



Statement of Senator Hillary Clinton on the U.S.-Armenia Relationship

Alone among the Presidential candidates, I have been a longstanding supporter of the Armenian Genocide Resolution. I have been a co-sponsor of the Resolution since 2002, and I support adoption of this legislation by both Houses of Congress.

I believe the horrible events perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against Armenians constitute a clear case of genocide. I have twice written to President Bush calling on him to refer to the Armenian Genocide in his annual commemorative statement and, as President, I will recognize the Armenian Genocide. Our common morality and our nation's credibility as a voice for human rights challenge us to ensure that the Armenian Genocide be recognized and remembered by the Congress and the President of the United States.

If the mass atrocities of the 20th Century have taught us anything it is that we must honestly look the facts of history in the face in order to learn their lessons, and ensure they will not happen again. It is not just about the past, but about our future. We must close the gap between words and deeds to prevent mass atrocities. That is why I am a supporter of the Responsibility to Protect. As President, I will work to build and enhance U.S. and international capacity to act early and effectively to prevent mass atrocities. The Bush administration's words of condemnation have not been backed with leadership to stop the genocide in Darfur. I support a no-fly-zone over Darfur. I have championed strong international action to ensure that the government of Sudan can no longer act with impunity, or interfere with the international peacekeeping force, which is essential for the protection of the people of Darfur.

I value my friendship with our nation's vibrant Armenian-American community. This is in keeping with my dedication to the causes of the Armenian-American community over many years. I was privileged as First Lady to speak at the first-ever White House gathering in 1994 for leaders from Armenia and the Armenian-American community to celebrate the historic occasion of Armenia's reborn independence. I said at the time that America will stand with you as you realize what the great Armenian poet, Puzant Granian, called the Armenian's dream "to be left in peace in his mountains, to build, to dream, to create."

I will, as President, work to expand and improve U.S.-Armenia relations in addressing the common issues facing our two nations: increasing trade, fostering closer economic

ties, fighting terrorism, strengthening democratic institutions, pursuing our military partnership and deepening cooperation with NATO, and cooperating on regional concerns, among them a fair and democratic resolution of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict. As President, I will expand U.S. assistance programs to Armenia and to the people of Nagorno-Karabagh.

I look forward, as President, to continuing to work with the Armenian-American community on the many domestic and international challenges we face together, and to build on the strong foundations of shared values that have long brought together the American and Armenian peoples.