

## Respond to Turkey's Actions in Syria - Cosponsor Resolution Recognizing the Armenian Genocide

Dear Colleague:

This week, the House will act on legislation to condemn the actions of Turkey in invading Northern Syria, an act that in just a few short days has displaced hundreds of thousands of Kurdish civilians and risks an escalating tragedy. We join in our determination to use all measures at our disposal to restrain Turkey from continuing their dangerous actions, including the imposition of sanctions.

There is another action Congress can take immediately that would send a strong message - **we can pass H.Res. 296 which would recognize and memorialize the Armenian Genocide**. H.Res. 296 is a bipartisan resolution with 112 cosponsors that affirms the United States record on the Armenian Genocide and the historical fact of the Ottoman Empire's genocidal campaign against the Armenian people, as well as the Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriacs, and other religious minorities, from 1915 to 1923.

Millions of men, women and children were killed, shot, beaten, starved, and raped as they were marched through deserts and over mountains. When the killing finally ended, 1.5 million Armenians had been killed and millions more had been displaced from the land of their birth.

There is no serious debate among historians that the Ottoman Empire committed atrocities against the Armenians, or that it meets the definition of a "genocide." Indeed, the facts of the genocide were recorded contemporaneously by American diplomats, including the Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau, who transmitted a flood of cables and reports describing the wholesale slaughter of the Armenians.

As we confront atrocities that are being committed in the present day, it weakens our standing and our moral clarity that the Congress has for too long been silent in declaring the events of 1915 as a genocide. As Turkish bombs fall on Kurdish cities, extremist groups backed by Turkey commit war crimes, and hundreds of thousands of civilians flee for their lives, it is surely not lost on Turkish leaders that for decades their campaign of lobbying and bullying has silenced the Congress from the simple act of speaking the truth about the events of 1915. Their actions in the past week suggest they believe they continue to wield a veto in the Congress, despite a variety of actions that have undermined our cooperation, including the purchase of Russian S-400 anti-aircraft batteries.

We ask that all Members join us to make clear that the United States will never be complicit in genocide denial, and that we will call out the atrocities of today and those of a century ago. As we confront continuing mass atrocities around the world, and as we work feverishly to restore calm and end the fighting in Northern Syria, Congress's silence about the Armenian Genocide of a century ago undermines our moral standing. **It must end.**

To join us as a cosponsor of the Armenian Genocide resolution, please contact Caroline Nicholas ([Caroline.Nicholas@mail.house.gov](mailto:Caroline.Nicholas@mail.house.gov)) in Rep. Schiff's office or Nathan Stamps ([Nathan.Stamps@mail.house.gov](mailto:Nathan.Stamps@mail.house.gov)) in Rep. Bilirakis's office.

Sincerely,

Adam B. Schiff

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