

European Parliament resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question (18 June 1987)

Caption: On 18 June 1987, the European Parliament adopts a resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question and asks the Council to secure from the Turkish Government an acknowledgment of the Armenian genocide of 1915–1917, thereby enabling a political dialogue to be established between Turkey and the representatives of the Armenian people.

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Resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question (18 June 1987)

Doc. A2-0033/87

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr. Saby and others on behalf of the Socialist Group on a political solution to the Armenian question (Doc. 2-737/84),

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr. Kolokotronis on the Armenian question and the declaration of 24 April as Armenian Genocide Day (Doc. V 2-360/85),

- having regard to the report of the Political Affairs Committee (Doc. 2-33/87),

A. having regard to:

- the motion for a resolution by Mr. Jaquet and others on the situation of the Armenian people (Doc. 1-782/81),

- the motion for a resolution by Mrs. Duport and Mr. Glinne on behalf of the Socialist Group on a political solution to the Armenian question (Doc. 1-735/83), and

- the written question by Mrs. Duport on the Armenian question ⁽¹⁾,

- the resolution of the Ministers with responsibility for Cultural Affairs, meeting within the Council of 13 November 1986 on the protection of Europe's architectural heritage ⁽²⁾, including that outside the territory of the Community.

B. convinced that recognition of the identity of the Armenian people in Turkey as an ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious minority follows on from recognition of its own history,

C. whereas the Armenian side regards these events as planned genocide within the meaning of the 1948 UN Convention.

D. whereas the Turkish State rejects the charge of genocide as unfounded,

E. whereas, to date, the Turkish Government, by refusing to recognize the genocide of 1915, continues to deprive the Armenian people of the right to their own history,

F. whereas the historically proven Armenian genocide has so far neither been the object of political condemnation nor received due compensation,

G. whereas the recognition of the Armenian genocide by Turkey must therefore be viewed as a profoundly humane act of moral rehabilitation towards the Armenians, which can only bring honor to the Turkish Government;

H. profoundly regretting and condemning the mindless terrorism by groups of Armenians who were responsible between 1973 and 1986 of several attacks causing death or injury to innocent victims and deplored by an overwhelming majority of the Armenian people,

I. whereas the obdurate stance of every Turkish Government towards the Armenian question has in no way

helped to reduce the tension,

1. Believes that the Armenian question and the question of minorities in Turkey must be resituated within the framework of relations between Turkey and the Community; points out that democracy cannot be solidly implanted in a country unless the latter recognizes and enriches its history with its ethnic and cultural diversity;
2. Believes that the tragic events in 1915-1917 involving the Armenians living in the territory of the Ottoman Empire constitute genocide within the meaning of the convention on the prevention and the punishment of the crime of genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948; Recognizes, however, that the present Turkey cannot be held responsible for the tragedy experienced by the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and stresses that neither political nor legal or material claims against present-day Turkey can be derived from the recognition of this historical event as an act of genocide;
3. Calls on the Council to obtain from the present Turkish Government an acknowledgment of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenians in 1915-1917 and promote the establishment of a political dialogue between Turkey and the representatives of the Armenians;
4. Believes that the refusal by the present Turkish Government to acknowledge the genocide against the Armenian people committed by the Young Turk government, its reluctance to apply the principles of international law to its differences of opinion with Greece, the maintenance of Turkish occupation forces in Cyprus and the denial of existence of the Kurdish question, together with the lack of true parliamentary democracy and the failure to respect individual and collective freedoms, in particular freedom of religion, in that country are insurmountable obstacles to consideration of the possibility of Turkey's accession to the Community;
5. Conscious of those past misfortunes, supports its desire for the development of a specific identity, the securing of its minority rights and the unrestricted exercise of its people's human and civil rights as defined in the European Convention of Human Rights and its five protocols;
6. Calls for fair treatment of the Armenian minority in Turkey as regards their identity, language, religion, culture and school system, and makes an emphatic plea for improvements in the care of monuments and for the maintenance and conservation of the Armenian religious architectural heritage in Turkey and invites the Community to examine how it could make an appropriate contribution;
7. Calls on Turkey in this connection to abide faithfully by the provisions for the protection of the non-Muslim minorities as stipulated in Articles 37 to 45 of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne which, moreover, was signed by most Member States of the Community;
8. Considers that the protection of monuments and the maintenance and conservation of the Armenian religious architectural heritage in Turkey must be regarded as part of a wider policy designed to preserve the cultural heritage of all civilizations which have developed over the centuries on present-day Turkish territory and, in particular, that of the Christian minorities that formed part of the Ottoman Empire;
9. Calls therefore on the Community to extend the Association Agreement with Turkey to the cultural field so that the remains of Christian or other civilizations such as the ancient classical, Hittite, Ottoman, etc., in that country are preserved and made generally accessible;
10. Expresses its concern at the difficulties currently being experienced by the Armenian community in Iran with respect to the Armenian language and their own education in accordance with the rules of their own religion;
11. Condemns the violations of individual freedoms committed in the Soviet Union against the Armenian population;

12. Condemns strongly any violence and any form of terrorism carried out by isolated groupings unrepresentative of the Armenian people, and calls for reconciliation between Armenians and Turks;
13. Calls on the Community Member States to dedicate a day to the memory of the genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated in the 20th century, specifically against the Armenians and Jews;
14. Commits itself to making a substantial contribution to initiatives to encourage negotiations between the Armenian and Turkish peoples;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the European Council, the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation, the EEC/Turkey Association Council and the Turkish, Iranian and Soviet Governments and the UN Secretary General.

(1) OJ n°C 216 -16.8.1984, p. 10

(2) OJ n°C 320 -13.12.1986, p. 1