

M E M O R A N D U M
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS
OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL,
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND
OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

T U R K E Y ' s
CANDIDACY FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Summary

This Memorandum has been drafted and is put forward by a number of co-signatories- human rights organisations and associations connected with the relevant minorities- in the context of the forthcoming consultations and decision on the Republic of Turkey's application to join the European Union.

The European Parliament has urged Turkey on numerous occasions since 1987 to recognize the genocide committed against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire. The signatories have examined the official position of the Turkish government regarding those Christian minorities still present on Turkish territory (Armenians, Syriacs and other Aramean-speaking Christians, as well as Pontic Greeks); they have come to the conclusion that their situation has in fact significantly worsened over the years 2002 and 2003, at which time the Minister of Education of Turkey, Dr. Huseyn Celik, launched a propaganda campaign against them. Those in Turkey's teachers' union voicing criticism on the subject, and characterizing these measures as racist, have been prosecuted and condemned in criminal courts.

According to the signatories, those activities of the Turkish Interior Ministry which are characterized by hostility towards minorities are not only obstacles to appeasement between Turks on the one hand, and Armenians, Syriacs and Pontic Greeks on the other, but they actually constitute a threat to the democratisation process currently under way in Turkey. As a consequence, the co-signatories propose to the European Parliament, European Commission and European Council, inter alia, to suspend subsidies intended to the Turkish Ministry of Education until the issue is resolved, and to step up its support to civil society initiatives in the field of minority rights.

The cosignatory organizations (in alphabetical order)

AAE-Assembly of Armenians of Europe / Brussels

ACSA - Assyrian-Chaldean-Syriac Association / Sweden

AGBU - Armenian General Benevolent Union - Section of Switzerland / Geneva

Abovian Armenian Cultural Association / The Hague

ADL - Ramgavar France (Arménien Démocrate Libéral) / Paris

“Amarantos” – Association of Greeks from Pontos in Wernau / Germany, Wernau
Association “House of Asia Minor” in Corinth (Μίκρασιατική Στεγη Κορινθου) / Corinth
Association of Greeks from Pontos in Munich / München
Association of friends of the people of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) / Berlin
AUS - Armenian Union of Switzerland / Geneva
Centre for Information and Documentation on Armenia / Berlin
Centre for Studies in Pontos (Κέντρο Ποντιακών Μελετών – ΚΕ. ΠΟ. ΜΕ.) /
Thessaloniki
Christian Solidarity International / Zurich
Christian Solidarity Worldwide / London
Europe-Third World Centre - CETIM / Geneva
FOAN - The Federation of Armenian Organizations in The Netherlands / The Hague
FSPC - Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches / Bern
FASD - Föderation der Aramäer (Suryoye) in Deutschland e.V.
Society for Threatened Peoples – Germany / Göttingen
Society for Threatened Peoples – Switzerland / Bern
Human Rights Without Frontiers / Brussels
Humanitarian Association “Humanitas” Berlin / Berlin
IADL - International Association of Democratic Lawyers
Institute of Armenian Studies / Munich
Institute Tchobanian / Paris
Interfaith International / Oxford, UK
International Council of Jewish Women
International Educational Development / Los Angeles
LICRA - The International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism / Geneva
LIDLIP - International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples / Geneva
Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights / Greece
MRAP - Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples / Paris
SAA - Switzerland-Armenia Association/Bern
SUA – Syriac Universal Alliance/Netherlands
The Union of Armenian Associations in Sweden / Uppsala
TÜDAY - Menschenrechtsverein Türkei/Deutschland e.V. / Köln
UASD – Union of Assyrian-Suryoye Associations in Germany / Gütersloh
Verein der Völkermordgegner e.V. / Frankfurt a.M.
WILPF - Women's International League for Peace and Freedom / Geneva
Working Group Recognition – Against Genocide, for International Understanding /
Munich, Berlin
Working Group for the Recognition of the Genocide in Greeks in Asia Minor (Pontos,
Cappadokia, Ionia and others) and in East Thrace / Berlin