



**Resolution on Armenian Genocide**  
Adopted October 2015

Historians and scholars tell us that the Armenian people were the victims of the first genocide of the twentieth century at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, the predecessors of modern-day Turkey. Approximately 1.5 million Armenians were killed or expelled from their homes and deported. The year 2015 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide. The government of Turkey has, to this day, refused to acknowledge such genocide took place.

The Armenian Genocide is a distant memory in the minds of the children of survivors. However, there is abundant documentation of the atrocities, particularly by former U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau. Nevertheless, Hitler stated in 1939, “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?”

The Jewish communities, as the targets of one of the worst genocides of the twentieth century, have a bond with the Armenian people here in the United States and abroad. We have a moral obligation to work toward recognition of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenian people.

The word genocide was coined just prior to the end of World War II, and the word Holocaust did not come into common usage to describe what happened to the Jews until after WWII. However, the term “genocide” may be attributed to atrocities that meet the definition of genocide after they have taken place.

The U.S. government has yet to name what happened to the Armenian people for a variety of reasons. The most obvious is the fear that doing so will hurt our relationship with Turkey. Turkey spans the east and west. The United States needs Turkey’s permission to fly over its territory and for support services in the United States’ activities in Iraq, its attempts to keep Iran in check, and to fight ISIS.

After 100 years, it is time for the U.S. to face facts and acknowledge that what happened in 1915 and in subsequent years was genocide.

Since at least 1951 there have been numerous references by U.S. government officials, Congress, and previous presidents to what happened to the Armenians as genocide. These have often been during events held in commemoration of the anniversary of the start of the genocide. But efforts to pass a House resolution officially recognizing it have failed, often as a result of lobbying on behalf of Turkey.

President Barack Obama, as a senator, pledged to support congressional resolutions to recognize the Armenian Genocide. As a presidential candidate, he once again promised to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Yet once he became president, political realities prevented such a move.

At this time, some 23 foreign countries, a number of world organizations, and 44 U.S. states have recognized the genocide that took place against the Armenian people. The Union for Reform Judaism, Anti-Defamation League, and American Jewish Committee have previously taken positions recognizing the genocide, as well as some U.S. church groups.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs believes:

- The Jewish people have asked the world to bear witness to the Holocaust. As we say Never Again, we must likewise bear witness to other people's genocide and say Never Again.
- We suffer greatly from efforts to minimize our own suffering and experience of genocide and we have a moral responsibility, as Jews, to name it in others' experience.
- We must not let the politics of the moment, or the U.S. government's relationship with Turkey, sway our moral obligation to recognize the suffering of the Armenian people.
- We call upon our the Congress and the President to officially recognize what started in 1915 at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, and resulted in the killing and deportation of approximately 1.5 million Armenians, as the Armenian Genocide.

The community relations field should:

- Consult and work with the national Armenian organizations to further the goal of U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide.
- Consult and work with the major Jewish organizations to raise awareness of the issue and gain their support in working to gain U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide.
- Consult and work with our interfaith coalition partners to further the aim of U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide.
- Urge our congressional representatives to support resolutions in Congress that call for the United States to recognize the Armenian Genocide.
- Call upon the President to recognize the Armenian Genocide.