

Ankara, 10 April 2005

Dear Mr. President,

The Turkish and Armenian peoples not only share a common history and geography in a sensitive region of the world, but also lived together over a long period of time. However, it is not a secret that we have diverging interpretations of events that took place during a particular period of our common history. These differences that have in the past left behind traces of painful memories for our nations continue to hamper the development of friendly relations between our two countries today.

I believe that, as leaders of our countries, our primary duty is to leave to our future generations a peaceful and friendly environment in which tolerance and mutual respect shall prevail.

These views are also shared by the leader of our main opposition party, Mr. Deniz Baykal, the Chairman of the Republican People's Party (CHP). In this connection, we are extending an invitation to your country to establish a joint group consisting of historians and other experts from our two countries to study the developments and events of 1915 not only in the archives of Turkey and Armenia but also in the archives of all relevant third countries and to share their findings with the international public. I believe that such an initiative would shed light on a disputed period of history and also constitute a step towards contributing to the normalization of relations between our countries.

I hope that our proposal which aims to create a friendly and more peaceful climate to be passed on to future generations will meet with your consent. If we receive a favorable response from your side to our proposal of forming such a group, we will be ready to discuss the details of this proposal with your country.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

His Excellency Robert Koçaryan
President
Republic of Armenia
Yerevan