Week 5

Human Rights and Foreign Policy: Armenian Genocide
World War I
1914-1918

- The world’s first global conflict, the “Great War.”
- Different from all previous wars, changed our outlook.
- Massive destruction, death and socio economic conditions paving the way for WWII.
- Started officially with the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914.
1. Austria issued ultimatum and demands to Serbia.
2. Serbia did not accept all Austrian demands.
3. Austria declared war on Serbia.
4. Russia mobilized in support of Serbia and Germany in support of Austria.
5. Germany became partner with Ottoman and declared war on France.
6. Germany occupied Belgium.
7. UK declared war on Germany.
8. Japan enters in support of UK, declares war on Germany

• Europe in total war, 5 weeks after the assassination of Ferdinand.
• Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.
• Allied Powers: Great Britain, the United States, France, Russia, Italy and Japan.
• Introduction of modern technology to warfare.
• More than 9 million combatants and 7 million civilians killed, 20 million people wounded.
Participants in World War I in 1917
Allies, green; Central Powers, orange; neutrals, grey
Genocide is the organized extermination of a nation aiming to put an end to their collective existence. Thus, the implementation of the genocide requires oriented programming and an internal mechanism, which makes genocide a state crime, as only a state possesses all the resources that can be used to carry out this policy.
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

• Extermination of Armenians, Assyrians and Greek, by Ottoman Empire, 1915 to 1923.
• First genocide of the modern times.
• Armenians, oldest Christians of the world, in Eastern Anatolia.
THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: 1915-1923

- **Massacre sites**: The marker size represents the number of deaths.
- **Death March Routes**: Turkish troops forced Armenians into the desert, without food or water, to die of starvation and heat exhaustion.
- **Concentration Camps**
- **Deportation Checkpoints**

present day regional country borders

Historic Armenia borders

Current Armenia borders

© 2004 Armenian National Committee of America

Armenian National Committee of America
818 17th Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202.775.5118 | Fax: 202.775.3548
www.anca.org | anca@anca.org
Historical Facts

• Towards the end of the 19th century, the political power and stability of Ottoman Empire was declining.
• Muslim Turks were being pushed out of the Balkans by Christian population in the area.
• Inside Turkey, along with other minorities, about 2 Million Armenians were asking for better treatment.
• The call for change by Armenians, brought about more violence against them.
• In 1908, promising freedom and equality for all citizens, including the ethnic minorities, the Government of Young Turks came to power on a platform of Ottomanism and coexistence.
• But, the progressive elements were sidelined over time and their promises were never realized.
• The conservative elements in power, in the name of the new Turkish Empire, turned viciously against the ethnic minorities, particularly the Armenians.
• Their view: Turkey a place only for Turkish Muslim people.
• Armenians considered the biggest threat to this Pan-Turkic idea. (Peter Balakian, “Black Dog of Fate”)
More likely explanations revolve around straight-out territorial and economic nationalism, mixed with Islamism, coveting the property of Armenians.

1915, WWI already started, Turkey became involved on the side of Germans.

The Turkish leadership used the excuse and claimed that non-Turks, especially the Christians are a threat with the potential of siding with the enemy, Russia.
THREE PHASES OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

- The first phase of the Armenian Genocide was the conscription of about 60,000 Armenian men into the Ottoman army, their disarmament and murder by their Turkish fellow soldiers in February 1915.
The second phase of the extermination of the Armenian population started on April 24, 1915.

Several hundred Armenian intellectuals and representatives of national elite (mainly in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople) were arrested and subsequently killed.

April 24, commemorated since then.
• The third phase of the genocide: exile of Armenian women, children, and elderly people to the deserts of Syria and Iraq.

• Hundreds of thousands of people murdered by Turkish soldiers, police officers, Kurdish bandits and others during the deportation.

• Many others died of epidemic diseases.

• Thousands of women and children subjected to violence.

• Tens of thousands were forcibly Islamized.
INTERNAL MECHANISM

• Major government officials organizing the genocide.
• A telegram was sent by the Minister of Interior to all Young Turks stating that: the Government has decided to destroy completely all Armenians living in Turkey.
“An end must be put to their existence, however criminal those measures employed may be. No regard must be paid to age, sex, and...”

- Villages were burned and women and children were forced to flee towards the desert, current Syria to die.
- Policy was to deport all minorities from Turkey.
• Turkish groups were mobilized to follow the Armenians and kill them.
• The U.S. Ambassador in Turkey in 1915 had talked about the fact that there was no doubt in his mind that the extermination of Armenians was a calculated and deliberate policy of the Government, conducted by Talaat Pasha, Minister of Interior to eliminate the Armenian question from Turkey.
The plan was to create an enormous Ottoman Empire that would spread to China, include all the Turkish speaking nations of the Caucasus and Middle Asia, intending also to Turkify all the ethnic minorities of the empire.
VICTIMS OF GENOCIDE

