

My Speech

Armenian Genocide's 106th Anniversary Memorial Service
St Sarkis Church – 25/04/2021

Your grace, Bishop Hovakim Mnaukyan,

Fr Patrick and Rev Fathers,

Your Excellency Mr Gagik Kirakosyan Charge de affair of the Embassy of Republic of Armenian to the UK & Ireland

Dear friends; sisters and brothers,

On behalf of the Armenian Community Council of the UK, I would like to welcome you to the glorious St Yeghiche Church on this solemn occasion of 106th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, perpetrated by Ottoman Turkish Empire in 1915.

A genocide that was planned, implemented mercilessly and monitored closely on a grand scale.

A genocide that is denied for over a century,

A genocide that became a blueprint for Adolf Hitler in planning and implementing the Jewish Holocaust.

A genocide that was documented through eyewitness accounts by numerous foreign missionaries, ambassadors and photo-journalists at the time, amongst them Ambassador **Henry Morgenthau**, the German officer and photographer **Armin Wenger** and many others.

While successive Turkish Governments continue to deny the veracity of the Armenian Genocide, we have witnessed growing number of countries and international establishments recognise the Armenian Genocide;

* The International Association of Genocide Scholars,

* The Vatican

* Many of the European countries

and most recently the official recognition by President Biden only yesterday, on 24th of April 2021.

However, sadly, we are yet to witness recognition by our government in the UK, despite our continued campaigns lead by CRAG, ANC UK and others for several decades.

We are yet to witness recognition by Israeli Government.

Shamelessly, they continue to deny despite several calls by Jewish scholars, journalist and some politicians for official recognition by **Jewish Knesset**.

In my petition letter sent to Prime Minister Boris Johnson on behalf of the British Armenian Community, I have emphasised the fact that recognition of the Armenian Genocide is a global and moral responsibility.

It is the first step toward reconciliation and reparation and most importantly, it has a far higher significance in historical and Human Rights terms than that of geopolitical and economic interests. **And precisely for this reason**, I have provided hard statistical evidence that recognition of the Armenian Genocide by countries such as France, Italy, United States and others has not had a detrimental effect on their economic ties with Turkey.

Evidently, Turkey's supporters of denialism are shrinking rapidly.

However, denial of the Armenian Genocide, particularly by the USA in the past and by UK and Israel, encourages Turkish dictators to do as they please. A poignant example, very recently, was Turkey's major involvement in the war between Artsakh and Azerbaijan. Something that still continues through various means, and in particular through bullying.

It should be very clear for us all that Turkey's pan-Turkism objectives are a real threat, not just for Armenians but for the International Community, for the Caucasus and the Middle East, particularly so when dictators such as Erdogan are at the helm.

It is therefore the responsibility of every one of us to campaign for the Recognition of the Armenian Genocide, to fight for Armenia's independence and security and to take decisive measures to prevent any future genocides.

Recognition is the best means for Prevention.

Following acceptance of guilt and recognition of the Armenian Genocide, the responsibility for reparation would fall upon Turkey, - **this must be our ultimate goal**.

An objective that would bring justice to the cause of Recognition, both for the memory of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide, their descendants and for the Republic of Armenia.

Thank you.