

Speech for the Armenian genocide commemoration

2023-04-24



Shlomo, dear ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we are here gathered to remember and honour innocent souls and martyrs of Armenian genocide women, children and men killed for their identity. First, I would like to pay tribute to the martyrs of 1915, and we will always remember their sacrifice and devotion to avoid such inhuman acts and crimes against humanity and genocide. We must continue our combat of recognition and justice towards history to offer bright, democratic, and free future for our children and coming generations.

The Armenian Genocide as considered first genocide of twenty century occurred at the same time and period with Syriac-Assyrian and Pontiac Greek genocide perpetrated by Ottoman-Turkish rule and until today we can observe post generational trauma among these communities and Turkey and its allies continue their destructive policies and actions against native Christian communities and other vulnerable minority groups in the Middle East. During the genocide of 1915, more than one and half million of Armenians, 500 thousand of Syriac-Assyrians and 350 thousand of Pontiac Greeks have been killed, thousands of women and children have been Islamised forcibly, intellectuals, writers, authors, artists, and religious leaders have been executed and left these communities without leaders in a systematic method to carry out full scale destruction and genocide. Moreover, hundreds of religious, cultural, and social monuments and assets have been seized, converted, or destroyed totally to annihilate these ancient communities totally. Social, economic, cultural richness of Armenian people have been transferred, seized, and forced remaining people in the misery and total lost.

More than one century after the genocide of 1915, with the foundation of Turkish Republic, new ruling class of Turkey continued their annihilated and denialist policies and actions against non-Muslim

communities by the legally putting hand on their economic assets and cultural heritage and suppressing their presence in the country. From 1920 onwards, on several attacks and pogroms, Christian communities in their country lived attacks and pressions and latest decades assassination and killing of well-known personalities forced once again Christian and Armenian people to flee the country. On this, we would like to mention the tragic assassination of courageous journalist and orator Hrant Dink who destroyed many taboos in Turkey especially regarding Armenian Genocide, trauma and memory and historical responsibility.

One century later, Turkey and its allies continue to make life difficult for various Christian communities and minority groups in Iraq and Syria. Recent participation of Turkey along Azerbaijan to the Artsakh war is a clear evidence of Turkey's centennial destructive mentality and approach to the Armenian people. With Azerbaijani leaders, several times declared their true intentions vis-à-vis destruction of Artsakh and Armenia. Turkey's military actions in Iraq and Syria have similar approach and vision to clear these areas from Syriac-Assyrians, Armenians, Kurds, Yezidis, and other minorities to create new security belt with dominant Sunni Muslims by supporting jihadists groups in the region by terrorising vulnerable groups.

Dear all, we are gathered today here to also show our resilience, dedication, and responsibility. We have all a responsibility towards our martyrs, our people and history. To lively freely and with dignity, we must continue our combat of recognition of the genocide, based on this, we repeat our call to Belgium authorities to recognize Sayfo genocide of Syriac-Assyrian people, and hand by hand to support our people to remain in the lands of their forefathers. The Middle East region without minority groups and Caucuses without Artsakh and Armenians is unimaginable. We should not let repetition of the history on our people. Based on this, we call to our allies, friends, and international community to support Armenian, Syriac-Assyrians and other vulnerable groups to continue their existence in their historical lands.

Thank you for your attention and listening.