



PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

April 24, 2014

Statement by the Prime Minister to the Armenian-Canadian Community

On this day we remember the terrible loss of life during the demise of the Ottoman Empire in 1915, and in particular the horrific suffering endured by the Armenian people. Both houses of Parliament have adopted resolutions referring to these events as "the first genocide of the twentieth century." This is a day we acknowledge solemnly, not to cast blame back into the distant past, but to guide us towards a better future. It reminds us all why we must remain committed to ensuring that today's world is one where respect for human rights and democratic freedom prevails.

Today, Canadians of Armenian and Turkish origin live together, sharing our values of tolerance and openness. We support efforts by Armenia and Turkey to seek a path towards reconciliation including an open border, the establishment of diplomatic relations and the implementation of a dialogue on the events of 1915. We welcome the talks between the Foreign Ministers of both countries in December 2013, and support the reconciliation process set out in the Zurich Protocols signed in October 2009.

On this day of remembrance, we praise those on both sides who seek to achieve a common understanding with honesty and in a spirit of goodwill.

I join with you today in remembering the past and in sharing hope for a future based on peace and mutual respect.

Sincerely,

*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada*