

## RECENT DOCUMENTS

### NOBEL LAUREATES' CALL FOR TOLERANCE, CONTACT AND COOPERATION BETWEEN TURKS AND ARMENIANS

Dear friends,

We, the undersigned Nobel laureates, issue this appeal directly to the peoples of Turkey and Armenia. Mindful of the sacrifice paid by Hrant Dink, the ethnic Armenian editor of *Agos* in Turkey, who was assassinated on January 19, 2007, and whose death was mourned by both Turks and Armenians, we believe that the best way to pay tribute to Mr. Dink is through service to his life's work safeguarding freedom of expression and fostering reconciliation between Turks and Armenians.

To these ends, Armenians and Turks should encourage their governments to:

- *Open the Turkish-Armenian border.* An open border would greatly improve the economic conditions for communities on both sides of the border and enable human interaction, which is essential for mutual understanding. Treaties between the two countries recognize existing borders and call for unhampered travel and trade.

- *Generate confidence through civil society cooperation.* Turks and Armenians have been working since 2001 on practical projects that offer great promise in creatively and constructively dealing with shared problems. The governments should support such efforts by, for example, sponsoring academic links between Turkish and Armenian faculty, as well as student exchanges.

- *Improve official contacts.* Civil society initiatives would be enhanced by the governments' decision to accelerate their bilateral contacts, devise new frame-

works for consultation, and consolidate relations through additional treaty arrangements and full diplomatic relations.

- *Allow basic freedoms.* Turkey should end discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities and abolish Article 301 of the Penal Code, which makes it a criminal offense to denigrate Turkishness. Armenia also should reverse its own authoritarian course, allow free and fair elections, and respect human rights.

Turks and Armenians have a huge gap in perceptions over the Armenian Genocide. To address this gap, we refer to the 2003 “Legal Analysis on the Applicability of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide to Events which Occurred During the Early Twentieth Century,” which corroborated findings of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

It concluded that, “At least some of the [Ottoman] perpetrators knew that the consequences of their actions would be the destruction, in whole or in part, of the Armenians of eastern Anatolia, as such, or acted purposefully towards this goal and, therefore, possessed the requisite genocidal intent. The Events can thus be said to include all the elements of the crime of genocide as defined in the Convention.” It also concluded that, “The Genocide Convention contains no provision mandating its retroactive application.”

The analysis offers a way forward, which addresses the core concerns of both Armenians and Turks. Of course, coming to terms will be painful and difficult. Progress will not occur right away. Rather than leaving governments to their own devices, affected peoples and the leaders of civil society need to engage in activities that promote understanding and reconciliation while, at the same time, urging their governments to chart a course towards a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Peter Agre  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2003)

Sidney Altman  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1989)

Philip W. Anderson  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1977)

Kenneth J. Arrow  
Nobel Prize, Economics (1972)

Richard Axel  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2004)

Baruj Benacerraf  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1980)

Gunter Blobel  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1999)

Georges Charpak  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1992)

Steven Chu  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1997)

J.M. Coetzee  
Nobel Prize, Literature (2003)

Claude Cohen-Tannoudji  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1997)

Mairead Corrigan Maguire  
Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)

Robert F. Curl Jr.  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996)

Paul J. Crutzen  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1995)

Frederik W. de Klerk  
Nobel Prize, Peace (1993)

Johann Deisenhofer  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1998)

John B. Fenn  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002)

Val Fitch  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1980)

Jerome I. Friedman  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1990)

Donald A. Glaser  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1960)

Sheldon Glashow  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1979)

Roy J. Glauber  
Nobel Prize, Physics (2005)

Clive W.J. Granger  
Nobel Prize, Economics (2003)

Paul Greengard  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

David J. Gross  
Nobel Prize, Physics (2004)

Roger Guillemin  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1977)

Dudley R. Herschbach  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986)

Avram Hershko  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004)

Roald Hoffman  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1981)

Sir Harold W. Kroto  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996)

Finn E. Kydland  
Nobel Prize, Economics (2004)

Leon M. Lederman  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1988)

Anthony J. Leggett  
Nobel Prize, Physics (2003)

Rudolph A. Marcus  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1992)

Daniel L. McFadden  
Nobel Prize, Economics (2000)

Craig C. Mello  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2006)

Daniel Kahneman  
Nobel Prize, Economics (2002)

Eric R. Kandel  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

Robert C. Merton  
Nobel Prize, Economics (1997)

