

**THE MESSAGE OF BLESSING AND WELCOME OF  
CATHOLICOS OF ALL ARMENIANS HIS HOLINESS KAREKIN II  
AT THE CONFERENCE DEDICATED  
TO THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

*(Yerevan, 20 April 2005)*

Your Excellency, President of the Republic of Armenia,  
Honored Participants and Guests of the Conference,

We greet you who are assembled here for this international conference on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, and bring to you blessings from the spiritual center of all Armenians – the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

Today is a day of great consolation for our people, that decades later, international society has focused on the Genocide of the Armenians implemented at the beginning of the 20th century in Ottoman Turkey, and which was the most lamentable page in the history of our people who have seen manifold tribulations.

In the century of enlightenment and the progress of civilization, our people had the hope of finding personal security, a defense of human rights, and conditions for a peaceful and creative life. However, instead they were eliminated from the greatest portion of their historical homeland within Turkey and in the Armenian-occupied settlements of the Ottoman Empire. The systematic massacres and organized exiles were transformed into death sentences; what the sword could not reach, was finished by starvation and epidemic. The studies of these events are not lacking for factual testimonies. Today, the recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, by a number of states as the greatest of crimes against humanity, fills us with confidence, that it will find universal recognition and truthful evaluation.

The 20th century, which began for the Armenian people with the greatest calamity of Genocide, became the century in the history of mankind which witnessed two world wars. The same mindset that produced the dreadful, savage massacres of the Armenians would later create the concentration camps and the gas chambers. Truly, a new century begins and it must begin with a new way of thinking, one that rejects violence and crime, and instead confirms the values of humanity and compassion. A century when, as the psalmist wishes with yearning, mercy and truth will meet, and righteousness and peace will embrace. We the people must create that century. History testifies that ruined cities are rebuilt with greater ease and conditions of life improve faster than changes in the thinking of men and the standards of life – which are the true guarantors of progress and hope for the future. Likewise, the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the Republic of Turkey would become a great victory for human rights and democracy, without which, Turkey will find the building of a free and joyful life difficult.

Dear ones, the highest aspiration and goal, the greatest efforts for all times must be that charity, rights and justice remain victorious against hatred and enmity, against terrorism and war, and against all other evils which are present in our contemporary reality, and are the challenges facing humanity in this century.

This international representative conference is similarly called to reflect on the challenges of our time. In this sense, the commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide is not only an event, but also a charge. It is our wish that this conference benefits the work of having a better and benevolent world, one that manifests the hopes and desires of mankind.

We extend our appreciation to the organizers of this gathering and to all of you, and wish manifold successes to the sessions of the conference.

May the Lord bless us and bless peace, justice and the paths of brotherhood between nations. We offer prayers and incense to the memory of the 1.5 million innocent victims. The mercy, grace and love of God be with the entire world and us always. Amen.