

RESOLUTION 21-04.169 (ASATRYAN, AD43)

Urging Release of Armenian POWs and Civilian Hostages; Divesting from, Condemning, Sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan

WHEREAS on September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan, [backed by Turkey](#), launched an [unprovoked attack](#) on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) with large-caliber weapons and [thousands of mercenaries recruited from Syria](#), targeting not only military personnel, but civilian-populated centers, [schools](#), [churches](#), [hospitals](#), and [forests](#), while killing and injuring women, children, the elderly, and journalists, in [violation of international law](#), thereby committing war crimes; and despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement of November 9, Azerbaijan continues to [detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs and civilian hostages, some of whom have been tortured and beheaded per Human Rights Watch reports](#) and independent international media;

WHEREAS California is home to the largest Armenian American population in the U.S., over 1 million who suffer the effects of the Armenian Genocide denial campaign by Turkey and the 2020 attacks; and California, in accordance with principles of human rights, has adopted legislation to divest from [South Africa](#), [Sudan](#), and [Iran](#), imposing economic consequences upon regimes violating human rights;

WHEREAS in 2019 [U.S. Congress recognized the Armenian Genocide](#) while California annually commemorates the Armenian Genocide, and in [2014 recognized Artsakh's independence and its people's right to self-determination](#); and the U.S. provided \$120 million American tax dollars in security aid to Azerbaijan for FY2018/2019, misused by Azerbaijan in attacking Artsakh and for propagating [hate crimes against Armenian cultural centers in California](#) where vandals and arsonists marked the destructions with Azerbaijani flags.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the California Democratic Party condemns Turkey and Azerbaijan for war crimes committed during 2020 attacks on Artsakh and Armenia; urges Congress and the Biden Administration to sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan; calls upon Azerbaijan to release all POWs and captured civilians; and urges the Secretary of State to engage with Azerbaijani authorities to return POWs and hostages.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the California Democratic Party calls on the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the State Teachers' Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan to ensure that California is not complicit in denying the Armenian Genocide and war crimes committed in 2020, until Turkey recognizes the Armenian Genocide; the people of Artsakh realize their right to self-determination on their indigenous lands.

Author(s): Elen Asatryan, AD 43

Sponsored By: Elen Asatryan , AD 43, Adam B Schiff, AD 43, Suzie Abajian, AD 41, Vanuhi Vartanian, AD 43, Hans Johnson, AD 51, Cindy Montoya, AD 41, Ellen Finkelpearl, AD 41, John Harabedian, AD 41, Josue Barnes, AD 41, Drexel Heard, AD 46, Koreen Cea, AD 51, Todd Jones, AD 41, Jessica Craven, AD 51, Linda Perez, AD 43, Malcolm Johnson, AD 43, Kev Abazajian, AD 74, Gina Clayton-Tarvin, AD 72, Sean Abajian , AD 41, Melissa Taylor, AD 41, Rebecca Wolfersberger , AD 45, Luis Lopez, AD 51, Mia Livas Porter, AD 51, Marco Flores, AD 53, Tina Fredericks, AD 41, Steven Fisher, AD 43, Karen Suarez, AD 41, Mary Ann Lutz, AD 41, Kathleen Patterson, AD 41, Angelica Duenas, AD 39, Tim Wendler, AD 41, Mindy Pfeiffer, AD 41, Jacinta Lincke, AD 41, Kenneth Armstrong, AD 41, Jason Small, AD 45, Thom OShaughnessy, Organization Contact Information: Elen Asatryan|(818) 523-8389| asatryan.e@gmail.com

ADDITIONAL SOURCE MATERIALS

- [LACDP Resolution 003-2024](#): PLACE SANCTIONS ON TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN AND STOP WAR CRIMES
- [LA County Democratic Party Leadership Calls for Sanctions on Turkey, Azerbaijan](#)
[www.lacdp.org/in the news](http://www.lacdp.org/in-the-news)
- [Photos and Videos](#)

General

- Genocide Watch: [Azerbaijan Genocide alert status](#) : Genocide Emergency. Genocide stage: 9-Extermination, 10 - Denial. Targeted Population: Armenians.
www.genocidewatch.com/azerbaijan
- Persecution: Genocide Azerbaijan Opens “Trophy Park” Celebrating Genocide
www.persecution.org/2021/04/13/azerbaijan-opens-trophy-park-celebrating-genocide/
- The Most Righteous Thing Joe Biden Has Done as President: His decision to label the mass murder of Armenians as “genocide” finally put the US on the right side of an awful chapter in world history. The Nation Magazine
https://www.thenation.com/article/world/armenian-genocide-biden/?fbclid=IwAR2vbGrjtJ96fsZqwijcy1Cy0fEsQW7DzfyCo8tXYm0TFqQQLwz_L60I9o
- Asbarez: [Azeri Children Play at Baku’s Macabre ‘Military Trophies Park’](#)
- [The Guardian: FB loophole - use of bots to convey anti-Armenian messages and control narratives of the war.](#)
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2021/apr/12/facebook-loophole-state-backed-manipulation>
- [What Biden's Recognition of Armenian Genocide Means to Armenian-Americans](#)
- https://time.com/5959135/biden-armenia-genocide/?fbclid=IwAR2RSsP6fGqiMilAQzvvx6juW3EH_UnkuYHSMiWsJrY71KKnB9IJZ48lOVM

UN Global Ceasefire

- Countries are listed. Note that Azerbaijan did not sign onto the agreement.
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066982>

Turkey Employing Jihadist ISIS Mercenaries

- [On October 3, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights observed that 1,200 Turkish-backed Syrian mercenaries were sent in to fight so far.](#)
- [France accuses Turkey of sending Syrian mercenaries to Artsakh](#)
- [Turkey deploying Syrian fighters to help ally Azerbaijan, two fighters say](#)
- [CNN Coverage interview with Syrian Fighter](#)

POWs and Civilian Hostages

- [‘They Chained Me to a Radiator and Beat Me’: Armenian POWs Speak Out \(vice.com\)](#)
- [Azerbaijan: Armenian POWs Abused in Custody | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#)
- [Survivors of unlawful detention in Nagorno-Karabakh speak out about war crimes | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#)