Marshall W. Nirenberg  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1968)

Sir Paul Nurse  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2001)

Douglas D. Osheroff  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1996)

Martin L. Perl  
Nobel Prize, Physics (1995)

John C. Polanyi  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986)

Stanley Prusiner  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1997)

Aaron Klug  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1982)

Edwin G. Krebs  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1992)

Nobel Prize, Peace (1996)

Richard J. Roberts  
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1993)

Wole Soyinka  
Nobel Prize, Literature (1986)

Elie Wiesel  
Nobel Prize, Peace (1986)

Betty Williams  
Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)

Kurt Wüthrich  
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002)

REPLY OF TURKISH SCHOLARS AND WRITERS TO THE  
CALL FOR TOLERANCE, CONTACT AND COOPERATION  
BETWEEN TURKS AND ARMENIANS ISSUED BY THE  
'ELIE WIESEL FOUNDATION FOR HUMANITY'

We, the undersigned Turkish scholars and writers, welcome the call of 'The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity' issued on April 9, 2007. We view this call as a doorway to opening a process of dialogue between Turks and Armenians and as a stepping stone which will work to keep that door open facilitating the culture of peace to bear fruit. We would like to state that we are willing to do our part to make positive contributions to this end.

It can not be refuted that Turks and Armenians have been living closely together under the Turkish Republic, as was the case during the time of the Ottoman Empire, as a result of which they have developed common cultural values. We believe these values may form the basis for the development of future relations.

We are cognizant of the great suffering endured by the Armenians, Turks and other peoples residing within the Ottoman Empire as a result of the tragic events of the First World War, and believe that all responsible individuals alike must actively engage themselves to preclude such suffering from being inflicted upon mankind once again. We are prepared to work constructively to this end. In this regard it should be noted that while acknowledging the loss incurred by a certain population it would be unfair to selectively neglect the irrefutably documented loss of another population residing within the same geography. We maintain that such dogmatic approaches and disregard for differing views lay at the root of the ongoing conflict of our day.

We evaluated the proposals expressed in the call issued by The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity. We are of the opinion that increasing mutual confidence by fostering relations between civil society organizations shall constitute the

most constructive way forward. We believe that the restoration of the Akhdamar Church and the participation of Turkish alongside Armenian officials to its opening was rewarding and hope that such contacts shall increase.

Air travel between Turkey and Armenia is open. The many citizens of the Republic of Armenia residing in Turkey as guest workers carries with it the potential of cultivating close friendship and ties between the citizens of both Republics. The border gate between both countries will surely be opened once those factors which led to it being closed are removed. No doubt, the clear and official affirmation on the part of Armenia to the effect that it recognizes the border between the two countries and does not demand that it be changed shall contribute to the establishment of official diplomatic relations. That part of Turkey's territories is defined as Western Armenia in the Armenian Declaration of Independence raises concerns regarding Armenia's possible future irredentist policies.

Turkey does not evaluate the tragic events of 1915 which befell the Ottoman Armenians as genocide as defined in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide. For an event to legally constitute genocide, a competent court must establish the intent to kill in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial or religious group solely because they were part of that group (*dolus specialis*). After evaluating various documents several academics, both Turkish and foreign, have arrived at the conclusion that the requisite genocidal intent was not present with respect to the Ottoman Armenians. We view that differing accounts expressed by a given committee or other groups on this matter should not be seen as anything other than the practice of the freedom of expression. We would like to declare that we are prepared to discuss this issue within the frame of joint committees together with Armenian historians and all those interested; we believe that engaging in dialogue is the only way forward to solve our outstanding problems. On this point one should not overlook how Turkey officially proposed to Armenia in April 2005, to establish a Joint History Commission comprising Turkish, Armenian and third party specialists for the purpose of conducting his-



torical research on the events prior to and following 1915. To facilitate this proposal Turkey has made it known that all its archives have been opened. We have faith that organizations such as The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity shall help to establish forums where views can be mutually exchanged and welcomed whereby the level of tolerance and cooperation called for can be attained.

