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## **TURKISH PRESIDENT HONORS MEMORY OF OTTOMAN ARMENIANS**

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History of Truth

Recep Tayyip Erdogan marks annual commemoration of events of 1915 with message to Armenian community

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday commemorated the lives of Armenians lost in 1915.

In a statement that was read out by the head of the Armenian church in Turkey at an Istanbul ceremony to remember those who died in eastern Anatolia in the early years of World War I, Erdogan paid tribute to those gathering to mark the tragic conditions of the war.

I welcome this commemoration which is taking place once again in Turkey, the most meaningful place to share the grief endured by the Ottoman Armenians, as well as to honor their memories, he said.

In the lands of Anatolia, where humanitarian duties are never neglected and happiness and grief are sincerely shared, the sense of conscience and justice are held above all.

The annual commemoration marks the deaths of Armenians in 1915, when some sided with the invading Russians and revolted. A subsequent relocation of Armenians resulted in numerous casualties.

Turkey rejects labeling the deaths as genocide and has called for the establishment of a joint commission of historians to study the episode.

Erdogan said the near 1,000-year-old culture of cohabitation between Turks and Armenians would always be remembered.

We will never give up working for amity and peace against those who try to politicize history through a bitter rhetoric of hate and enmity and strive to alienate the two neighboring nations, who are bound with their common history and their similar traditions, he added in the statement, read by Patriarch Aram Atesyan.

With this in mind, I once again commemorate the Ottoman Armenians who passed away and extend my condolences to their children and grandchildren.

The president went on to pay tribute to all Ottoman citizens regardless of their ethnic or religious origins who lost their lives. I would like to reiterate that we share this common pain, he said.

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Kaynak/Source: