The campaign to influence the government of Israel to recognize the Armenian Genocide by April 24 was not successful

Discussion published by Israel Charny on Friday, May 13, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Below please find two articles in English that were published in the Jerusalem Post in April 2022 and one article in Hebrew that was published in Haaretz (this article is essentially a translation of the two previous columns in English -- obviously not for reading by most of you but an indication of the effort we have made to put the message across to Israeli political leaders and the public).


The point of it all was that we had embarked on a campaign to try to influence the current (post-Netanyahu) government of Israel to recognize the Armenian Genocide on or as of April 24. That day is Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day marking the day in 1915 when the Turks initiated the huge chapter of the Armenian Genocide by arresting some 250 Armenian cultural leaders from a great variety of professions and then executing the vast majority of them, and now it has also become the date on which one year ago President Joseph Biden finally completed full United States recognition of the Armenian Genocide. We felt it would be particularly fitting for Israel to link its recognition to the same date, and from the point of view of its time honored deeply regrettable concerns about Turkish responses thus also to link itself to the continuation of America's major step forward.

As many of you know, getting to government leaders and members of Parliaments is not at all automatic or easy, but we felt that over the course of several months that we were making good progress, and then were also very cheered by the decisions of the editors of both major Israeli newspapers (Jerusalem Post and Haaretz) that they would publish the attached articles in April. Unfortunately, as we all know the world has gone into shock over Russia's brutal invasion (and indeed genocidal killings) in the Ukraine, adding to a huge number of ongoing serious world problems, including Corona, major climate change, and very much including several other genocidal campaigns that are in process. It was unfortunately understandable that our efforts to mobilize government leaders were impeded during such a period.

The reactions to the above columns have been encouraging though also illuminating. Haaretz published a strong Letter to the Editor supporting recognition, and the Jerusalem Post remarkably has run three other subsequent articles from different writers strongly supporting recognition for which you will find links below. At the same time, the online edition of Haaretz which publishes off the cuff reader responses without any editorial review included a number of comments by Israelis who espoused the strong arm realpolitik solution that getting along with Turkey is more important than any other consideration and/or that no other genocide can be compared to the Holocaust. Happily, the responses also included many calls to recognize the Armenian Genocide, including a letter from the recently retired premier news journalist of Israel for many years, Yaakov Ahimeir.

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Will we ever get there? I don’t know, but I continue to take pleasure from the fact that the great majority of Israelis support recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Thanks to all who assisted and participated in our campaign.

Best regards,

Israel

Three ADDITIONAL articles in the Jerusalem Post:

Lederman, Shmuel (April 24, 2022). Israel, Turkey, and a Small Matter of Genocide: When it comes to recognizing the Armenian Genocide, it’s not only about taking a moral position but also about knowing one’s own history. Jerusalem Post. https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-704995?utm_source=jpost.app.apple&utm_medium=share

Schrader, Emily (April 25, 2022). Genocide Awareness Month: Public responsibility to build a better future - opinion. These dates and this month remind us that there is no better time than now to remember the past and take responsibility to ensure that “never again” is the reality. Jerusalem Post. https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-705084?utm_source=jpost.app.apple&utm_medium=share

Boteach, Shmuley (April 25, 2022). US candidates must recognize Armenian genocide - opinion

It was not until 2019 that the House overwhelmingly (405-11) passed a resolution recognizing the genocide, rejecting the denial of the massacre, and calling for educating the public about genocide. Jerusalem Post. https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-705077?utm_source=jpost.app.apple&utm_medium=share