

Letter to President Asking For Recognition of Armenian Genocide on April 24

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in sending the below letter to President Biden asking that he clearly and directly recognize the Armenian Genocide in his April 24 statement. The historic facts are indisputable, and after overwhelming majorities of the House and Senate voted to recognize the Genocide in 2019, the time has come for the President to do so as well.

Sincerely,

Rep. Adam Schiff

Rep. Gus Bilirakis

Rep. Frank Pallone

Rep. David Valadao

Rep. Jackie Speier

Letter Text

Dear President Biden:

Later this month, on April 24, the world will mark the 106th anniversary of the first days of the Armenian Genocide, the systematic murder of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, and the displacement of millions more. Yet for decades, while leaders around the world recognize the first genocide of the 20th Century, the President of the United States has remained silent. We join with the proud Armenian American community and all of those who support truth and justice in asking that you clearly and directly recognize the Armenian Genocide in your April 24 statement.

We know that this is an issue you are well acquainted with from your time in the Senate and as Vice President, including shepherding S.J.Res. 212 (designating April 24, 1990, as a National Day of Remembrance of the 75th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide) through the Judiciary Committee in 1989. We also appreciate that as Vice President you attended the centenary anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in 2015 at the National Cathedral. It was during the centennial that His Holiness Pope Francis at Mass in St. Peter's Basilica said this about the Armenian Genocide: "concealing or denying evil is like allowing a wound to keep bleeding without bandaging it."

The historic fact of what occurred a century ago is not in serious dispute. American diplomats of the period documented the mass slaughter of the Armenians, though they had no word for what they were witnessing. It was only decades later that Raphael Lemkin coined the term “genocide”, and did so specifically with the attempted extermination of the Armenian people in mind.

In accurately describing the Genocide this year, you will be joining both the House and Senate which overwhelmingly passed resolutions doing so in 2019. Additionally, the Library of Congress has already taken the important step of cataloging books on the subject under historically accurate Armenian Genocide subject heading.

Mr. President, as you said last year in your April 24 statement, “Silence is complicity.” The shameful silence of the United States Government on the historic fact of the Armenian Genocide has gone on for too long, and it must end. We urge you to follow through on your commitments, and speak the truth.

Sincerely,