



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

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Dear Dr Hoffman

Thank you for your letter to the Foreign Secretary of 11 March, concerning some widely reported recent comments our Ambassador to Armenia, Thorda Abbott-Watt made to an Armenian journalist about the events of 1915-16. I am replying as the desk officer responsible for Armenia. These comments have generated numerous responses from Armenian individuals and organisations, both to her and to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Your views, and those of others who have been in touch with us on this matter, have been noted. Our Ambassador was responding to a question about HMG's position on the terrible tragedy that befell the Armenian people during the First World War. Quite rightly, and as we would expect, she answered with a statement of that position, which is well-known and long established.

We are aware that this issue is particularly sensitive in Armenia, and it is a matter of regret to our Ambassador if her answer caused offence. However, she could not have done other than to answer honestly the question that was put to her and in doing so she was correctly representing her Government's views, and has our support.

Yours sincerely

Sean Rooney
Eastern Dept