- [Unlawful Attacks on Medical Facilities and Personnel in Nagorno-Karabakh | Human Rights Watch](#)
- [American Support is Needed to Resolve a POW Crisis in the Caucasus - Defense One](#)

War Crimes: Civilians, Children, Infrastructure attacked

- [Artsakh's Human Right's Ombudsman reports on the humanitarian disaster](#)
- [BILD Reporter at the scene when Cathedral was bombed](#)
- [Additional coverage about Armenian Church and Cultural House in Artsakh](#)

Environmental impact and destruction

- [Satellite imagery shows environmental damage of reported white phosphorus use in Nagorno Karabakh](#)
- [The humanitarian toll of Azerbaijani scorched-earth strategy in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh: White Phosphorus, devastated nature and non-healing wounds](#)
- [Azerbaijan celebrates Nagorno-Karabakh victory, Erdogan attends. *More than 3,000 soldiers took part in the military parade as Turkish president reaffirms alliance and condemns Armenia.*](#)
- Evidence for chemical burns by white phosphorus in Armenian soldiers during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabagh war [https://www.injuryjournal.com/article/S0020-1383\(21\)00175-3/fulltext](https://www.injuryjournal.com/article/S0020-1383(21)00175-3/fulltext)

Current threats:

- [Armenia says declaring genocide is security matter, Baku protests | Reuters](#)
- [How Might Turkey React to Biden's Armenian Genocide Recognition? - 19FortyFive](#)
- [Armenia's History of Grief Weighs Heavily After Lost War With Azerbaijan \(foreignpolicy.com\)](#)
- [Is Azerbaijan's Ilham Aliyev the new Saddam Hussein? | The National Interest](#)
- [How Human Rights Should Drive Biden's Relationship with Turkey | The National Interest](#)
- [Op-Ed: The fight is not over for Armenians in Los Angeles – The Sundial \(csun.edu\)](#)

Report about Armenia proper Attacked:

- https://yorknewstimes.com/news/world/fighting-by-armenia-and-azerbaijan-injures-4-journalists/article_4_ae303c5-3972-5f48-b680-1c231ce65ce0.html

Aliyev rules out concessions:

- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-armenia-azerbaijan/azeris-and-ethnic-armenians-fight-before-planned-talks-with-russia-idUSKBN26U0PZ>
- <https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/03/asia/azerbaijan-armenia-president-intl/index.html>

Hate Crimes:

- ['I'm afraid now for my son:' SF Armenian school vandalized with hateful graffiti](#)
- [Church burned down in San Francisco: 3 incidents at S.F. Armenian church, school now considered hate crimes](#)
- [Gunfire Erupts At K-8 Private School, 3rd Hate Crime Against SF Armenians In 2 Months](#)

Legal References:

- [ECHR decision that calls on Turkey to refrain from actions that contribute to breaches of the Convention rights of civilians, and to respect their obligations under](#)

[the Convention.](#)

- The UN CMM Cluster Munition Convention Text – Prohibits all use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of cluster munitions.
<https://www.clusterconvention.org/the-convention/convention-text/>
- International Criminal Court Rome Statute – Article 8 on page 4 and 5 discusses and defines what a war crime is. Please note Article 8 Section 2(b)(i), 2(b)(ii), 2(b)(iii), 2(b)(v), 2(b)(ix) and more. -
https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0iPyXoNxocsqoF-2IXvaR04_WcNyNzXQOLfl_i3xfGyH2VFxof9fBkkKLs
- **War Crimes:** Both Hague Law and Geneva Law identify several of the violations of its norms, though not all, as war crimes. While there is no one single document in international law that codifies all war crimes, lists of war crimes can be found in both international humanitarian law and international criminal law treaties, as well as in international customary law. Most specifically in the Rome Statute of ICC.

International Criminal Court has jurisdiction to hear war crimes cases, which however, does not mean you need a currently pending court case to qualify violations as war crimes. The Rome Statute clearly enumerates which violations are considered war crimes, and by the clear evidence of specific cases of such violations during the recent Artsakh war that are included in supporting documents with this resolution, they are qualified as war crimes per se. The Geneva Conventions, as well as Rome Statute and international customary law support such qualification.

Refusing to qualify these incidents as war crimes is an arbitrary move, and is a clear disregard of international definitions.

- **Sanctions**
Sanctions references not only "economic punitive measures", but also encompasses providing military aid and the sale of military equipment. To replace the word "sanction" with "economic punitive measures" or call it "aid and trade" will remove either or both economic and military portion and what is trying to be conveyed here by the use of the term "sanction". Please note LACDP already passed a resolution calling for Sanctions

Biden Recognition of the Armenian Genocide

- [Activists welcome U.S. recognition of Armenian genocide - Los Angeles Times \(latimes.com\)](#)
- [To Armenians, Biden's recognition of the genocide means the world - The Washington Post](#)
- [Why Biden's Armenian Genocide Declaration Really Is a Big Deal - POLITICO](#)
- ['Of course it's genocide': How Biden fulfilled a promise to Armenians that Obama wouldn't - POLITICO](#)
- [Biden, Newsom recognize Armenian genocide \(sfchronicle.com\)](#)
- [Opinion | Biden will be the first U.S. president to recognize the Armenian genocide. That's huge. - The Washington Post](#)
- [Recognizing Armenian Genocide Was Long Overdue, But It's Not Enough \(jewishjournal.com\)](#)
- [Recognizing the Armenian Genocide Marks a Historic Turning Point in American Foreign Policy - Just Security](#)

Biden Recognition of the Armenian Genocide - continued

- [Op-Ed: Remember Artsakh but never forget the Armenian genocide - Los Angeles Times \(latimes.com\)](#)
- [Mr. President, recognize the Armenian genocide - The Boston Globe](#)
- [President Biden could soon recognize the Armenian Genocide | The Fresno Bee](#)
- [Key U.S. air base built on property stolen in Armenian genocide | The Fresno Bee](#)
- [A fork in the road | Ahval \(ahvalnews.com\)](#)
- [The Most Righteous Thing Joe Biden Has Done as President: His decision to label the mass murder of Armenians as “genocide” finally put the US on the right side of an awful chapter in world history. The Nation Magazine](#)