• Before 1915, about 2 million Armenians lived in Ottoman Empire in Eastern part of current Turkey.
• 1.5 million were killed.
• Greek and Assyrians were also killed.
• 450,000 Greek and 300,000 Assyrians were killed.
• All 3 cultures were finished in that country.
• In 1920 and 1930s, Armenian survivors were deported from their homes in western Armenia and sent to other areas in the region.
• In 1940s and exorbitant tax on Armenians with the intention of making them broke.
• Armenian Genocide ABC World news tonight with Peter Jennings; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVQjodbeVgU

• Glenn Beck Salutes Armenian Genocide Upstander - Mehmet Celal Bey; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RjTkHj5U-A&index=36&list=RD03kOR8rKNM
INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

• May 1915, first international response to the violence, joint statement by France, Russia and the Great Britain, atrocities defined as “a crime against humanity and civilization,” with government responsible for the implementation of the crime.
• Victors of WWI gave Armenians a State of their own, a small portion of the land held by Armenians, but no reference were made to the Genocide.

• In the immediate aftermath of the genocide and mass deportation, the Armenians were scattered throughout the Middle East, with no food and shelter.
• Forced to settle in permanent exile.
• Priority, survival facing starvation and disease.
• Gradually rebuilt their lives.
• Started challenging the world to hear their call and recognize and condemn the Genocide.
In the beginning, no sympathy.

Change started in 1960s, more and more countries and organizations started to condemn and recognize the Armenian genocide by Ottoman Turks.

The Turks deny genocide and they deny it still.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Vatican</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Arguments on U.S. de facto Recognition

2. President Reagan Proclamation 4838, April 1981.

3. Two Resolutions by US Congress in 1975 and 1984 confirming the historical facts of Armenian Genocide.

• CNN Slams Obama for Breaking Armenian Genocide Pledge; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDtuetm6vkc
• State Department Responds on The Questions Of Armenian Genocide; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkftRq-FxVI
• Congressman Adam Schiff questions Secretary of State Rice on Armenian Genocide; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxfPdn1rn18
United States National Interest v. Promotion of Justice & Human Rights Abroad

• President Obama calling it mass atrocity, but not genocide.
• In April 2007, as a Senator, he called it genocide.
• Turkey is a strategic ally of the United States in a volatile region.
• Preserving National and Security interests are considered the primary concerns of Foreign Policy.
• Although the U.S. has not yet officially recognized the genocide, President Obama has since 2009 repeated his personal view of the historical fact.
• U.S. promotes the idea of coming into terms between Turks and Armenians as a national issue.
• Potential concern for cases where indigenous population were massacred and their property confiscated.
• Citing the Ottoman systematic massacre of Armenians during the World War I as meeting the criteria for the UN definition of genocide and as one of the genocides of the 20th century.

• Report was received and noted by a resolution at the 38th session of the Sub-Commission in 1985.
Other Recognitions

• 1987, European Parliament Resolution, recognizing the Armenian Genocide.
• Hundreds of international legal scholars have recognized the genocide.
• It is a historical fact.
Turkey and Denial of Genocide

• Last phase: universal and absolute denial of the Turkish government of the mass deportations and genocide carried out against Armenians in their homeland.
• 101 years later, the governments of Turkey and Azerbaijan are the only ones that directly deny the historical factuality of the Armenian Genocide.
• Turkey punishes anyone who brings up the issue inside the country.
• Turkey believes the actions of Ottomans do not merit to be called Genocide.
• Turkish government hired lobbyists and put political and economic pressures to stop the support for Armenian demands in countries acknowledging genocide.
• Turkey, as a NATO member and a vital ally of the West, considers itself immune from the need to recognize the genocide.
• Armenia: 'Genocide' as a word 'exactly sho...;
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHb1U_q4JjY&list=RD03kOR8rKNMc&index=30
Quest for Justice

• The current government in Turkey: they will never accept that what happened was a genocide.
• Some major countries not yet on board.
• Policy of appeasement for political reasons.
• No need to convince that genocide happened.
• Armenians deserve more than just a simple acknowledgement.
• Acknowledgement is not going to change the situation.
• Armenians deserve and expect justice.
• Justice would mean compensation and right to their homes, properties and communal properties.
• Restitution and return of their confiscated lands and properties in accordance with international law.
• Return of all churches and schools to the Armenians.
• Turkey is legally liable.
• Turkey inherited the assets and liabilities of the Ottoman.
• Turkey fears that accepting Genocide will lead to paying restitution and right to return to their lands.
• Option: Pursue legal channels, ICJ, United States, EU and European countries courts.
• Justice is long overdue.
• FULL SPEECH: Amal Clooney on legal team in EHCR Armenian genocide case; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNJ9_vW6FcTs&list=RDoykOR8rKNM&index=29

• BBC - Our World - Remembering the Armenian Massacres (25/4/15); https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iO99ECSJYwkg&index=29&list=RDoykOR8rKNM

• The Armenian Journey - A Story Of An Armenian Genocide; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gE-XI6blXBo
The End