EVALUATING INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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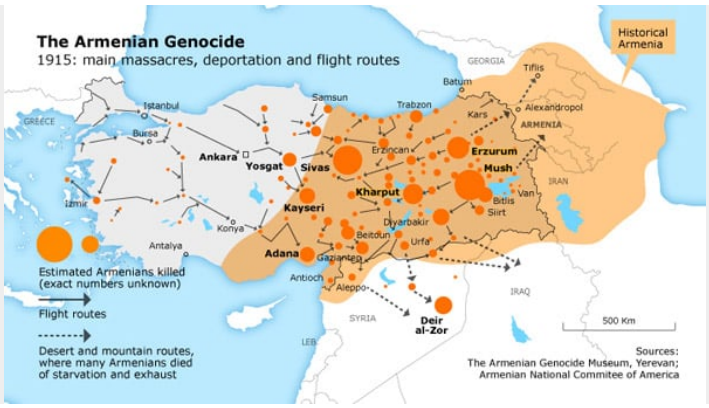

Category: Opinions

The Empty Value of Genocide Recognition Without Security

By Dr. Armen Ayvazyan, Yerevan, 3 July 2026

In response to a question about the Israeli government's recognition of the Armenian Genocide, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan told reporters: "We see no need to respond, because we believe that refraining from **becoming entangled in** the issue of the weaponization of the Armenian Genocide is in the interests of the Republic of Armenia."

With this statement, Pashinyan has, in effect, officially embraced one of the longstanding anti-Armenian doctrines and demands of the Turkish state: namely, to treat the Armenian Genocide as a purely historical event, detached from the Republic of Armenia's present grave predicament, the vital interests of the Armenian people, and the fundamental principles of international law. If this logic continues to prevail, it will not be long before, in the Turkish manner, people begin speaking not of the Armenian Genocide but of the "events of 1915." Pashinyan's proposal to depoliticize the Genocide is nothing short of a bitter absurdity.

As for the official recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the Government of Israel or by any other state, such a decision should not particularly excite us, although it is, on the whole, a positive development. The fact is that recognition of the Armenian Genocide has little value if it does nothing to restrain ongoing Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression and hostile policies directed against Armenia, or to improve Armenia's current, extremely precarious geostrategic position.

On this occasion, I must repeat what I have stated on numerous occasions over the years.

The fact remains that the dozens of major, influential states and international organizations that recognized the Armenian Genocide not only failed to lift a finger during 2020–2023, but did not even condemn the Turkish-Azerbaijani-Israeli-Salafist (ISIS) assault against Armenia. They took no measures whatsoever to assist the victim**s** of the genocide they themselves had recognized, nor did they punish the genocidal aggressors (one of whom was NATO member Turkey, and the other Israel, a close ally of the collective West and the United States). On the contrary, they did everything in their power—and continue to do so—to consolidate and perpetuate the **genocidal consequences** of that assault.

As early as October 2007, I outlined what the position of Armenia and the Armenian people should be with regard to such recognitions.

Here it is:

"As for the discussion of the Armenian Genocide in the parliaments of various states and in other international, non-judicial bodies, it is long past time for Armenia and the Armenian people to evaluate such resolutions according to their own criteria, which correspond both to historical reality and to Armenian national and state interests (there is no contradiction between the two, despite

years of attempts to persuade us otherwise). We propose the following five principal criteria for such an assessment:

1. The precise identification of the **chronological parameters** of the genocide: 1893–1923.
2. An explicit acknowledgment that the Armenians were exterminated in their historic homeland, primarily in the western part of Armenia.
3. The clear identification of the state that committed the Armenian Genocide—Ottoman Turkey—as well as the unequivocal condemnation of its legal successor, the Republic of Turkey, for denying the Armenian Genocide and for pursuing hostile policies against Armenia (including the blockade, propaganda warfare, refusal to establish diplomatic relations, military assistance to Azerbaijan, etc.).
4. Recognition of the Turkish fascist state's responsibility toward the Armenian state, as the ultimate representative of the interests of the Armenian people, together with recognition of the necessity of providing compensation to the Republic of Armenia (above all, territorial compensation).
5. The linkage, within such resolutions, between the consequences of the genocide and the present geopolitical situation in the region—in other words, recognition of the genocide's continuing negative impact on the security of Armenia and the region. This is, above all, the decisive issue: to what extent do such resolutions contribute to solving the most urgent problem—the security of Armenia?

The Armenian Genocide created a vital territorial problem for the survival of the Armenian people by reducing their living space to dangerously inadequate dimensions. It is from this perspective that both the liberation of Artsakh (which alone provided Armenia's borders with defensibility and the minimum strategic depth necessary for national security) and the need to ensure the secure development of the Armenian population of Javakhk should be understood.

