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TURKISH CONGRESS ON ARMENIAN RESEARCH PROGRAM 20 APRIL 2002

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SESSION VIII

ROOM A

CHAIR: AMBASSADOR (R) ÖMER ENGİN LÜTEM

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE CONGRESS

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TURKISH CONGRESS ON ARMENIAN RESEARCH DECLARATION

20-21 April 2002, Ankara

Turkish Congress on Armenian Research that aims at getting all Turkish scholars engaged in the field of Armenian research together, increasing scientific interest in Armenian research, providing a ground of dialogue between Turkish and Armenian peoples based on tolerance and common sense, and in the face of the recent developments revealing the common attitude of the Turkish scholars to the Turkish, Armenian and world public opinions, has been held on April 20-21, 2002 in Ankara. Turkish Congress on Armenian Research, realized thanks to the initiatives of Institute for Armenian Research and participation of a great number of scholars and authors, presented an opportunity for analysis of Turkish-Armenian relations from current and historical perspectives and scientific study of "genocide" claims.

Submitted presentations and other delivered speeches made it clear that the Armenian claims are mostly based on the distorted documents, that the documents expressing and serious researches are disregarded or are misinterpreted to support prejudices, that unscientific methods are resorted to generalize the individual opinions belonging to just one of the sides.

Despite all the negative responses received so far, Turkish scholars and intellectuals believe that to help to resolve a problem stemming from the distortion of a historical event, Turkish and Armenian scholars should come together to discuss the subject considering all its aspects. The participants of the congress called on their Armenian colleagues for such a dialogue.

In the congress where legal aspects of the subject have been

taken up as well, it was made clear that the scientific researches conducted so far show that "genocide" cannot be talked about, and every clash in history however great it may be, cannot be called "genocide". Moreover, in the Congress it was determined that the 1915 relocation needs to be evaluated within the context of the historical conditions of the age, by no means fits the legal definition of the 1948 United Nations' Convention, that whether such an act was committed or not can only be determined by competent courts, and that according to the Treaty, the mentioned act can be committed not by institutions and states but rather by individuals. In addition to this, the Congress vehemently condemns the murder of a great number of civilian Turks by armed Armenian groups, and calls not to overlook the Turkish victims.

In spite of the scientific data to the contrary, the use of "genocide" claims against Turkey as a tool of propaganda by some Armenian groups, some circles supporting them and by the government of Armenia in recent years, can only be explained by political reasons. Moreover, that the mentioned circles get such claims recognized by foreign institutions and parliaments, which are not qualified to judge historical events is also based upon political reasons. The analyses laid bare that, among the reasons behind Armenia's policy of creating artificial tension with Turkey, is the endeavor to create a justification for continued occupation of Azerbaijani territories despite UN resolutions, and that such a stand not only endangers long-term interests of Armenia but also peace and stability in the Caucasus. In addition to all these, that Armenia insistently disrespects the borders of the neighboring states, and explicitly doesn't recognize the Turkish-Armenian border that is enshrined in written treaties, are the greatest obstacles in front of the lasting relationship between Turkey and this state. Armenia should immediately abandon its attitude for the sake of its own interests and regional peace.

Extremist Armenian groups' setting forth the recognition of "genocide" claims as a precondition for a dialogue, and their refusal to analyze the issue in relevant organizations that would handle it with all its aspects, allowing both sides to express their views, is far from being scientific and constructive. This attitude shows the lack of confidence of these circles to their thesis. The claims of this kind, besides running counter to all the values that are tried to mark 21st century, encourages resentment, hatred and

a racist terrorism; that such an approach is overlooked carries a great deal of drawbacks. The congress has condemned all the initiatives that utilize "genocide" claims for political ends and accept such claims unilaterally.

All the participants strongly condemned Armenian terrorism that resulted in the murder of innocent Turkish diplomats, other Turkish citizens and citizens of other countries. The Congress calls on all the states of the world to put the Armenian terrorist organizations on their terrorist lists.

The congress considered studies that needs to be conducted to put forward historical truth against the claims in question.

