



## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

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### **On Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide**

In order to mark the centennial of the Armenian Genocide in 2015, to remember the suffering of the Armenian people, and to give thanks for their continuing witness, the Presbytery of Los Ranchos respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take the following measures to testify to this tragedy and to help ensure that no other peoples experience such suffering:

1. Urge congregations and individuals to
  - a. recognize the Armenian Genocide, which claimed 1.5 million lives of Armenians from 1915 to 1923 and displaced more than one million more;
  - b. express deep sympathy to the Armenian people and designate April 24th of every year hereafter as a day of remembrance of the 1.5 million Armenians who fell victim to the first genocide of the twentieth century;
  - c. honor the provisions of American and international law and the role of American and international justice institutions in preventing the recurrence of similar mass killings, atrocities, and population removals and bringing the perpetrators of any such crimes to justice; and

Furthermore, believing that the international recognition of this genocide is a necessary condition for the prevention of similar crimes that may occur in the future, the General Assembly:

2. Supports the designation of “genocide” for the deaths of 1.5 million Armenians and the expulsion of one million more from the Ottoman Empire during the period from 1915–1923, recognizing the systemic elimination of a population group as a crime against humanity in keeping with the 1947 Geneva Convention on Genocide.
3. Directs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to
  - a. call upon President Obama and the Congress of the United States of America to recognize and condemn the deaths and expulsion of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire during the period from 1915–1923, as a genocide, and to communicate this resolution for that purpose;
  - b. communicate this resolution to ecumenical partners and organizations nationally and internationally;

c. ensure suitable time within the 222nd General Assembly (2016) to observe the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and to honor those organizations, countries, and individuals who assisted Armenian refugees, including the work of the Jinishian Memorial Program.

4. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency to

a. encourage appropriate observance of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, designating Sunday April 26, 2015, as the 100 year anniversary commemoration day in Presbyterian churches including the preparation of educational and liturgical resources, drawing on the witness of prior assemblies and other historical records, and participation in travel, conferences, and other memorials to be made available on the web at least two months prior to 4/26/2015;

b. encourage the United States to endorse the highest human rights standards for all agencies and actions of the United States government, including protection of minority and/or subjugated populations from genocide and ethnic cleansing;

c. work cooperatively with other churches and communions in both advocacy and encouraging appropriate artistic, musical, and other cultural forms of remembrance.