It is the task of Armenian diplomacy to skillfully link the international condemnation of the Armenian Genocide with a just settlement of the Karabakh conflict and the establishment of lasting peace in the region. Having recognized the genocide committed against the Armenians, the international community is obliged to take the next logical step: to recognize the Armenian people's right to Artsakh, including all of its liberated territories.

The above-mentioned principles of responsibility and compensation have not yet been reflected in any resolution adopted by any international body. Nor could they have been, since the Republic of Armenia itself never set such objectives, never attempted to formulate such programs, and, naturally, never advanced corresponding well-substantiated claims."

Regrettably, not a single President or government of the Republic of Armenia developed such a policy or made use of the principles I proposed.

For the time being, this is all I wish to say on the matter. Should the occasion arise, I will return to it in

greater detail.

Note. The above principles were originally published in the following periodicals:

- "Armenia Must Develop a Policy for the Post-Recognition Phase of the Armenian Genocide." *DeFacto* (public affairs monthly), no. 10 (2007), pp. 66–67.
- *Azg*, October 10, 2007.
- *Yerkir*, October 12, 2007.
- Also published in Russian as: Armen Ayvazyan, "Instead of Reading the U.S. Resolution on the Genocide, People in Armenia Are Playing 'Loves Me, Loves Me Not,'" *REGNUM*, October 12, 2007.

P.S. This commentary was first published in Armenian on my Facebook page, as well as in the *Azg* daily newspaper and several other Armenian media outlets.

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Comments

Vahe H Apelian – 2026-07-06 09:48:11

Russia maintains a continuous military presence in Armenia, anchored by the 102nd Military Base in the city of Gyumri. This contingent comprises several thousand personnel (estimated to be up to 4,000) and includes mechanized units, fighter jets, and air defense systems. My concern has been and remains the possibility Russia overtaking the Armenian government institutions and subjugating Armenia. There is more of potential of that happening then what David Boyadjian claims. I quote ARF ideologue Kristapor Mikaelian: "«moving forward, always faithful to its spirit of destruction, Russia, as in the past, as well as today, is a representation of a large-scale arena of general persecution, general destruction and violence. There was not a nation left in Russia that was not oppressed, there was not a people left that was not suffocated, there was no word, opinion, right, law - even proclaimed from the imperial throne - that was not violated. It is a terrible stage of rulers and slaves, predators and tyrants, spies and spiers, poisoned by the choices of mutual grudge and hatred. Russia competes with Turkey in all spheres of state life, equally successful in the negative, as well as in the positive. And the unfortunate Armenian is destined to live, to claim the right to see the light of day, on the borders of those two brutal tyrants, 'between the devil and the deep blue sea', as the English say."

Vahe H Apelian – 2026-07-05 22:46:38

Dr. Armen Ayvazyan rightfully points out that since its founding on May 28, 1918, the Republic of Armenia did not make the three Rs of the Genocide -recognition, restituting, reparation - instruments of its foreign policy. But I disagree with his claim that because of Armenia's inaction, governments have not recognized the genocide as it should be recognized; and, "nor could they have been, since the Republic of Armenia itself never set such objectives." During the Nurenberg trials, Shavarsh Missakian in his Haratch Daily editorial on December 9, 1945, where he introduced the newly minted term Genocide to his readers, wrote: "Our rage mounts tenfold particularly because the day's victors were present then, where the crime was committed. They were there (in Turkey) for full four years and ruled like landlords, much like they do nowadays in Germany. Then also (aftermath of WWI), hundreds were apprehended, and 70 hand-picked monsters were sent to Malta to be tried and punished commensurate to the crimes they perpetrated. Then?" We all know no such thing happened. Shavarsh Missakian wondered, and surely in sarcasm, wrote, "Had they not discovered the word (Genocide)? Or was it that the bloodthirsty monster was too strong to lay a hand on"? The answer is simply, "the bloodthirsty monster" is "too strong to lay a hand on"; or strategically too important to punish it, no matter what Armenia does.

David Boyajian – 2026-07-04 22:13:59

Great, timely article by Dr. Armen Ayvazyan. Too often Armenian leaders have simply commemorated the Genocide without explaining its greatest lesson to our people: Turkey aims for a repeat someday. Just look at its threats and its "modern" record of aggression and massacres. Naive Pashinyan, of course, thinks that he will please Turkey by not mentioning the Genocide and hence buy its gratitude and friendship. It's the wrong approach. And I can't say that his predecessors exactly covered themselves in glory.