

**ARBEITSGRUPPE ANERKENNUNG -  
GEGEN GENOZID, FÜR  
VÖLKERVERSTÄNDIGUNG E.V.  
WORKING GROUP RECOGNITION -  
AGAINST GENOCIDE, FOR  
INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING**  
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Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the  
United Kingdom  
Secretary of State for Foreign and  
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- Jack Straw -  
King Charles Street

London SW1A 2AH

March 11, 2004

- Interview with UK Ambassador Mrs Thorda Abbott-Watt

Sir,

it has been brought to our attention that the UK Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia, Mrs. Thorda Abbott-Watt has repeatedly denied the genocide of 1.5 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire during the years 1915/16.

Mrs Abbott Watt mentioned "mass killings" and "brutality", but ignored that half of the victims died during death marches or exile in desert areas from starvation, exhaustion and epidemics. The UN Convention on Genocide describes such circumstances as "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." (Art. 2, c)

Mrs Abbott Watt is wrong in publicly doubting that the case of the Armenian Genocide did not correspond with the definition and categories of the UN Genocide Convention. She may not know that the author of this convention, Mr Raphael Lemkin, drafted it on the empirical base of both the Armenian and the Jewish Genocide as case studies during WW1 and WW2.

Mrs Abbott Watt may also be ignorant of the joint statement of May 27, 1915, in which the governments of Britain, France and Russia warned the Ottoman government to hold its members personally responsible for the crimes committed on the Armenian citizens of the Ottoman Empire. In this statement the killings of the Armenian population were categorised, under the terms of contemporary law, as a **crime against humanity and civilization**.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs Abbott Watt is obviously not qualified as a scholar of genocide research. Otherwise she would know that the denial of genocide is considered as an integral part of the crime and its final stage. Sadly, Mrs Abbott Watt herself contributes to the crime of denial, thus keeping painfully alive the trauma of the Armenian nation and upsetting all others, who are aware of the consequences of genocide denial.

As an international NGO, which is focusing on the recognition of denied genocide crimes, we urge you to re-consider whether it is advisable that Mrs Abbott Watt, who is ignorant of basic facts of legal history and international relations and who makes repeated incompetent and offensive statements, may continue her diplomatic career in a country, where half of the population descends from survivors of genocide.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tessa Hofmann  
Chairperson

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<sup>1</sup> The full text reads: "For about a month the Kurd and Turkish populations of Armenia has been massacring Armenians with the connivance and often assistance of Ottoman authorities. Such massacres took place in middle April (new style) at Erzerum, Dertchun, Eguine, Akn, Bitlis, Mush, Sassun, Zeitun, and throughout Cilicia. Inhabitants of about one hundred villages near Van were all murdered. In that city Armenian quarter is besieged by Kurds. At the same time in Constantinople Ottoman Government ill-treats inoffensive Armenian population. In view of those new crimes of Turkey against humanity and civilization, the Allied governments announce publicly to the Sublime-Porte that they will hold personally responsible [for] these crimes all members of the Ottoman government and those of their agents who are implicated in such massacres."

Compare: [http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Affirmation.160/current\\_category.7/affirmation\\_detail.html](http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Affirmation.160/current_category.7/affirmation_detail.html)