### **TURKISH SCHOLARS AND WRITERS WHO SIGNED THE REPLY**

1. Prof. Dr. Tahsin AKALP
2. Prof. Dr. Seçil KARAL AKGÜN
3. Prof. Dr. Şahin AKKAYA
4. Rtd. Ambassador Gündüz AKTAN
5. Prof. Dr. Ali AKYILDIZ
6. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gülşen Seyhan ALIŞIK
7. Prof. Dr. Deniz Ülke ARİBOĞAN
8. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yavuz ASLAN
9. Assoc. Prof. Dr. İbrahim Ethem ATNUR
10. Prof. Dr. Yusuf AVCI
11. Prof. Dr. Süheyl BATUM
12. Prof. Dr. Taner BERKSOY
13. Prof. Dr. Süleyman BEYOĞLU
14. Prof. Dr. Gülay Öğün BEZER
15. Prof. Dr. Ali ATIF BİR
16. Prof. Dr. Naz ÇAVUŞOĞLU
17. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sadi ÇAYCI -
18. Prof. Dr. Mehmet ÇELİK
19. Prof. Dr. Kemal ÇİÇEK
20. Ercan ÇİTLİOĞLU
21. Prof. Dr. Sebahat DENİZ
22. Rtd. Ambassador Filiz DİNÇMEN

23. Prof. Dr. Uluğ ELDEGEZ
24. Prof. Dr. Vahdettin ENGİN
25. Prof. Dr. İsmail ERÜNSAL
26. Prof. Dr. Yavuz ERCAN
27. Prof. Dr. Ahmet ETÜCE
28. Prof. Dr. Suat GEZGİN
29. Prof. Dr. Müfit GİRESUNLU
30. Prof. Dr. Ufuk GÜLSOY
31. Prof. Dr. Nurbay GÜLTEKİN
32. Prof. Dr. S. Selçuk GÜNAY
33. Prof. Haluk GÜRGEN
34. Prof. Dr. Erhan GÜZEL
35. Prof. Dr. Yusuf HALLAÇOĞLU
36. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oğuz İÇİMSOY
37. Prof. Dr. Mücteba İLGÜREL
38. Dr. Erdal İLTER
39. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet İNBAŞI
40. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamer KASIM
41. Prof. Dr. Fahri KAYADİBİ
42. Prof. Dr. Mustafa KEÇER
43. Prof. Dr. Selami KILIÇ
44. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Murat KOÇ
45. Prof. Dr. Enver KONUKÇU
46. Prof. Dr. Kemalettin KÖROĞLU
47. Prof. Dr. Nuri KÖSTÜKLÜ
48. Prof. Zekeriya KURŞUN
49. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sedat LAÇİNER
50. Rtd. Ambassador Faruk LOĞOĞLU
51. Rtd. Ambassador Ömer Engin LÜTEM
52. Prof. Dr. Nurşen MAZICI
53. Prof. Dr. Hasan MERİÇ

54. Prof. Dr. Özcan MERT
55. Rtd. Ambassador Tansu OKANDAN
56. Prof. Dr. Besim ÖZCAN
57. Prof. Dr. Hikmet ÖZDEMİR
58. Prof. Dr. Necdet ÖZTÜRK
59. Prof. Dr. Nihat ÖZTOPRAK
60. Prof. Dr. Bayram ÖZTÜRK
61. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bilgehan PAMUK
62. Prof. Dr. Mesut PARLAK
63. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Said POLAT
64. Prof. Dr. Ömer Asım SAÇLI
65. Prof. Dr. Hüseyin SALMAN
66. Prof. Dr. Günay SARIYAR
67. Assoc. Prof. Dr.Sema SOYGENİŞ
68. Assoc. Prof. Dr.Orhan SÖYLEMEZ
69. Rtd. Ambassador Ömer ŞAHİNKAYA
70. Prof. Dr. Hale ŞIVGIN
71. Rtd. Ambassador Bilal N. ŞİMŞİR
72. Prof. Dr. Ahmet ŞİMŞİRGİL
73. Rtd. Ambassador Pulat TACAR
74. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Şükrü TEKBAŞ
75. E. Büyükelçi Sanlı TOPÇUOĞLU
76. Prof. Dr. Korkut TUNA
77. Prof. Dr. Muammer UĞUR
78. Prof. Dr. Sema UĞURCAN
79. Prof. Dr. Şafak URAL
80. Rtd. Ambassador Necati UTKAN
81. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Çetin VARLIK
82. Prof. Dr. Halil YANARDAĞ
83. Prof. Dr. Şenay YALÇIN
84. Prof. Dr. Emine YAZICIOĞLU
85. Prof. Dr. İbrahim YUSUFOĞLU
86. Rtd. Ambassador Erhan YİĞİTBAŞIOĞLU

