kinship solidarity even in deplorable deeds. We also understand the frustration of Azerbaijani authorities, who were unable to carry out the same crime against humanity against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. I would like to stress that my country will never allow the Nagorno-Karabakh people to be a subject of such crime. Armenia will continue to guarantee physical security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

World War I is one of the darkest pages of humankind, which claimed millions of innocent lives, both military and civilian. Under its cover and pretext first crimes against humanity were committed.

An artilleryman of Armenian descent, Captain Sargis Torosyan also joined the troops of the Ottoman Empire in the Battle of Gallipoli. He was an officer, dedicated to the defense and security of the Empire, like tens of thousands Armenians, serving in the Ottoman Army. Sargis Torosyan was decorated with Ottoman military awards for his loyalty and heroism. Nevertheless, in that same year, marking the culmination of mass killing and forced deportation, preliminary planned and perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire, the wave of massacres did not bypass even Sargis Torosyan. His parents, brutally killed, and sister, perished in the Syrian Desert, were among 1.5 million Armenian victims of Genocide.

We firmly believe that peace and friendship first and foremost shall be based on the courage to confront the past, as well as on recognition of full-fledged universal memory.

Having said this, we regret that the Turkish side even distorted the history one more time by shifting the day of Gallipoli commemoration to April 24. This sad development showed to what degree Turkish authorities are ready to face own past.

Thank You.

### *Second Reply*

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to summarize our points. What message we are trying to deliver here is that duty of memory and right to the truth are indispensable for paving the path of reconciliation; that acceptance of the historic truth can heal the deep running discord between the Armenian and Turkish societies; that recognition of the past can in no way be viewed as humiliation or attack on the Turkish people.

In my statement I mentioned many good things about Turks and the Turkish society. What is wrong with that? Statements of the Turkish leaders came under the tremendous pressure of the international community for the first time in 100 years. What really the leadership of Turkey thinks was expressed by the President Erdogan just two weeks ago as a reaction to the international remembrance events, when he stated that the Turkish Government could deport Armenians living today in Turkey, but it is not doing that. It means that the threat of deportation of Armenians is still in the minds of the Turkish leaders.

We invited President Erdogan to visit Armenia on 24<sup>th</sup> of April to offer apology and pay tribute to the memory of victims of Genocide. What happened next, we all know. The real aim behind the commemoration of the Battle of Gallipoli was hijacking the international attention from the Armenian Genocide Commemoration from the Genocide commemoration on 24<sup>th</sup> of April, the day when 250 representatives of Armenian community of Istanbul, members of the Ottoman Parliament, writers, composers became the first victims of the deportation and massacre.

Today Turkey continues its anti-Armenian policy by refusing to establish diplomatic relations and imposing land blockade.

Thank You.