

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 16, 2006

His Excellency José Manuel Barroso  
President  
The European Commission  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Excellency,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding Turkey's ongoing denial of the Armenian Genocide, recognition of which is fundamental to the shared values of the United States and Europe. The European Union is a family of democratic nations, founded on a shared vision for the rule of law, social justice, and respect for human rights. In this regard, we also remain deeply concerned about Turkey's lack of progress in adhering to the democratic principles that serve as the bedrock for our society.

Turkey's protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including rights of ethnic and religious minorities, and freedom of press and expression remains wholly inadequate. Its domestic reform and economic liberalization effort lacks vigor and consistency. Turkey's posture and policies toward its neighbors, including some that are members of the EU, are disturbing. Despite commitments undertaken within the framework for its membership negotiations, Turkey continues to be in persistent and systematic breach of the pace and standards set forth under that instrument.

Of particular concern is Turkey's lack of interest in considering improvements in areas that are of paramount importance for the integrity and credibility of Turkey's bid for membership. Principal among such areas is the question of Turkey's diplomatic recognition of Armenia, and the removal of its blockade, as a major impediment to regional security and development in the South Caucasus. Equally critical is Turkey's ability to end its official policy of denial of the Armenian Genocide, and come to terms with its genocidal legacy.

Underpinning the European idea is the shared will of the EU member states, united by common history, values and a vision for the future, to safeguard and expand security and prosperity across the continent, and to never again allow war, destruction, and genocide to happen within the European family. The United States, ever mindful of its own and the world history, has been at the forefront of international efforts to prevent genocide, including through the acknowledgment of, and learning lessons from past crimes against humanity, as reflected in our country's 2006 National Security Strategy. Unfortunately, Turkey has demonstrated no such willingness or effort, as it remains in strong denial of the truth and reality of the Armenian Genocide – an incontestable historical fact affirmed by an increasing number of EU member states and European institutions.

As Turkey moves toward an eventual outcome of its accession talks, we urge you to

proceed in measuring Turkey's progress on the basis of its full and unequivocal accomplishment of all necessary criteria set forth within its negotiation framework, as well as the spirit and fortitude of its effort in meeting such membership standards as outlined in relevant recommendations and resolutions of other EU institutions, including the European Parliament.

We will be monitoring this process with great interest and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Carolyn B. Maloney

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Steven A. Roth

Mike Bilirakis

Jim Cooper

Donald Payne

Michael R. McNulty

Vytautas M. V. J.

Sen Kelly

Edward J. Markey

Joe Scarborough

Liane E. Watson

Bob Casey

Bob Latta

Charles A. Schumer

Tom Evers

Jim Hironaka

Tammy Baldwin

Kathleen McLoth

Jim Dot

Nita M. Sweeney

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Grace J. Napolitano

Raul M. Grijalva

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List of Signers:

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney  
The Honorable Frank Pallone  
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
The Honorable Michael Bilirakis  
The Honorable John Conyers  
The Honorable Jim Costa  
The Honorable Jim Gerlach  
The Honorable Charles Gonzalez  
The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
The Honorable Sue Kelly  
The Honorable Nita Lowey  
The Honorable Edward Markey  
The Honorable Thaddeus McCotter  
The Honorable James P. McGovern  
The Honorable Michael McNulty  
The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano  
The Honorable Donald Payne  
The Honorable Steven Rothman  
The Honorable Adam Schiff  
The Honorable Joe Schwarz  
The Honorable John Sweeney  
The Honorable Nydia Velázquez  
The Honorable Diane Watson