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## **FM ÇAVUŞOĞLU DISCUSSES ARMENIA BILL IN US HOUSE, SYRIA WITH COUNTERPART POMPEO**

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01.11.2019

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Daily Sabah (31 October 2019)

Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu discussed the recent Armenia bill in U.S. House of Representatives and developments in Syria with his U.S. counterpart Mike Pompeo, an official statement said late Thursday.

Ankara has condemned the U.S. resolution titled "Affirming the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide" that was passed by the House of Representatives on Tuesday, arguing that this decision was taken as a reprisal against Turkey's Operation Peace Spring and labeling the move as "worthless."

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan criticized the U.S. House of Representatives for adopting a controversial resolution on 1915 events, as he slammed European countries for providing protection for PKK-linked groups to carry out their terrorist activities.

On Aug. 7, Turkish and U.S. military officials agreed to set up a safe zone and develop a peace corridor running from the Euphrates River to the Iraqi border to facilitate the return of displaced Syrians currently living in Turkey to their home country and provide security for Turkish border settlements and military outposts. They also agreed to establish a joint operations center. The agreement envisages the setting up of measures necessary to address Turkey's security concerns.

Although the first phase of establishing a safe zone in northern Syria has been launched together with the U.S. after a long period of discussions, Turkey is still approaching the issue cautiously due to its previous failed negotiations with the NATO ally.

The U.S., which has designated the PKK a terrorist organization, still allies itself with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in Syria, which mainly consist of PKK offshoot People's Protection Forces (YPG) militants. Turkey wants YPG commanders removed from the SDF's top ranks and Sunni Arabs, together with non-YPG Kurds, included in the lower ranks.

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