



Kurdish National Congress of North America
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The Honorable Steve Cohen
U.S. Congressman, 9th District, TN
1004 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2008

Dear Congressman Cohen;

We found your stand on the Armenian genocide by the Turkish Ottomans problematic. Several prominent European countries have already condemned Turkey for the Armenian genocide including France, which has made denial of the genocide a crime.

We understand at this critical time it may not be easy for the US Congress to go along with other European nations in this condemnation due to American strategic needs in the Middle East. In addition, we understand the current geopolitical reasons such as Turkey's cooperation in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, it should be on the future agenda of Congress to hold Turkey responsible for the genocide of 1.5 million Armenians. We urge you to encourage Turks to come to terms with their past and take responsibility for the past actions of their government.

This is important if Turkey is to grow into a more civilized nation by accepting responsibility for this crime against humanity. Turkey cannot find its way into a more prosperous and democratic future if Turkey continues to remain in denial of the Armenian genocide. The world will not tolerate this evasion of responsibility. Therefore democratic nations should not be complacent with Turkey's persistent denial of this historical fact.

We, the Kurds, as a distinct ethnic group in the Middle East, also have experienced genocide; therefore we feel morally convinced the Armenian genocide should not be condoned or effaced by acts of denial.

We urge you, as a man of principle, to review your position and devise a more conscientious means to complement your long stance on defending human rights. Denying the Armenian genocide is equal, in our opinion, to denying the Jewish Holocaust. Denying a historical fact of an act of genocide could allow similar crimes in the future.

Sincerely,

Kirmanj Gundi

Kirmanj Gundi, Ed. D.
President