Additional Independent Media Coverage

- PBS: [Why fighting between Armenia, Azerbaijan has regional implications](#)
- The Guardian: [Half of Nagorno-Karabakh population displaced by Armenia and Azerbaijan clashes](#)
- **Associated Press:** [Azerbaijan's genocidal policy](#)
- Defense News: [Democrats urge halt to security aid to Azerbaijan in Armenia conflict](#)
- **LA Times:** [The world should not ignore the deadly attacks in the South Caucasus](#)
- The Guardian: ['Defend our nation': Armenian diaspora feels pull of another war](#)
- [https://www.injuryjournal.com/article/S0020-1383\(21\)00175-3/fulltext](https://www.injuryjournal.com/article/S0020-1383(21)00175-3/fulltext)

Other

Congressman Schiff Statement - <https://www.facebook.com/AdamSchiffCA/posts/4303875352984224>
Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair [Senator Bob Menendez](#) slams Turkey's military aggression against Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) and Syria and bellicose actions against Greece and Cyprus.

"Long considered a NATO ally, Turkey seems to want to break with us rather than be our partner," said Sen. Menendez, who called on the Biden Administration to reorient the US in the Eastern Mediterranean towards democracies. - <https://www.facebook.com/ancagrassroots/videos/749435885771098>



Glendale Teachers Association
3233 N. Verdugo Road, Glendale, CA 91208
(818) 240-3924
www.glendaleteachers.org



April 20, 2021

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th St.
Sacramento, CA. 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

I am writing to you today to urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169, as submitted, introduced by DSCC Member Elen Asatryan. The Resolution urges for the immediate release of approximately 200 Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian hostages held captive by Azerbaijan and calls for divesting, condemning and sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan for their flagrant violations of international law and war crimes during the 44-day unprovoked war they initiated and perpetrated on the people of Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) beginning September 27, 2020.

Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey through both its munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, and its military personnel, which included recruiting, funding and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, such as hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs. Azeri soldiers committing these heinous crimes have made their videos public on social media and continue to seek out the relatives of their Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of the torturous acts including bodily mutations and beheadings.

Turkish military forces have historical targeted and killed Armenians, with no accountability. Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world, the government of Turkey continues to deny the Armenian Genocide which occurred 106 years ago, resulting in the killings of over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syrians, and Chaldeans. The Government of Turkey has funded a multimillion dollar lobbying campaign to defeat any and all legislation that acknowledges their perpetrated acts of genocide.

We must not only call on our federal government to take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars, but we must also urge the California Public

Employees' Retirement System and the State Teachers' Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, while sending a principled message to any country who participates in war crimes, denies genocide, works against the United States and California's security interests and basic humanitarian principles. Furthermore, Turkey's irresponsible and belligerent actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not make for sound investment.

As educators, we are entrusted to teach students about historical events that include human injustices in order to help students learn empathy and garner a moral obligation to protect and promote human rights. We prepare our students, the citizens of the future, to practice anti-racism, anti-violence, anti-bigotry, and anti-hate. How can we as adults stand silent and financially support the harmful and hateful acts described above? It is imperative that our actions model the expectations that we hold for our students. We must speak up and take action.

I urge you to speak up and take again by voting in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04. 169 to show a continued commitment to upholding and supporting democratic values of liberty, justice, and peace.

Sincerely,



Ms. Taline Arsenian
President



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

April 19, 2021

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 (Asatryan, AD43) as submitted

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Armenian National Committee of America - Western Region (ANCA-WR) - the largest and most influential nonpartisan Armenian-American advocacy organization -- urging support for CDP resolution 21-04.169 (Asatryan, AD43) "Urging Release of Armenian POWs and Civilian Hostages; Divesting from, Condemning, Sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan" as submitted.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syrians, and Chaldeans.

Undeterred, Turkey and Azerbaijan continue to take brazen actions within the region, including deliberate acts in opposition to the United States. In 2020, the Executive Branch imposed sanctions on Turkey in response to their acquisition of a multibillion-dollar Russian missile system. At the same time, Turkey increased its aggression in the region, recently attacking U.S.-backed Kurds fighting ISIS in Syria. In the Fall of 2020, the international community failed to speak or act during Azerbaijan's renewed war against the Armenians of Artsakh (formerly known as Nagorno Karabakh) Republic. During this time, Turkey funded and transported thousands of terrorist mercenaries from Syria to support Azerbaijan against the indigenous Armenian population.

For these reasons, the ANCA-WR fully supports this resolution.

Sincerely,

Nora Hovsepien, Esq.
Chair



California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Southern California Armenian Democrats to urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 as submitted and introduced by DSCC Member Elen Asatryan which 1) urges for the immediate release of the approximate 200 Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian hostages held by Azerbaijan and 2) calls for divesting, condemning and sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan for their flagrant violations of international law and war crimes during the 44-day unprovoked war they waged on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).

In late September, 2020, Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey through both its munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, and its military personnel, which included recruiting, funding and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, such as hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs. Azeri soldiers committing these heinous crimes have made their videos public on social media and continue to seek out the relatives of their Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of the torturous acts including bodily mutations and beheadings.

In addition to Azerbaijan's havoc by way of murder, torture and captivity of Armenians alongside its decimation of Armenian infrastructure and ancient cultural sites during the 44day war and thereafter, Azerbaijan also committed ecocide and environmental destruction through its use of white phosphorus munitions in Armenian forests within civilian-populated communities. The use of white phosphorous against civilians is banned by the Geneva Convention. Wildlife, vegetation, and water sources were not spared from Azeri war crimes – neither were the bodies of Armenian soldiers whose burns overwhelmed Armenian hospitals and physicians. Chemical burns inflicted by way of white phosphorous are different than physical burns which result from exposure to heat/fire. Chemical burns, which afflicted Armenian soldiers as a result of Azerbaijan's use of white phosphorous, essentially eat the flesh of the afflicted, down to the bone and through it. Treatment is difficult and painful and specialist physicians from around the world were summoned to assist in treatment of the wounded Armenian soldiers, which is still ongoing.



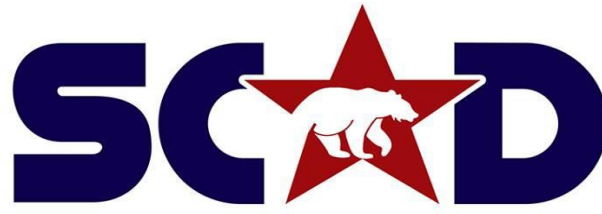
On December 10, 2020, Azerbaijan held a military parade in its capital city of Baku celebrating its “successes” during the 44-day war, wherein over 3,000 of its soldiers participated. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the parade and remarked during his speech that “As long as Turkey and Azerbaijan work hand in glove, they will continue to overcome all difficulties and run from one success to the next.” It is abhorrent that war crimes against Armenians are being heralded as “successes.”

Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the “Military Trophy Park” in the country’s capital city of Baku which boasts its above-referenced war crimes through such abhorrent exhibits including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azeri families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored “park” have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians all around the world, especially the family members of fallen soldiers, civilians and currently held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians is being actively sown by Azerbaijan all while it continues to keep around 200 Armenian POWs captive.

With all this in mind, we must not only call on our federal government to **take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars**, but we must also urge the California Public Employees’ Retirement System and the State Teachers’ Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and **divest** all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, **thus sending a principled message to any country who participates in war crimes, denies genocide, works against the United States and California’s security interests and basic humanitarian principles**. Furthermore, Turkey’s irresponsible and bellicose actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not make for sound investment.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syrians, and Chaldeans.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced any domestic opposition, purged independent judges replacing them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ARMENIAN DEMOCRATS
VOICE OF THE ARMENIAN DEMOCRATS

Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in number of imprisoned media workers.

Again, we urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04. 169 to show California Democratic Party's continued commitment to upholding and spreading democratic and humanistic values of liberty and justice. If we do not take a strong stance now then nothing sets us apart from the international community in 1915 who stood by and watched the Armenian Genocide unfold, 1.5 million women, children and men raped and slaughtered- and did nothing to stop it.

Sincerely,

Leonard Manoukian
President

PAUL KREKORIAN



FOR CITY COUNCIL



PaulKrekorian.com

(818)714-1516

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169

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of Armenian soldiers whose burns overwhelmed Armenian hospitals and physicians. Chemical burns inflicted by way of white phosphorous are different than physical burns which result from exposure to heat/fire. Chemical burns, which afflicted Armenian soldiers as a result of Azerbaijan's use of white phosphorous, essentially eat the flesh of the afflicted, down to the bone and through it. Treatment is difficult and painful and specialist physicians from around the world were summoned to assist in treatment of the wounded Armenian soldiers, which is still ongoing.

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Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the "Military Trophy Park" in the country's capital city of Baku which boasts its above-referenced war crimes through such abhorrent exhibits including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azeri families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored "park" have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians all around the world, especially the family members of fallen soldiers, civilians and currently held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians is being actively sown by Azerbaijan all while it continues to keep around 200 Armenian POWs captive.

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Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syriacs, and Chaldeans.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced any domestic

opposition, purged independent judges replacing them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in number of imprisoned media workers.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Krekorian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Krekorian,
Los Angeles City Councilmember and DSCC Member



April 19, 2021

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 as submitted

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

The Pan Armenian Council of the Western United States and its 24 regional and national Armenian-American religious, political and civil organizations: Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian Bar Association, Armenian Catholic Eparchy of Our Lady of Nareg of North America, Armenian Democratic Liberal Party, Western District, Armenian General Benevolent Union, Western District, Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian National Committee of America, Western Region, Armenian Relief Society of Western USA, Armenian Revolutionary Federation of Western USA, Armenian Society of Los Angeles, Armenian Youth Association of California, Armenian Youth Federation of Western USA, Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of the Western USA, Homenetmen Western USA, Iraqi Armenian Family Association of Los Angeles, Kessab Educational Association, Organization of Istanbul Armenians, Service Employees International Union Local 721 – Armenian Caucus, Southern California Armenian Democrats, Tekeyan Cultural Association, Unified Young Armenians, Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 as submitted and introduced by DSCC Member Elen Asatryan which urges for the immediate release of the approximate 200 Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian hostages held captive by Azerbaijan and calls for divesting, condemning and sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan for their flagrant violations of international law and war crimes during the 44-day unprovoked war they waged on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).



On September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey through both its munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, and its military personnel, which included recruiting, funding and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, such as hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs. Azeri soldiers committing these heinous crimes have made their videos public on social media and continue to seek out the relatives of their Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of the torturous acts including bodily mutations and beheadings.

In addition to Azerbaijan's havoc by way of murder, torture and captivity of Armenians alongside its decimation of Armenian infrastructure and ancient cultural sites during the 44 day war and thereafter, Azerbaijan also committed ecocide and environmental destruction through its use of white phosphorus munitions in Armenian forests within civilian-populated communities. The use of white phosphorous against civilians is banned by the Geneva Convention. Wildlife, vegetation, and water sources were not spared from Azeri war crimes – neither were the bodies of Armenian soldiers whose burns overwhelmed Armenian hospitals and physicians. Chemical burns inflicted by way of white phosphorous are different than physical burns which result from exposure to heat/fire. Chemical burns, which afflicted Armenian soldiers as a result of Azerbaijan's use of white phosphorous, essentially eat the flesh of the afflicted, down to the bone and through it. Treatment is difficult and painful and specialist physicians from around the world were summoned to assist in treatment of the wounded Armenian soldiers, which is still ongoing.

On December 10, 2020, Azerbaijan held a military parade in its capital city of Baku celebrating its "successes" during the 44-day war, wherein over 3,000 of its soldiers participated. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the parade and remarked during his speech that "As long as Turkey and Azerbaijan work hand in glove, they will continue to overcome all difficulties and run from one success to the next." It is abhorrent that war crimes against Armenians are being heralded as "successes."

Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the "Military Trophy Park" in the country's capital city of Baku which boasts its above-referenced war crimes through such abhorrent exhibits including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azeri families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored "park" have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians all around the world, especially the family members of fallen soldiers, civilians and



currently held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians is being actively sown by Azerbaijan all while it continues to keep around 200 Armenian POWs captive.

With all this in mind, we must not only call on our federal government to take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars, but we must also urge the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the State Teachers' Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, while sending a principled message to any country who participates in war crimes, denies genocide, works against the United States and California's security interests and basic humanitarian principles. Furthermore, Turkey's irresponsible and bellicose actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not make for sound investment.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syrians, and Chaldeans.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced any domestic opposition, purged independent judges replacing them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in number of imprisoned media workers.

Again, we urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 to show our continued commitment to upholding and spreading democratic and humanistic values of liberty and justice.

Sincerely,

PAN ARMENIAN COUNCIL OF THE WESTERN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Armenian Assembly of America

Armenian Bar Association

Armenian Catholic Eparchy of Our Lady of Nareg of North America

Armenian Democratic Liberal Party, Western District

Armenian General Benevolent Union, Western District

Armenian Evangelical Union of North America

Armenian Missionary Association of America

Armenian National Committee of America, Western Region

Armenian Relief Society of Western USA

Armenian Revolutionary Federation of Western USA



Armenian Society of Los Angeles
Armenian Youth Association of California
Armenian Youth Federation of Western USA
Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of the Western USA
Homenetmen Western USA
Iraqi Armenian Family Association of Los Angeles
Kessab Educational Association
Organization of Istanbul Armenians
Service Employees International Union Local 721 – Armenian Caucus
Southern California Armenian Democrats
Tekeyan Cultural Association
Unified Young Armenians
Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America
Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America

Talin V. Yacoubian

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169, as submitted, introduced by DSCC Member Elen Asatryan which urges for the immediate release of the approximate 200 Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian hostages held captive by Azerbaijan and calls for divesting, condemning and sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan for their flagrant violations of international law and war crimes during the 44-day unprovoked war they waged on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).

On September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey through both its munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, and its military personnel, which included recruiting, funding and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, such as hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs. Azeri soldiers committing these heinous crimes have made their videos public on social media and continue to seek out the relatives of their Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of the torturous acts including bodily mutilations and beheadings.

In addition to Azerbaijan's havoc by way of murder, torture and captivity of Armenians alongside its decimation of Armenian infrastructure and ancient cultural sites during the 44 day war and thereafter, Azerbaijan also committed ecocide and environmental destruction through its use of white phosphorus munitions in Armenian forests within civilian-populated communities. The use of white phosphorus against civilians is banned by the Geneva Convention. Wildlife, vegetation, and water sources were not spared from Azeri war crimes – neither were the bodies of Armenian soldiers whose burns overwhelmed Armenian hospitals and physicians. Chemical burns inflicted by way of white phosphorus are different from physical burns which result from exposure to heat/fire. Chemical burns, which afflicted Armenian soldiers as a result of Azerbaijan's use of white phosphorus, essentially eat the flesh of the afflicted, down to the bone and through it. Treatment is difficult and painful and specialist physicians from around the world were summoned to assist in treatment of the wounded Armenian soldiers, which is still ongoing.

On December 10, 2020, Azerbaijan held a military parade in its capital city of Baku celebrating its "successes" during the 44-day war, wherein over 3,000 of its soldiers participated. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the parade and remarked during his speech that "As long as Turkey and Azerbaijan work hand in glove, they will continue to overcome all difficulties and run from one success to the next." It is abhorrent that war crimes against Armenians are being heralded as "successes."

Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the "Military Trophy Park" in the country's capital city of Baku which boasts its above-referenced war crimes through such abhorrent exhibits including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azeri families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored "park" have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians all around the world, especially the family members of fallen soldiers, civilians and currently held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians is being actively sown by Azerbaijan all while it continues to keep around 200 Armenian POWs captive.

With all this in mind, we must not only call on our federal government to take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars, but we must also urge the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the State Teachers' Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, while sending a principled message to any country who participates in war crimes, denies genocide, works against the United States and California's security interests and basic humanitarian principles. Furthermore, Turkey's irresponsible and bellicose actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not make for sound investment.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syrians, and Chaldeans.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced any domestic opposition, purged independent judges replacing them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in number of imprisoned media workers.

Again, I urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04. 169 to show our continued commitment to upholding and spreading democratic and humanistic values of liberty and justice. If we do not take a strong stance now then nothing sets us apart from the international community in 1915 who stood by and watched the Armenian Genocide unfold, 1.5 million women, children and men raped and slaughtered- and did nothing to stop it.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Joshua Levine Grater

Rabbi Joshua Levine Grater



ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

734 15TH STREET, N.W. • SUITE 500 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005 • 202.393.3434

April 18, 2021

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Urging vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Armenian Assembly of America to urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 as submitted and introduced by DSCC Member Elen Asatryan, which urges the immediate release of approximately 200 Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian hostages held captive by Azerbaijan, and calls for divesting, condemning, and sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan for their flagrant violations of international human rights law and war crimes during the 44-day unprovoked war that both countries waged on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).

On September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey by way of munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 strike drones, and military personnel, which included recruiting, funding, and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, such as hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing a ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs. Azerbaijani soldiers committing heinous crimes have made their videos public on social media, and continue to strike fear among relatives of Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of their torturous actions including bodily mutilations and beheadings of victims.

In addition to Azerbaijan's havoc by way of murder, torture and captivity of Armenians, alongside its decimation of Armenian infrastructure and ancient cultural sites during the 44-day war and thereafter, Azerbaijan also committed ecocide and environmental destruction through its use of white phosphorus munitions in Armenian forests adjacent to civilian-populated communities. The use of white phosphorus against civilians is banned by the Geneva Conventions. Wildlife, vegetation, and water sources were not spared from Azerbaijani war crimes – neither were the bodies of Armenian soldiers whose burns continue to overwhelm Armenian hospitals and physicians. Chemical burns inflicted by way of white phosphorus are different compared to physical burns, which result from exposure to heat and fire. Chemical burns, which afflicted Armenian soldiers as a result of Azerbaijan's use of white phosphorus, essentially eat the flesh of the wounded, down to the bone and through it. Treatment is difficult and painful, and specialist physicians from around the world were summoned to assist in the treatment of the wounded Armenian soldiers, which is still ongoing.

