

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 27, 2012

The Honorable Hilary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

We are writing to share with you our deeply held concerns regarding your recent public statement on January 26, 2012, mischaracterizing the Armenian Genocide as a "historical debate," despite the fact that this thoroughly documented crime is a matter of settled history that President Obama, Vice-President Biden, and you have previously condemned and commemorated on numerous occasions, and rightly so.

The historically inaccurate description of the Armenian Genocide as an open question, in addition to the offense it represents to Armenian Americans and other victims of genocide, provides American encouragement to the Republic of Turkey in its shameful campaign of denial. More broadly, the Administration's failure to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide falls far short of our common expectation as Americans that our government will always speak honestly on issues of human rights and genocide prevention.

As you and President Obama noted in an appeal by Senators to then President Bush in 2006, the Armenian Genocide was a "systematic and deliberate campaign of genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire in 1915. . . The victims of the Genocide deserve our remembrance and their rightful place in history. . . It is in the best interests of our nation and the entire global community to remember the past and learn from these crimes against humanity to ensure that they are never repeated."

America should never be complicit in genocide denial, which, as we know from painful historical experience, represents the last stage of this horrific crime. We share the principled view you expressed in 2008, when you said that "[T]he horrible events perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against Armenians constitute a clear case of genocide," and that "[o]ur common morality and our nation's credibility as a voice for human rights challenge us to ensure that the Armenian Genocide be recognized and remembered by the Congress and the President of the United States."

We urge you to disavow the ill-considered statement you made during the Town Hall, and to reaffirm your commitment to recognition of the Armenian Genocide. We also

hope that the Obama Administration will seize the opportunity to make a statement of clear, unequivocal recognition this April 24th – putting America firmly behind a policy of recognizing genocide wherever and whenever it occurs.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Paul Fink

Robert G. Sold

Frank Pallone Jr.

Ed Royce

Howard L. Berman

Patrick Meehan

Michael A. Grimm

Jim Cooper

Gene M. Eshen

MAG Eshen

Jodi Spini

Pete Stang

Al H. Li

Frank R. Wolf

Jim Langwin

Bruce Braly

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Peter Hallen

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Henry L. Ackerman Edward J. Markey

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Scott Smith Robert E. Anderson

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