

April 25, 2005

H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister
Republic of Turkey
Ankara

Dear Prime Minister,

I'm in receipt of your letter. Indeed, as two neighbors, we both must work to find ways to live together in harmony. That is why, from the first day, we have extended our hand to you to establish relations, open the border, and thus start a dialogue between the two countries and two peoples.

There are neighboring countries, particularly on the European continent, who have had a difficult past, about which they differ. However, that has not stopped them from having open borders, normal relations, diplomatic ties, representatives in each other's capitals, even as they continue to discuss that which divides them.

Your suggestion to address the past cannot be effective if it deflects from addressing the present and the future. In order to engage in a useful dialog, we need to create the appropriate and conducive political environment. It is the responsibility of governments to develop bilateral relations and we do not have the right to delegate that responsibility to historians. That is why we have proposed and propose again that, without pre-conditions, we establish normal relations between our two countries.

In that context, an intergovernmental commission can meet to discuss any and all outstanding issues between our two nations, with the aim of resolving them and coming to an understanding.

Sincerely,

Robert Kocharian