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Armenian National Committee of America  
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

September 30, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

I am writing to share with you the growing alarm and outrage among Armenian Americans over the heavy pressure that you, officials of the Department of State, and others in the Obama-Biden Administration are applying to Armenia to accept the Turkey-Armenia Protocols.

These one-sided agreements, which are being imposed upon a landlocked Republic of Armenia that remains blockaded by Turkey and that is still working to overcome the devastating demographic, economic and geopolitical legacy of the Armenian Genocide, would, if adopted, call into question the reality of the Armenian Genocide, threaten Armenia's security, jeopardize the freedom of Nagorno Karabagh, and compromise the inalienable rights of all Armenians.

As you can imagine, in light of your powerful track record as a U.S. Senator and Presidential candidate in support of recognition of the Armenian Genocide, we are particularly troubled by the role that you have played in pressuring Armenia to accept these Protocols. Rather than keeping faith with your principled stands on this human rights issue, you have, since taking office, aggressively pressured Armenia into a process that effectively provides President Obama with a rationale –morally flawed, but nonetheless politically effective – for failing to honor his clearly stated pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

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The starkest evidence of the intense pressure applied on Armenia is that the initial Turkey-Armenia “Roadmap” was announced late on the evening of April 22nd, only hours before the President’s first April 24th remarks, following a marathon 14-hour session in Yerevan between the Foreign Minister of Armenia, Edward Nalbandyan, and Matt Bryza, at the time a Deputy Assistant Secretary. This meeting, and all the intense pressure on Armenia in the days leading up to the President’s reversal on his Armenian Genocide pledge, was plainly intended to serve Turkey’s interest in blocking U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide. This coercion has continued through to this day, with headlines in the New York Times and elsewhere reporting your personal “prodding” and “pushing” of the Armenian government to accept the Protocols in the face of broad-based opposition both in Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora.

As you may know, over 10,000 Armenian Americans gathered in Los Angeles over the weekend to protest the one-sided Protocols and to demand full U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide. These American citizens and over one and a half million Armenian Americans, rightful stakeholders in our nation’s policies on Armenian issues, have been excluded from any meaningful role in the shaping of our nation’s active diplomacy on the Protocols. When we have formally protested this exclusion to senior officials of the State Department, we have been advised to address our concerns to the Armenian government. This dismissal represents a patent insult to every American of Armenian heritage. We deserve transparency and honesty from our government, a policy-making process that fairly embraces all American stakeholders, and the opportunity to offer our input in a respectful and meaningful manner.

In light of these concerns, I call upon you to lift the pressure being applied to Armenia to accept the Protocols and ask you, once again, to agree to accept our outstanding request to meet to discuss these and other urgent matters of concern to the Armenian American community.

Sincerely,



Kenneth V. Hachikian  
Chairman