



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUN 28 2006

Dear Senator Biden:

Thank you for your letter of June 23 concerning Ambassador John Evans.

Ambassador Evans recently tendered his resignation as Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia, but currently remains in charge of our Embassy in Yerevan. We continue to work closely with him and his capable team. Please be assured that allegations that the U.S. is removing Ambassador Evans under pressure from the Government of Turkey are simply untrue. The Government of Turkey has not approached the Administration on this issue, and the United States and Turkey engaged in no diplomatic exchanges related to this matter.

All U.S. Ambassadors, both career and non-career, serve at the pleasure of the President and as advocates of the President's policies. President Bush has expressed his policy regarding the tragic events of 1915 each year of his Presidency with his personal statement on Armenian Remembrance Day, April 24. In those statements, the President has called on all concerned parties to engage in thoughtful introspection on the forced exile and mass killing of as many as 1.5 million Armenians by Ottoman troops. We share the profound sorrow of Armenian communities around the world regarding these horrific events. We believe this tragedy is of such enormous human significance that its characterization should be determined through heartfelt dialogue, not through diplomatic or political proclamations.

We are encouraging all concerned parties to advance such dialogue. One such effort produced the analysis of the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). This study of the legal character of the horrors of 1915 marked a significant step toward reconciliation and restoration of the spirit of tolerance and cultural richness that has connected the people of the Caucasus and Anatolia for centuries.

The Honorable

Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee

United States Senate

Please let us know if we can be of assistance on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey T. Bergner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeffrey" and last name "Bergner" clearly distinguishable.

Jeffrey T. Bergner
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs