

THE DAY AFTER THE GENOCIDE


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By Souren G. Seraydaryan, Vienna, 15 March 2010

In response to questions related to Western Armenian National Congress (WAN Congress) raised in 24April Forum (Toronto), [Souren G. Seraydaryan](#), one of the Deputy executives of the International Organizing Committee (Steering Committee) posted the following response (composite): 

I read with interest your latest communications and understand the need to clarify some of your legitimate concerns. I will try to address these questions as briefly as possible and will be prepared to discuss the details personally with you during my planned stay in Montreal on the 9th and 10th of April.

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1. You assume correctly that the idea of holding a congress (*hamacoumar*) was launched as a result of a declaration made by a group of Armenian intellectuals in 2006.
2. The International Organizing Committee (IOC) for the preparation of the Western Armenian National Congress was created as an NGO and is registered as an Association under French Law as well as in Switzerland with a headquarter office in Geneva. It has branches in Yerevan at the Noravank Foundation as well as in Moscow.

The present membership includes nationals of Armenian origin from Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Iran, Lebanon, Russia, Switzerland, Syria, Uruguay, USA, and there are working groups in the aforementioned countries.

3. Following extensive deliberations the name Western Armenian National Congress was selected to reflect two factors: as a follow up of the two first Conferences of Western Armenians held in Yerevan in 1917 and 1919, and the second factor was to reflect the representational capacity of the claimant; i.e. the descendants of the former citizens of the Ottoman Empire.

4. The word Diaspora, as referred to by some, was considered but discarded because many descendants of Ottoman Armenians live in Armenia and Artsakh and have their *hairenagtsagan mioutiouns* (Compatriotic Associations). The term Western Armenia is used in reference to not only the country as defined in the non ratified text of the Sevres Treaty including the 6 vilayets, but also to the territories that Armenians lived throughout the Empire from Edirne to Kars, and from Istanbul to Aleppo.

5. In accordance with our Statutes any Armenian who believes in the goals of the IOC to call for a Congress to establish/elect an Assembly and an Executive Branch (National Council) may be a member. No Armenian is excluded.

6. The IOC and the Congress may also include eminent none Armenians who have contributed as historians, intellectuals, politicians towards the advancement of the Armenian cause.

7. WAN Congress is certainly not linked to Ara Aprahamian or to the Government of the Republic of Armenia. We contacted all traditional Armenian parties to keep them informed of our endeavours but we are not connected to any of them.

We are particularly addressing the silent majority of Armenians who are looking forward for what I call the 25th of April, i.e. the day after the genocide (Bolded by Keghart.com).

So far eleven meetings of the IOC and one scientific meeting took place in France, Armenia, Switzerland and Cyprus. We published the following: *Hamahaygagan Khorheritagtsiounner 1912 - 1920* (Inter-Armenian Consultations From 1912 to 1920), Vahan Melikyan's *Arevmedahayeri Hamacoumarnere yev haygagan hartzi poulere 1917-1923* (The Conferences of Western Armenians and the phases of the Armenian Question 1917-1923) and a book summarizing the Cyprus scientific seminar "The main issues of Western Armenian Claims ".

We are presently preparing the Statues of the Congress to present it as a draft for consideration by the Congress as well as a political/historical paper in addition to a legal paper for review by the Congress. We will be holding a meeting of a core group of lawyers from 26 to 28 March in Geneva to be followed by additional meetings of lawyers and other professionals to finalize the legal document for presentation to the Congress which we plan to hold late this year if we are ready.

Our work has been to prepare the Congress. The established organs will have to continue, rather start the real work. Our role was basically what is referred to as a steering Committee.

It is my personal humble view that there is no disagreement among interested Armenians as far as the vision and the Strategy is concerned. We may differ on the processes and the tactics but certainly not on the general vision (Bolded by Keghart.com).

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