On December 10, 2020, Azerbaijan held a military parade in its capital city of Baku celebrating its "successes" during the 44-day war, wherein over 3,000 of its soldiers participated. Turkish President

Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the parade and remarked during his speech that “As long as Turkey and Azerbaijan work hand in glove, they will continue to overcome all difficulties and run from one success to the next.” It is abhorrent that war crimes against Armenians are heralded as “successes.”

Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the “Military Trophy Park” in Baku, which boasts its aforementioned war crimes via horrific exhibits, including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azerbaijani families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored “park” have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians around the world, especially to family members of fallen soldiers, civilians, and currently-held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians are being actively sown by Azerbaijan, while it continues to keep upwards of 200 Armenian POWs captive.

It is incumbent upon all people of good will to not only call on our federal government to take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan, and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars, but also urge the California Public Employees’ Retirement System and the State Teachers’ Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, while sending a principled message to any country that participates in war crimes, denies genocide, and works against the United States and California’s security interests and basic humanitarian principles. Further, Turkey’s bellicose actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not augur a sound investment.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other Christian minority groups.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced domestic opposition, purged independent judges and replaced them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in the number of imprisoned media workers.

Again, we urge you to vote in favor of CDP Resolution 21-04.169 to show our continued commitment towards upholding and spreading democratic and humanistic values of liberty and justice. If we do not take a strong stance now, then nothing sets us apart from the international community in 1915, which stood by and watched the Armenian Genocide unfold – 1.5 million women, children, and men raped and slaughtered – and did nothing to stop it.

Sincerely,

Mihran Toumajan

Mihran Toumajan
Western Region Director

April 30, 2021

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

We urge you to vote in favor of and allow passage through consent at the Convention, CDP Resolution calling for Justice for Armenian POWs and Civilian Hostages; Divesting from, Condemning, Sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan. (Elen Asatryan, AD43)

-Background information and source materials are available for your review at <https://bit.ly/3vltknE> .

As you may be aware, on April 24, 2021, President Joe Biden on the occasion of the 106th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide formally recognized the massacre of the 1.5 million Armenians who were slaughtered at the hands of Ottoman Turks, as Genocide. Yet to date, the Armenian people face threats of annihilation as noted by Genocide Watch and recent reports published by Human Rights Watch. Lives are at stake. The situation is dire. This resolution is timely.

On September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey through both its munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, and its military personnel, which included recruiting, funding and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs some of whom have been tortured and/or beheaded. These heinous crimes have been made public on social media, by Azeri soldiers who seek out the relatives of their Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of their tortious acts.

In addition to targeting civilians and civilian settlements, torturing, mutilating and murdering POWs and civilian captives, destroying cultural and religious sites, Azerbaijan also committed ecocide and environmental destruction through its use of white phosphorus munitions which burned thousands of acres of forests that are home to a diverse ecosystem and various endangered species.

Azerbaijan's war crimes also include the use of cluster munitions on civilian centers, which are designed for long term damage and pose a lasting threat to civilians. And, of course, the above mentioned white phosphorous, the use of which against civilians is banned by the Geneva

Convention, as the chemical burns caused by white phosphorus continue to burn at 5000F° until the elemental form of the phosphorus is completely oxidized, in other words the chemical will burn through flesh and bone and cannot be extinguished.

Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the "Military Trophy Park" in the country's capital city of Baku which boasts its above-referenced war crimes through such abhorrent exhibits including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azeri families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored "park" have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians all around the world, especially the family members of fallen soldiers, civilians and currently held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians is being actively sown by Azerbaijan all while it continues to keep around 200 Armenian POWs captive.

With all this in mind, we must not only call on our federal government to take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars, but we must also urge the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the State Teachers' Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, while sending a principled message to any country who participates in war crimes, denies genocide, works against the United States and California's security interests and basic humanitarian principles. Furthermore, Turkey's irresponsible and bellicose actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not make for sound investment.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syriacs, and Chaldeans.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced any domestic opposition, purged independent judges replacing them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in number of imprisoned media workers.

Again, we urge you to support the resolution calling for Justice for Armenian POWs and Civilian Hostages; Divesting from, Condemning, Sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan to show our continued commitment to upholding and spreading democratic and humanistic values of liberty and justice. Should you need additional information, please contact the author, Elen Asatryan at

asatryan.e@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing of your support and thank you for your time, commitment and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Lilit Iskanian | Glendale, CA |
| Ani Bekmezian | West Hollywood, ca |
| Saro Shirinian | Porter Ranch, CA |
| Armig Shirinian | La Crescenta, CA |
| Noushig Karpanian | Los Angeles California |
| Razmig Shirinian | La Crescenta, CA |
| Sanan Shirinian | Orange, CA |
| Anahid Oshagan | Glendale, CA |
| Ara Oshagan | Glendale, California |
| Sanan Shirinian | Orange, CA |
| Sebouh Oshagan | Berkeley, CA |
| Adom Oshagan | Glendale, CA |
| Sebouh Oshagan | Berkeley, CA |
| Ara Oshagan | Glendale, California |
| Anahid Oshagan | Glendale, CA |
| Dustin Clendenen | Los Angeles, CA |
| Ani Torosyan | Glendale , CA |
| Karren Torosyan | Glendale , CA |
| Lori Torosyan | Glendale ca |
| Nairi Torosyan | Glendale ca |
| Sarkis Simonian | Glendale, CA |
| Zvart Vartanyan | Glendale, CA |

