PRESIDENT OBAMA ON ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

Posted on April 24, 2010 by Keghart



Category: Opinions

Office of the Press Secretary For Immediate Release April 24, 2010

Statement of President Barack Obama on Armenian Remembrance Day
On this solemn day of remembrance, we pause to recall that ninety-five years ago one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century began. In that dark moment of history, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred or marched to their death in the final days of the Ottoman Empire.

Office of the Press Secretary For Immediate Release April 24, 2010

Statement of President Barack Obama on Armenian Remembrance Day
On this solemn day of remembrance, we pause to recall that ninety-five years ago one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century began. In that dark moment of history, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred or marched to their death in the final days of the Ottoman Empire.

Today is a day to reflect upon and draw lessons from these terrible events. I have consistently stated my own view of what occurred in 1915, and my view of that history has not changed. It is in all of our interest to see the achievement of a full, frank and just acknowledgment of the facts. The Meds Yeghern is a devastating chapter in the history of the Armenian people, and we must keep its memory alive in honor of those who were murdered and so that we do not repeat the grave mistakes of the past. I salute the Turks who saved Armenians in 1915 and am encouraged by the dialogue among Turks and Armenians, and within Turkey itself, regarding this painful history. Together, the Turkish and Armenian people will be stronger as they acknowledge their common history and recognize their common humanity.
Even as we confront the inhumanity of 1915, we also are inspired by the remarkable spirit of the Armenian people. While nothing can bring back those who were killed in the Meds Yeghern, the contributions that Armenians have made around the world over the last ninety-five years stand as a testament to the strength, tenacity and courage of the Armenian people. The indomitable spirit of the Armenian people is a lasting triumph over those who set out to destroy them. Many Armenians came to the United States as survivors of the horrors of 1915. Over the generations Americans of Armenian descent have richened our communities, spurred our economy, and strengthened our democracy. The strong traditions and culture of Armenians also became the foundation of a new republic which has become a part of the community of nations, partnering with the world community to build a better future.

Today, we pause with them and with Armenians everywhere to remember the awful events of 1915 with deep admiration for their contributions which transcend this dark past and give us hope for the future.

Armenian National Committee of America

Press Release, 24 April 2010

PRESIDENT OBAMA FAILS TO HONOR ARMENIAN GENOCIDE PLEDGE ONCE AGAIN

April 24th statement avoids "genocide" characterization

WASHINGTON, DC – In yet another disgraceful capitulation to Turkey's threats, President Obama today once again failed to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide, offering euphemisms and evasive terminology to characterize this crime against humanity, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).
"Today we join with Armenians in the United States and around the world in voicing our sharp disappointment with the President's failure to properly condemn and commemorate the Armenian Genocide," stated ANCA Chairman Ken Hachikian. "After more than a year of Turkey's manipulation of the Obama Administration's policy on this core human rights issue, and the collapse of even the pretense of progress of any sort coming from Ankara, President Obama faced a stark choice: to honor his conscience and commitment to recognize the Armenian Genocide or to remain an accomplice to Turkey's denial of truth and justice for this crime. Sadly, for the U.S. and worldwide efforts to end the cycle of genocide, he made the wrong choice, allowing Turkey to tighten its gag-rule on American genocide policy."

As a Senator and presidential candidate, President Obama pledged repeatedly to recognize the Armenian Genocide and promised "unstinting resolve" to end the Darfur Genocide, stating, "America deserves a leader who speaks truthfully about the Armenian Genocide and responds forcefully to all genocides. I intend to be that President." View his record on the issue by clicking here.

Since then, while stating that his personal views of the events of 1915 have not changed, President Obama has refrained from properly characterizing this crime against humanity and going so far as to oppose Congressional Armenian Genocide legislation (H.Res.252) – which he had pledged to support during the 2008 Presidential campaign.

In contrast to his remarks in 2009, the President chose not to use the April 24th statement as a platform to push the flawed Turkey-Armenia Protocols process – stalled by Turkey's preconditions related to the Nagorno Karabagh negotiations and shameful efforts to use the Protocols to block

international affirmation of the Armenian Genocide. The ANCA, in an April 7 letter urging the President to honor his genocide pledge, asked the White House to “mark this day sincerely and not, as has too often been the case, to view it as an opportunity to present a policy statement on the region.” The letter continued to note that an “explanation of U.S. priorities regarding Armenia-Turkey relations or other current foreign policy issues, while certainly entirely appropriate in other settings, clearly does not belong in a Presidential April 24th statement, just as a statement of U.S. policy on the Israel-Arab peace process would not be appropriate in Presidential remarks devoted to remembering the Holocaust.”

25 April 2010

Turkish foreign minister: Mr. Obama's statement is not acceptable
Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said on Saturday that the statement of US President Barack Obama about 1915 incidents was not right and acceptable.
Obama described the incidents of 1915 as a "great tragedy" in a presidential statement he released on April 24. He said what happened in 1915 was "one of the worst atrocities" of the 20th century.

Davutoğlu told the Anatolia news agency that Turkey was against judging the history with political motives. He added that the history could only be researched by historians, and such historical incidents should be discussed only by the countries which were directly related with the issue.

Davutoğlu said that neither executive bodies nor parliaments could make such historical judgements, and this was unacceptable. He added that the efforts to perceive the history in a one-sided aspect caused an injustice.

Releasing a statement, Turkish Foreign Ministry also said, "we deeply regret this statement which reflects an incorrect and one-sided political perception."