

TURKEY PROTESTS, ARMENIA WELCOMES SWISS DECISION

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International Institute for Genocide and
Human Rights Studies
A Division of the Zoryan Institute

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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: March 11, 2014

CONTACT: Deborah Hay
TEL: 416-250-9807

Switzerland Appeals ECHR Ruling

Bern, Switzerland—The International Association of Genocide and Human Rights Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute) (IIGHRS) and the Switzerland-Armenia Association (SAA) are pleased to announce that the Swiss Government announced today it will appeal the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on December 17, 2013, overturning the conviction of Dogu Perinçek for denying the Armenian Genocide.



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The decision was made by the Swiss Federal Office of Justice to ask the ECHR's Grand Chamber to review the ruling in order to clarify the scope available to Swiss authorities in applying the Swiss Criminal Code to combat racism. The anti-racism law was created in 1995 in order to comply with the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. [See the press release of the Swiss Federal Office of Justice.](#)

In 2007, Mr. Dogu Perinçek was convicted under the Swiss anti-racism law for publicly denying the Armenian Genocide. He failed to win two appeals in Swiss courts, then appealed to the ECHR. On December 17, 2013, the ECHR overturned this conviction on the grounds of freedom of speech.

The IIGHRS and the SAA have worked together since December, along with a team of scholars and experts in international human rights law, major Armenian organizations and individuals, as a strategic team to inform and educate Swiss public opinion.

Le Temps (Geneva), in covering this story, wrote, "Armenian associations in Switzerland are highly

mobilized in collaboration with The International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, which took a full-page advertisement in newspapers, including "[Le Temps](#)." A [petition](#) that has more than 10,000 signatures was also sent to the Minister of Justice and Police, Simonetta Sommaruga, for Switzerland to appeal."

Mailing address:

The Zoryan Institute of Canada, Inc
255 Duncan Mill Rd Suite 310
Toronto, ON M3B 3H9
Canada



Turkey Responds to Switzerland's Decision **[Public Radio of Armenia](#), 14 March 2014**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey has issued a statement in response to the referral of judgment of the European Court of Human Rights on the case of "Perincek v. Switzerland" to the Grand Chamber by Switzerland. The statement reads:

"In a judgment published on 17 December 2013, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) had ruled that Switzerland breached Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights on "freedom of expression" in the case of Doğu Perinçek v. Switzerland.

We have learned through the written statement by Swiss Federal Office of Justice on 11 March 2014 that Switzerland has decided to object to this judgment and refer it to the Grand Chamber of the ECHR .

Having full confidence in the rule of law, we expect that the Grand Chamber will confirm once more and forcefully that "freedom of expression", which is the building bloc of democratic societies, is safeguarded.

In this way, we believe that the efforts to politicize the law will be aborted once again."

President Sargsyan Welcomes Switzerland's Decision **[Public Radio of Armenia](#), 14 March 2014**

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan welcomes Swiss Government's decision to appeal the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on "Perincek v. Switzerland" case.

"It's inspiring. We should express our positive attitude towards the decision of the Swiss Government. Everyone knows that Switzerland has always been one of the most active human right advocates on

the international arena, one of the most active governments fighting racial discrimination and xenophobia, and we expect Switzerland to make a correct decision," the President said.

According to President Sargsyan, the decision of the Swiss Government is only the start of a greater process, because the European Court of Human Rights is still to make a decision to take up the consideration of the issue. "We are confident, however, that the Court will adopt a ruling that will not be offensive for peoples that have passed through genocide and will not dishonor the memory of the innocent victims."

