



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Plenary sitting

13.4.2015

B8-0347/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the commemoration of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide
(2015/2590(RSP))

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Arne Lietz, Gilles Pargneaux, Sylvie Guillaume, Nikos Androulakis,
Demetris Papadakis, Nicola Caputo, Tonino Picula, Marlene Mizzi,
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on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the commemoration of the centennial of the
Armenian Genocide
(2015/2590(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 28 September 2005 on the opening of negotiations with Turkey¹,
 - having regard to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,
 - having regard to its resolution of 18 June 1987 on a political solution to the Armenian question²,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas one of the main motivations for the European unification movement and one of the founding values of the European Union is the will to prevent the recurrence of wars and crimes against humanity in Europe;
- B. whereas in 1915, shortly after the Ottoman Empire entered World War I, the regime of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), in a centrally planned operation, ordered and executed mass deportations and destruction of more than one million of the Ottoman Armenians and the erasure of their culture; whereas the European Parliament recognised in its resolution of 18 June 1987 that these events constitute genocide within the meaning of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;
- C. whereas 2015 marks the centennial of the Armenian Genocide perpetrated in the Ottoman Empire;
- D. whereas, at the same time, hundreds of thousands of Ottoman Muslims died during World War I as victims of famine and disease, as well as of targeted killings; whereas this should not detract from the fact that the mass destruction of the Ottoman Armenians was the greatest single atrocity of World War I;
- E. whereas the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk himself, recognised the mass atrocities against the Ottoman Armenians, calling them a ‘shameful act’; whereas the Turkish Republic failed to build on this admission and confront the dark issues of its national history, espousing instead different forms of official denial, and proceeded with the destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage; whereas the denial of the genocide constitutes its final stage;

¹ OJ C 227 E, 21.9.2006, p. 163.

² OJ C 190, 20.7.1987, p. 119.

- F. whereas the changes in Turkish society since the beginning of the 21st century and reforms paving the way for the opening of the EU accession negotiations created conditions for a more open and free debate on historical issues in Turkey, including the Armenian issue; whereas numerous civil society initiatives and cultural exchanges between Turkey and Armenia developed as a result; whereas a number of Turkish NGOs and intellectuals are preparing to publicly commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Istanbul;
- G. whereas Turkey and Armenia have embarked on a process of diplomatic normalisation, signing protocols in 2009 in Geneva on establishing and developing relations, including opening the border; whereas, however, this process has since stalled;
- H. whereas Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has offered his condolences to the families of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, calling the mass killings ‘inhumane’; whereas the Prime Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu, has stated that Turkey ‘shares the suffering of Armenians’, called for the breaking of taboos in addressing the ‘great trauma that froze time in 1915’ and has committed to giving ‘due recognition to the Armenian cultural heritage in Turkey’;
- I. whereas the European Parliament stressed in its resolution of 2 April 2009 the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, since there can be no reconciliation without truth, remembrance and justice;
1. Participates in the commemoration of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide in a spirit of solidarity and justice, and pays tributes to the memory of the innocent victims of this genocide; calls on the Commission and the Council to join in the commemoration of the centennial; expresses its gratitude to all those who contributed to the investigation, recognition and memory of the Armenian Genocide;
 2. Stresses that the timely prevention and effective punishment of genocides and crimes against humanity should be among the main priorities of the international community and the European Union;
 3. Welcomes the statements by President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Davutoğlu offering condolences and recognising atrocities against the Ottoman Armenians as a step in the right direction; encourages Turkey to use the commemoration of the centenary of the Armenian Genocide as an important opportunity to continue its efforts to come to terms with its past, to recognise the Armenian Genocide and thus to pave the way for a genuine reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples;
 4. Is convinced that the open and free debate in Turkish society on historical issues, including the Armenian Genocide, is inextricably linked to the democratisation process, as a healthy, mature democracy cannot be built on the basis of denial of historical facts and responsibilities; in this regard, recognises the vital role the start of the EU accession process played in promoting the democratisation of Turkey; calls therefore for the negotiation process with the EU to be reinvigorated as an important catalyst for a more open and free debate on historical issues, including the destruction of the Ottoman Armenians;

5. Calls on both Turkey and Armenia to renew efforts to normalise their relations by ratifying, without preconditions, the protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations and opening the border; stresses the social, human, cultural and economic benefits that the normalisation of relations between Turkey and Armenia would bring to the Turkish and Armenian peoples, including by doing away with their respective biases and prejudices towards each other;
6. Strongly supports the work of Turkish and Armenian academics, NGOs and cultural figures in promoting dialogue and reconciliation between Turks and Armenians; calls on the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to consistently and proactively support these activities;
7. Calls on the Turkish authorities, politicians and media at all levels to refrain from inflammatory statements against minorities, including Armenians, and to do their utmost to combat hate speech and prejudice against minorities by, inter alia, removing all derogatory and discriminatory language from school books and enacting comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including a prohibition of discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religious identity;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the President and Parliament of Armenia and the President and Parliament of Turkey.