



ԵԱՀԿ ՌԻՄ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄՇԱԿԱՆ ՆԵՐԿԱՅԱՑՈՒՑՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Statement

In response to the Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance on the occasion of the commemoration of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day as delivered by Ambassador Armen Papikyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia at the 1300th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council January 28, 2021

Madame Chairperson,

My delegation warmly welcomes Ambassador Michaela Küchler, Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance at the Permanent Council and thanks her for her remarks.

Today, we once again pay tribute to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Though universally recognized, condemned and prosecuted, the Holocaust, nevertheless, did not bring humanity to a point of no return in the sense that genocides are no longer possible. In fact, the Holocaust itself was a re-creation of another atrocity crime, the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Turkey, which, unlike the Holocaust, is being consistently and creatively denied by modern-day Turkey. The Holocaust was made possible also because the Armenian Genocide remained denied and unpunished. Notably, while referring to the Armenian Genocide in one of his motivating speeches, Hitler himself spoke of the Armenian Genocide as a long-forgotten crime. Unfortunately, he was right at the time.

One may argue that today the international community has advanced towards the prevention and prosecution of the crime of genocide and has developed certain mechanisms to this end. Indeed, the legal vacuum that existed during the Armenian Genocide is hopefully in the past. When Raphael Lemkin coined the term “genocide” back in 1943, which later developed into the well-known Convention, he had also the Armenian Genocide in his mind. But today, the dark minds of denial interpret the application of the Convention with some retrospective limitations which, in fact, is a sophisticated way of denial.

Madame Chairperson,

Unfortunately, it has been proven again and again that history repeats itself, but also it can develop, take different forms and manifestations. One of the relatively new phenomena of our time, international terrorism, is being instrumentalized for various purposes such as committing crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and other crimes that has genocidal intent. We have seen this in the Middle East and in Nagorno-Karabakh. However, foreign terrorist fighters are the tool, the executors, whereas the masterminds, those who pull the strings and benefit from their services and thus finance and support terrorists are the real perpetrators. Almost one hundred and six years after the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian people of Artsakh are facing the same threats.

The statements of the Turkish leadership for the last decade or so, revived the process of dehumanization of the Armenian people that took place right before the Armenian Genocide. Before the violent war against Artsakh was unleashed last September, the Turkish President and other senior officials, spoke about Turkey's so called "historical mission" in the region, which, for obvious reasons for Armenia and the Armenian people, were reminiscent of the Genocide carried out by the Ottoman Turkey. Moreover, the Turkish leader went further to justify the Armenian Genocide, calling its victims "bandits" and the survivors of the genocide "leftovers of the sword".

On 27 September 2020, in flagrant violation of international law and principles of the Helsinki Final Act, Azerbaijan with its allies Turkey and foreign terrorist fighters and jihadists unleashed an all-out war against Artsakh and its people in pursuit of their policy of ethnic cleansing and annihilation of the Armenian people. The atrocities committed by Azerbaijan and its allies and supporters pursued the policy of wiping out the Armenian population of Artsakh and erasing all traces of their existence in their ancestral homeland.

Moreover, during the military parade organized by Azerbaijan to glorify the aggression of the triple alliance of Azerbaijan, Turkey and foreign terrorist fighters and jihadists against Artsakh, the Turkish President praised the words and deeds and recalled the spirit of Enver Pasha, the War Minister of the Ottoman Empire and one of the masterminds of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Moreover, that person was the one who led the invasion into the South-Caucasus by the so-called Turkish Islamic Army of the Caucasus and was responsible for the massacre and atrocities committed against Armenians in Baku and Artsakh in 1918.

Madame Chair,

When we think of genocide, atrocities and crimes against humanity, we usually have in our mind something distant: either from the past times or taking place in other parts of the world, or crimes perpetrated against someone else. It was the prevalence of this same thinking that made the Holocaust possible. Silence, indifference, policy of appeasement and spurious neutrality - this is what leads the world to witness again and again the recurrences of that heinous crime. Let me conclude with a quote from Dante's *Inferno*: "The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in times of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality".

As a nation that survived genocide, Armenia, like no other, understands the pain and suffering of the victims of the Holocaust, as well as the importance of preserving the memory of all victims of this crime. That is why Armenia today is at the forefront of international efforts to prevent genocides, as well as preserve the memory of the victims of genocide worldwide.

The denial or, even worse, attempts at justification of the crime of genocide and glorification of perpetrators continue even today, and with more and more state institutional support and financial resources allocated to that end, the methods, strategies and tactics utilized are more perilous and aggressive. Indeed, the denial or attempts at justification of the crime of genocide and the Holocaust, is not only the continuation of the same crime but the final stage of this gravest crime against humanity.

In closing, I would like to once again thank you, Ambassador K uchler, for your address and wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Thank you.