

"THE FROZEN CONSCIOUSNESS OF HUMANITY"

Posted on April 18, 2011 by Keghart



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Editor

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary



PRESS RELEASE

April 23, 2011

Statement by the President on Armenian Remembrance Day

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We solemnly remember the horrific events that took place ninety-six years ago, resulting in one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century. In 1915, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred or marched to their death in the final days of the Ottoman Empire.

I have consistently stated my own view of what occurred in 1915, and my view of that history has not changed. A full, frank, and just acknowledgement of the facts is in all our interests. Contested history destabilizes the present and stains the memory of those whose lives were taken, while reckoning with the past lays a sturdy foundation for a peaceful and prosperous shared future. History teaches

us that our nations are stronger and our cause is more just when we appropriately recognize painful pasts and work to rebuild bridges of understanding toward a better tomorrow. The United States knows this lesson well from the dark chapters in our own history. I support the courageous steps taken by individuals in Armenia and Turkey to foster a dialogue that acknowledges their common history. As we commemorate the Meds Yeghern and pay tribute to the memories of those who perished, we also recommit ourselves to ensuring that devastating events like these are never repeated. This is a contemporary cause that thousands of Armenian-Americans have made their own.

The legacy of the Armenian people is one of resiliency, determination, and triumph over those who sought to destroy them. The United States has deeply benefited from the significant contributions to our nation by Armenian Americans, many of whom are descended from the survivors of the Meds Yeghern. Americans of Armenian descent have strengthened our society and our communities with their rich culture and traditions. The spirit of the Armenian people in the face of this tragic history serves as an inspiration for all those who seek a more peaceful and just world.

Our hearts and prayers are with Armenians everywhere as we recall the horrors of the Meds Yeghern, honor the memories of those who suffered, and pledge our friendship and deep respect for the people of Armenia.

