WEBSITE ASSESSES ARMENIAN GENOCIDE LOSSES

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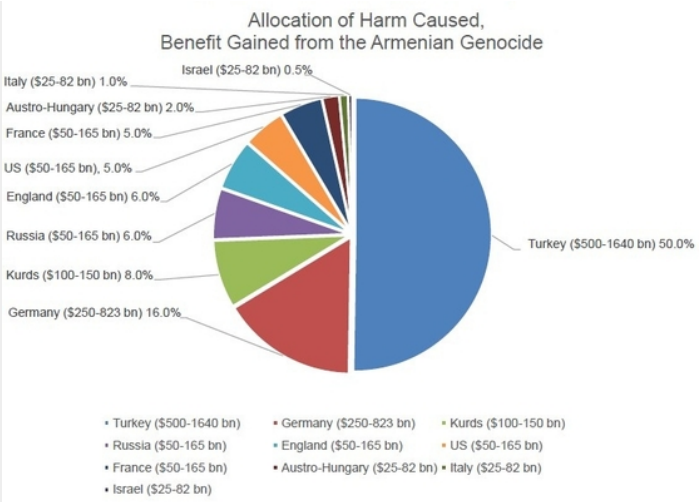

Category: Opinions

Press Release

Yerevan, March 12, 2015 – Armenian Genocide Losses 1915 is a new web site created by an independent research group in Armenia. "The goal is to provide a framework for informed discussion on the extent of the harm resulting from this genocide."

It presents a formula based on international norms and precedents, which call for reversible harm to be reversed and irreversible harm to be compensated. Reversible harm includes land, property and rights that can be restored. Irreversible harm includes lost lives, destroyed property, and other intangible harm caused and benefit gained by delay and denial of the Armenian Genocide. The total harm caused and benefit gained from the Armenian Genocide is estimated to be in excess of $3 trillion.

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The site takes as a starting point the 1919 Armenian Claim at the Paris Peace conference, which had both monetary and land/property restoration components. It also adds delay damages for the 100 years of denial and delay in resolving the Armenian Genocide.

As shown in bar charts, the mix of reversible and irreversible harm is subject to adjustment, depending on political will. The more land, property and rights that are restored, the less monetary compensation that is due for irreversible harm, and vice versa. The site considers four scenarios for land restoration ranging from current-day Armenia and Artsakh to the 1919 Armenian Homeland claim from the Black to Mediterranean Seas made at the Paris Peace Conference.

Somewhat unique in its approach, the site recognizes that in addition to direct perpetrators there were other complicit parties and beneficiaries before, during and after the Armenian Genocide. A pie chart allocates the harm caused and benefits gained to various countries and peoples. These

include Turkey, its WWI Allies Germany, and Austro-Hungary, the Kurds, and the Great Powers, whose policies and actions factored into the Armenian Genocide and the obstruction of its timely resolution, such as, England, Russia, France, Italy, the US and later Israel.

Delay damages were calculated using present value and the time value of money and property. Delay damages also includes deprivation of access to the Armenian ancestral homeland for 100 years, interference with maintenance of cultural heritage, and the emotional distress associated with denial of the crime, delay in justice, and witnessing the depredation of one's nation and homeland.

Irreversible harm includes post-1919 destruction of life, real and immovable property, injuries and refugee maintenance costs, destroyed and desecrated cultural heritage, lost revenues from natural resources and transit rights, stolen property, costs of continued discrimination, oppression and persecution of Armenians in Turkey, as well as projected revenues from national patrimony, including natural resources (minerals, hydrocarbons) and continued costs to Armenia of blockade and lack of access to the sea.

The site makes the case that assessment of the harm is essential to recognition and rectification of the crime. Although justifying the need for compensation, the site comes to the sobering conclusion that "although compensation cannot make the victims whole, it can help the perpetrators and beneficiaries find the redemption they need: if not for themselves, for humanity's sake; if not for this generation, for future generations."