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LETTER OF PRIME MINISTER RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN TO ROBERT KOCHARIAN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA,

13 April 2005

"Dear Mr. President,"

"The Turkish and Armenian peoples have not only shared a common history and geography in a sensitive part of the world but they have also lived together for many years. However it is no secret that we have differences of interpretation and evaluation over a certain period of our common history.

"These differences have left memories that have distressed our peoples in past years and today they play a role that does not make the development of friendly relations between our countries easier.

"I believe that, as leaders of our countries, our principal duty is to leave to our future generations a climate of friendship marked by peace and harmony and characterized by tolerance and mutual respect. Mr Deniz Baykal, the leader of our country's main opposition Republican People's Party, also shares these views. In this framework we invite your country [to join us] in forming a group comprised of the historians and other specialists of our two countries to investigate the developments and events related to the 1915 period by researching all the archives of not only Turkey and Armenia but also all relevant third countries and to report their findings to the international community.

"I believe that an initiative in this direction will shed light on a controversial period of history and will serve as a step towards the normalization of relations between our countries.

"I hope that this proposal aimed at passing on a friendly and more peaceful climate to future generations will be accepted.

If you are positively disposed towards our proposal to form a group of historians and specialists to conduct joint work on archives we are prepared to discuss the details of our proposal with your country.

"Sincerely,

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