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mary Karpanian | Los Angeles California |
| Hasmik Baghdasaryan | Van Nuys, CA |
| Anahit Hambaryan | Van Nuys, CA |
| Misha Baghdasaryan | Van Nuys, CA |
| Azat Baghdasaryan | Van Nuys, CA |
| Elizabeth Kyurkchyan | Studio City |
| Mesrob Kyurkchyan | Studio City |
| Hasmik Kyurkchyan | Van Nuys, CA |
| Sam Galoustian | Glendale California |
| Lori Bashian | Winnetka, CA |
| Ani Ghazaryan | Glendale, California |
| Tenny Alaverdian | Glendale, California |
| Kohar Sanikian | Signal Hill, CA |
| Vana Bashian | Los Angeles, California |
| Deeown Shaverdian | Glendale, California |
| Setrag Cherchian | Garden Grove, California |
| Natalie Yekikan | Glendale, CA |
| Gregory Mikhanjian | Tustin, CA |
| Raffi Samurkashian | Baltimore, MD |
| Karine Codilian | Irvine, CA |
| Alique Cherchian | Garden Grove, CA |
| Maria Zaki | Glendale, CA |
| Garo Ghazourian | Los Angeles, CA |
| Garni Dadaian | Encino, CA |
| Jibid Melkonian | La Crescenta, California |

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Preny Alaverdian | Glendale, CA |
| Tanya Toramanian | Clovis, California |
| Serli Shanlian | Altadena, CA |
| Taleen Nazarian | Pasadena, CA |
| Manoug Manokian | Porter Ranch, California |
| Christina Bastagian | Glendale, CA |
| Krista Apardian | Huntington Beach, CA |
| Kile Meguerian | Granada hills |
| Nareg Tufenkdjian | Pasadena, CA |
| Haig Kossakian | Burbank, CA |
| Naira Gourdikian | Long Beach, CA |
| Maher Zaher | Orange, CA |
| Seran krikorian | Glendale, ca |
| Victoria Cinquegrani | Whittier, CA |
| Seta Avedissian | Glendale, CA |
| Ani Nazaryan | Glendale |
| Set Nazaryan | Glendale |
| Areknaz Grigoryan | Glendale |
| Amalya Nazaryan | Glendale |
| Krikor Der Abrahamian | San Francisco, California |
| Meghrig Zaki | CA, Glendale |
| Tristan Agoopi | Los Angeles, CA |
| Joseph Kaskanian | Glendale, CA |
| Lusine Asatryan | Glendale,Ca |
| Suren Tovmasyan | Glendale,Ca |

Liana Margaryan

Sun Valley, CA

Joseph Kaskanian

Glendale, CA

April 29, 2020

California Democratic Party Headquarters
Resolutions Committee
1830 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Lead Co-Chairs, Co-Chairs and Members of the CDP Resolutions Committee,

We urge you to vote in favor of and allow passage through consent at the Convention, CDP Resolution calling for Justice for Armenian POWs and Civilian Hostages; Divesting from, Condemning, Sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan. (Background information and source materials are available for your review at <https://bit.ly/3vltknE> .)

As the party who stands up for human rights of all people and speaks out against human rights violations, we Democrats must take action now. As you may be aware, on April 24, 2021, President Joe Biden on the occasion of the 106th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide formally recognized the massacre of the 1.5 million Armenians who were slaughtered at the hands of Ottoman Turks, as Genocide. Yet to date, the Armenian people face threats of annihilation as noted by Genocide Watch and recent reports published by Human Rights Watch. Lives are at stake. **The situation is dire and this resolution is timely.**

On September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan, heavily backed by Turkey through both its munitions, including the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, and its military personnel, which included recruiting, funding and transporting thousands of Syrian jihadist mercenaries to Azerbaijan, launched an unprovoked attack on Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) targeting not only Armenian military posts and personnel, but heavily populated civilian centers, hospitals, churches and schools. Women, children, the elderly, and journalists were purposefully targeted, killed and injured. Despite Azerbaijan's obligations under the Geneva Conventions and its commitments in signing the ceasefire statement on November 9, 2020, Azerbaijan continues to detain approximately 200 Armenian POWs some of whom have been tortured and/or beheaded. These heinous crimes have been made public on social media, by Azer soldiers who seek out the relatives of their Armenian victims and harass them with photographs and videos of their tortious acts.

In addition to targeting civilians and civilian settlements, torturing, mutilating and murdering POWs and civilian captives, destroying cultural and religious sites, Azerbaijan also committed ecocide and environmental destruction through its use of white phosphorus munitions which burned thousands of acres of forests that are home to a diverse ecosystem and various endangered species. ...

Azerbaijan's war crimes also include the use of cluster munitions on civilian centers, which are designed for long term damage and pose a lasting threat to civilians. And, of course, the above mentioned white phosphorous, the use of which against civilians is banned by the Geneva

Convention, as the chemical burns caused by white phosphorus continue to burn at 5000F° until the elemental form of the phosphorus is completely oxidized, in other words the chemical will burn through flesh and bone and cannot be extinguished.

Most recently, on April 12, 2021, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated the "Military Trophy Park" in the country's capital city of Baku which boasts its above-referenced war crimes through such abhorrent exhibits including a wall of helmets belonging to dead Armenian soldiers, and mannequins with caricature-like features made to mockingly resemble Armenian soldiers and POWs who are displayed shackled in scenes of torture and humiliation. Photographs of Azeri families with their young children visiting and parading around the state-sponsored "park" have surfaced on social media, causing shock, distress, and trauma for Armenians all around the world, especially the family members of fallen soldiers, civilians and currently held POWs. Hate and contempt towards Armenia and Armenians is being actively sown by Azerbaijan all while it continues to keep around 200 Armenian POWs captive.

With all this in mind, we must not only call on our federal government to take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of the POWs, sanction Turkey and Azerbaijan and demand accountability for inappropriate allocations of our tax dollars, but we must also urge the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the State Teachers' Retirement System to take socially responsible steps and divest all public employee retirement funds in investment vehicles issued by Turkey and Azerbaijan. California state trust monies must be protected from investment in Azerbaijan and Turkey, while sending a principled message to any country who participates in war crimes, denies genocide, works against the United States and California's security interests and basic humanitarian principles. Furthermore, Turkey's irresponsible and bellicose actions and foreign policy have resulted in a spiraling and volatile economic market in Turkey, which does not make for sound investment.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments around the world to encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide, the government of Turkey has engaged and continues to engage in an ongoing campaign of genocide denial, refusing to compensate its victims, and funding a multimillion-dollar political lobbying campaign to defeat legislation that recognizes the Armenian Genocide that killed over 1.5 million Armenians and other minority groups including Greeks, Assyrians, Syriacs, and Chaldeans.

