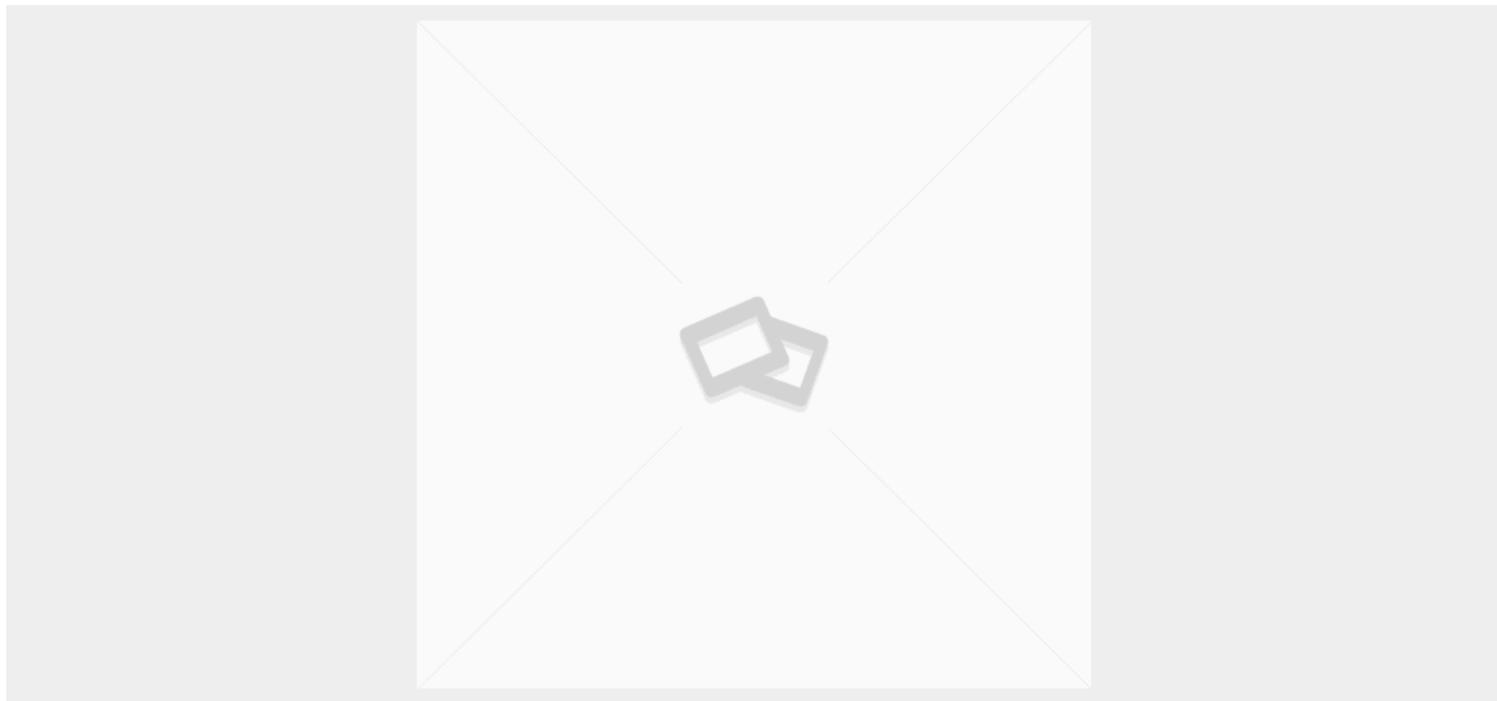


IN PURSUIT OF ANSWERS

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Category: [Opinions](#)



By Artin Boghossian PhD, Toronto, 6 October 2009

Artin Boghossian is the moderator of 24April Forum where critical and substantive discussions take place. The forum is neither an organisation nor an action group. It simply is a meeting place for people who are interested in issues related to Armenia and Armenians. Affiliated and non-affiliated individuals alike take part in these discussions. To its credit, the Forum has gained the confidence of most of its participants by adhering to common sense principles, such as agreeing to disagree and respecting others' opinions with cordial approach. Naturally, the Protocols are the theme of the discussion these days, and Boghossian sent a note to the members in this respect. The content interests people beyond the confines of the Forum. It is presented below with a slight adaptation for Keghart.com readers.

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It has become clear that the Protocols envisage, among other things, the formation of a Sub-Commission (HSC) dealing matters of history. It will "Implement a dialogue on the historical dimension with the aim to restore mutual confidence between the two nations, including an impartial and scientific examination of the historical records and archives to define existing problems and formulate recommendations." It is also fair to assume that this HSC will also deal with the Armenian Genocide and attendant matters, since this is the single most important historical issue relating to Armenians and Turkey.

Despite the protests against the Protocols, I hear that there is the likelihood for them to be ratified/approved. If so, then, it is possible that the HSC will end up no differently than the TARC, namely in failure. On the other hand, it may turn out that the HSC is the proper route to pave the way for Turkey to recognize legally the Armenian Genocide. After all, there is no doubt in the minds of all learned individuals, including Turks, that it is a historical fact. All attempts at denial serve different avoidance purposes and the eventual acceptance of the Genocide by Turkey is inevitable. Perhaps

Assuming Turkey acknowledges the Genocide, it will undoubtedly try to get out of its consequences with as little reparations/compensations as possible, while Armenians would naturally wish to get everything that is rightfully theirs, including interest where applicable. There will be negotiations.

Do we have a clear vision of the limits of what we want in a negotiation? Should we not discuss these things so that we are prepared when the time comes? More than once I have heard expressions like: we were not prepared; it happened so suddenly; who was expecting the collapse of the Soviet Union so suddenly?

Of course, we can set our demands at such a high level that it cannot possibly be achieved, although nothing is impossible, as some say. Nothing is wrong with this approach and it may be the preferred route for some. More practically, among many other provisions, it is conceivable that there may be a certain amount of money allocated for damages/losses suffered during the Genocide. How much of that, for example, I will be entitled for as the grandson of those who lost everything, including their lives, during the Genocide? On what basis do we sort out and verify such claims? There are many other scenarios and variations to consider.

Are we qualified/entitled to discuss such matters? Should they be imposed on us and we start a new round of petitions and demonstrations? Is it too early to discuss such things? Should we study other nations who have gone through a similar experience? Perhaps we already have all the answers?

I would suggest that we refrain from attacking each other, our neighbours, our political parties, our clergy, our other organizations, and our country. I think it is perfectly legitimate for us to continue to be critical of issues and actions without attacking or being disrespectful to anyone. Let us continue to stick to major issues and stay clear from petty personal accounting. There is no shortage of tabloids elsewhere to do the gossiping.

