# CANADA'S PM, POLITICIANS OBSERVE 24 APRIL

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**The Right Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada**

"On this day we remember the terrible loss of life during the demise of the Ottoman Empire in 1915, and in particular the horrific suffering endured by the Armenian people. Both houses of Parliament have adopted resolutions referring to these events as “the first genocide of the twentieth century.” This is a day we acknowledge solemnly, not to cast blame back into the distant past, but to guide us towards a better future. It reminds us all why we must remain committed to ensuring that today’s world is one where respect for human rights and democratic freedom prevails.

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Today, Canadians of Armenian and Turkish origin live together, sharing our values of tolerance and openness. We support efforts by Armenia and Turkey to seek a path towards reconciliation including an open border, the establishment of diplomatic relations and the implementation of a dialogue on the events of 1915. We welcome the talks between the Foreign Ministers of both countries in December 2013, and support the reconciliation process set out in the Zurich Protocols signed in October 2009.

On this day of remembrance, we praise those on both sides who seek to achieve a common

understanding with honesty and in a spirit of goodwill.

I join with you today in remembering the past and in sharing hope for a future based on peace and mutual respect."

**Olivia Chow, author, former Toronto councilor and federal MP.**

She resigned her seat in March to run in the upcoming Toronto mayoral elections.

"The term 'genocide' was first coined in order to describe the Young Turks' organized mass extermination of Armenians a century ago in their historic homeland, the present-day Turkey. Victims were worked to death through forced labour or sent on mass death marches into the Syrian Desert. Despite thousands of eyewitness accounts, historic records and archeological evidence, the Turkish government denies, to this day, that the events ever occurred."

**Jim Karygiannis, former MP and candidate in Toronto Ward 39 elections.**

"It is with deep sense of reverence that I commemorate with the 99th Anniversay of the Armenian Genocide.

Today, we pause to remember this atrocity which was perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire--the execution of 1.5 million Armenians.
Members of the Armenian community have keenly felt the horror of this black chapter in the world's history.

On this solemn occasion, we pay homage to the victims and express solidarity with the survivors and their descendants. We stand together as we recognize the first genocide of the 20th century.

On April 24, 2004, the Parliament of Canada voted to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Several of my fellow Parliamentarians and I had pressed Parliament to move in this direction for many years. On April 19, 2006, the Prime Minister affirmed that the Government of Canada officially recognized the Armenian Genocide.

I was privileged to lead a Canadian delegation to Armenia on the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The Canadian delegation joined 1.5 million Armenians from around the world, in laying flowers at the Genocide Memorial's Eternal Flame. Armenians, members of the international Armenian Diaspora and diplomats from around the world sent a powerful message--the atrocities of 1915 will never be forgotten.

As we reflect, we must re-commit to fervently work to ensure that such unspeakable acts are never repeated.

As the descendants of survivors of the Pontian Genocide, I believe it is important for us to remember

the lessons of history and uphold the values Canadians hold dear--peace, freedom, democracy and respect. In so doing, we will develop a deeper understanding of our duty and responsibility to our fellow man to ensure that we live in peace and harmony.

This is a day we solemnly acknowledge as we work toward a better future for all mankind.

**Regarding Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's condolences to Armenians, Mr. Karygiannis said:**

It is a start in the right direction. However it falls short of a full apology and acknowledging the fact that the Ottoman Empire today's Turkey was solely responsible for the Armenian, Assyrian and Pontian Genocides.

There were close to two million people that were butchered, killed, maimed and women were raped.

The Turkish government is falling short of what is expected of them. Calling themselves a democracy they constantly deny people the three basic pillars of democracy: freedom of religion, respect of human rights and freedom of the press.

Their expansionism policies have so far led to the occupation of the Northern Part of Cyprus by close to 40 thousand Turkish Soldiers.

Their recent involvement in Syria which led to Al Qaeda destroyed Christian villages.

If Endrogan is seriously sorry I expect him to visit Yerevan kneel down in front of the **memorial of the Medz Yeghern** on the hill of **Tsitsernakaberd** and acknowledge that Turkey perpetrated genocide on the Armenian people.

**Greetings from the Hon. Jason Kenney, PC, MP, on the Day of Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide**

Minister Kenney speaking at the Armenian Youth Centre in Toronto on April 27, 2014, alongside Parliamentary colleagues Chungsen Leung and Costas Menegakis

Today, I join all Canadians of Armenian origin in marking the 99th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The events of 1915 represent a terrible page in the history of humanity, punctuating what Blessed Pope John Paul II referred to as "the century of tears." As you know, Canada's Senate and House of Commons have adopted motions recognizing the mass killings of Armenians in Anatolia in 1915 as genocide, and condemning it as a crime against humanity. We are committed to ensuring that all Canadians remember the lessons of the past so that such crimes are never repeated. For example, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights being constructed in Winnipeg will include a permanent exhibit on the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian community is to be commended for keeping alive the flame of memory of the Medz Yeghern, never to forget the sacred memory of those whose lives were taken, and to teach future generations about the violent consequences of racial and ethnic hatred. At the same time, all Canadians must work together to advance mutual respect, overcoming the burden of historic enmities.

I join with all members of Canada's Armenian community in prayerful commemoration of your ancestors. May they rest in peace.

**Message of Multiculturalism Minister Hon. Tim Uppal:**
Member of Parliament for Edmonton—Sherwood Park

This year marks the 99th anniversary of Medz Yeghern. Canada condemns the Ottoman Empire's despicable crimes against humanity during the first genocide of the twentieth century that resulted in the tragic massacre of nearly 1.5 million Armenian women, men and children.

Our Government not only acknowledges the historical reality of the Armenian Genocide in 1915, we join with all those around the world paying homage to the memory of its victims.

The intolerance and discrimination that fueled these atrocities serve as a reminder of the importance of pluralism and equality in our global community. It is our sincere hope that Armenia and Turkey's future relations are anchored in tolerance, openness and mutual respect.

As we share in the grief of the Armenian people and reflect on this great calamity, our Government is all the more committed to protecting and promoting freedom, democracy and the rule of law, at home and abroad.