Turkey also continues state-sponsored human rights abuses as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has taken the country down an authoritarian path. He has forcibly silenced any domestic opposition, purged independent judges replacing them with loyalists, and jailed scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey only behind China in number of imprisoned media workers.

Again, we urge you to support the resolution calling for Justice for Armenian POWs and Civilian Hostages; Divesting from, Condemning, Sanctioning Turkey and Azerbaijan to show our continued commitment to upholding and spreading democratic and humanistic values of liberty and justice. Should you need additional information, please contact the author, Elen Asatryan at

818.523.8389 or asatryan.e@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing of your support and thank you for your time, commitment and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Ardashes "Ardy" Kassakhian | Councilmember, City of Glendale |
| Malcolm Johnson | Individual, AD 43 |
| John Harabedian | Delegate, AD 41 |
| Stephanie Oddo | Delegate, AD 73 |
| Kenneth Armstrong | LACDP Vice Chair, AD-41 |
| Hans Johnson | President, East Area Progressive Democrats & DSCC delegate, AD 51 |
| Rocio Rivas | Elected Delegate, AD 51 |
| Henry Lo | 49AD Delegate |
| Malcolm Johnson | Individual, AD 43 |
| Chris Duncan | Delegate, AD 73 |
| Ingrid Gunnell | AD 43 |
| Chris Duncan | Delegate, AD 73 |
| Adele Andrade Stadler | Voices for Immigrant Students of Alhambra, Executive Director |
| Jenni Chang | Delegate, AD-43 |
| Angel Izard | Delegate, AD 43 |
| CA Senator Maria Elena Durazo | Senate District 24 |

MALCOLM JOHNSON
GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

April 30, 2021

Dear California Democrats:

As a member of the Democratic State Central Committee, I am a non-Armenian, African American local Democratic leader. I write to ask that ALL in our party, led by its Resolutions Committee, ACT now with required urgency to **APPROVE the resolution by our party to support the human rights of Armenians and sanctions for those implicated in abusing them.**

This resolution is before us now. We are the largest Democratic Party in our nation. We must not delay this necessary action. Please pass this resolution and make it a **PRIORITY item for all delegates' prompt approval at this convention.**

If you are at all familiar with Genocide, you may have heard how 1.5 million Armenians died in the Genocide of 1915. That's a terrible number, but you may not understand the full weight of what that number means.

There were 2.1 million Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire as the Genocide commenced. That means nearly 75 percent of the population was wiped from existence. That means a unique language was nearly extinguished; a culture, literary traditions, artistic traditions, music, poetry, food, and everything that makes people a people, nearly destroyed. Thus, people of Armenian descent, be they from Boston or the Motherland, fight to make sure their culture lives on. They fight to make sure what happened to them never happens again.

I'm not Armenian. I am a resident of Glendale, California, these last nineteen years. Living in Glendale means becoming familiar with its diverse Armenian residents—and their wide-ranging concerns as well as their unanimity in support of respect for their homeland and recognition of the suffering of its people. Being a citizen of Glendale entails standing alongside friends and neighbors to see their vision of justice realized. I've been honored to march in commemoration of the Genocide for the last five years. And I've been honored that my Armenian-American friends have **stood proudly and consistently with me in support of racial justice and police reform. That includes last June 7, 2020, in Glendale, when thousands rallied peacefully, with 100 percent wearing face masks to stop the spread of COVID, to protest the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others. This is what solidarity means.**



I've been shown the cultures and traditions of Shushi in Artsakh. I've come to know two High Commissioners of the Diaspora, one of whom was a Democrat and the former mayor of Glendale. I continue to support the construction of the Armenian-American Museum here in Glendale (groundbreaking should

happen this year). I had a chance to celebrate with my Armenian friends the night **Adam Schiff and the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a resolution recognizing the Genocide**. That was the first crack in the gag rule that ended with **President Biden's proclamation this last week**. More importantly, I try to explain to other non-Armenians why these issues matter and why they're important not only to Armenians, but also to all of us.

Then came the Artsakh War. This was different. This wasn't policy. It was not an intellectual exercise happening thousands of miles away. This was my friends' relatives going to the front lines to fight, and in some cases, to die.

This was also watching the KZV Armenian School in San Francisco be vandalized. This was Genadi Petrosyan, 69, and Yuri Asryan, 82, two men having videos of their beheadings posted on social media by Azeri soldiers on November 22 and December 3, 2020. You'd think that the nightmare might stop there. But it didn't.


All the joy from that wonderful night when we celebrated the breakthrough in Congress for Genocide recognition got sucked away as half of Artsakh was given to Azerbaijan at Russia's insistence. All that I could do was listen to my friends' heartbreak, their disappointment, their anger. And again, the nightmare just wouldn't stop.

As we speak, there are more than **200 Armenian prisoners being held by Azerbaijan. Some are soldiers, but many are civilians**. Hostilities have ended. Why are they being held? Because Azerbaijan can get away with it, and they know it.

A resolution from the California Democrats may not sound like much, but it helps shine a light on the situation. It helps raise public awareness of what's happening, especially among non-Armenians who just don't see this story in American newspapers or on cable news. A resolution lets the Armenians know that the Democratic Party, the party of ALL the people, understands what's happening. That they know there is still work to be done and that we will keep fighting for them.

We are Democrats. This is supposed to be what we do. **We fight for those who don't have a voice** or whose voice has been quashed, drowned out, or ignored. We fight for those who have been denied justice. This is manifestly what Armenians continue to suffer. It is up to us to use our voice to highlight how that mistreatment is wrong and how it might begin to be redressed.

In unity and solidarity,



Malcolm Johnson