The extremist campaigns couldn't be responded to with the same intensity. This situation results in that people, who didn't have enough information on the issue, accept to most repeated allegations as truth. First of all, scientific studies showing that the allegations have no reliable basis should be conducted continuously. This amounts to a historical duty and responsibility for the Turkish scholars.

Archive researches that constitute the basis for scientific studies is of vital importance. The majority of the documents about Armenians and Armenian question are in the Turkish archives. For this reason, valuable activities of the Turkish General Directorate of Archives should be strongly supported to offer the required documents easily to the scholars making the historical truths come to the fore. For the first-hand analysis of the Russian and Armenian archives, the training of scholars competent in these languages should be accelerated. Moreover, the participants of the Congress called for the immediate opening of other states' archives, first of all the Armenian ones, related to the issue.

To be sure, to continue studies on the historical aspects of the subject needs to be carried out. Yet mere historical approach is not enough. The current aspects of the subject shouldn't be disregarded besides its historical ones. In this context, to complete existing studies with other studies on international relations, political science and sociology, scholars should be encouraged and supported.

To respond to the campaign we face today, it's equally important that scientific researches are widely known. The researches may be conducted in foreign languages or, those in

Turkish should be translated to foreign languages, most notably to English, and disseminated. In this endeavor new means of communication like Internet shouldn't be neglected.

The Congress considering the issue of encouraging and facilitating scientific researches in the country as well, finds it relevant to put forward the practical advises below:

1. Official institutions are expected to participate in these efforts within the limits of their capacities and even include them in their activities in a programmed way,
2. Private organizations are expected to support such activities and to contribute necessary donations,
3. To secure continuity and intensity in encouraging scientific researches in the country it would be useful that the Council of High Education acquire a central function would be useful. The council might fulfill its job by granting research scholarships, awarding serious scientific studies, providing coordination and other means,
4. A "Scientific Council" established under the chairmanship of the Council of Higher Education might help in coordinating and evaluating such studies.

All the participants of the congress, convinced of the benefits of discussing freely the topics together, wish that the Congress be convened in two years time at most, and present their appreciation and gratitude to the Institute for Armenian Research for its valuable initiative.

**THE 81. ANNIVERSARY OF TALAT PASHA'S ASSASSINATION: A
LOOK ON INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM**

15 March 2002

ISTANBUL – Pera Palas

Program

09:00	Opening Speech:	
	Minister of Culture Istemihan Talay	
1. Section		
Chairman:	Ömer Lütem	
09.15-09.45	Seçil Akgün	First Armenian Terrorist Incidents
09.45-10.15	Arslan Terzioğlu	The Assassination of Talat Pasha and Bahaddin Shakir in Berlin and the Armenian Relocation
10.15-10.45	Kallerya Bellova	The Assassination of Cemal Pasha in Tiflis
10.45-11.15	Discussion	
11.15-11.30	Break	
2. Section		
Chairman:	Arslan Terzioğlu	
11.30-12.00	Erich Feigl	Talat Pasha: The Slandering of a statesman by Franz Werfel
12.00-12.30	Otto Winkelmann	"The Armenian Question" in the Memoirs of Ernst von Düring Pasha (1858-1944)
12.30-13.00	Samuel Weems	Armenian Terrorism in the USA
13.00-13.30	Discussion	
13.30-14.30	Lunch Break	

3. Section

Chairman:	Seçil Akgün	
14.30-15.00	Bilal Şimşir	Diplomat Victims of Armenian Terrorism
15.00-15.30	Ömer Lütem	Armenian Terrorism and the Aftermath
15.30-16.00	Nesib Nessibli	The Karabakh Conflict and Armenian Terrorism
16.00-16.30	Discussion	
16.30-16.45	Break	

4. Section

Chairman:	Bilal Şimşir	
16.45-17.15	Peter Bendixen	The Prevention of Terrorism by Cultural Exchange
17.15-17.45	Mehmet Saray	How can the Problems of the Turkish Armenian Relations be solved?
17.45-18.15	Discussion	
18.15	End	