



THE ELIE WIESEL FOUNDATION FOR HUMANITY

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April 9, 2007

*Re: Nobel Laureates call for tolerance, contact and cooperation
between Turks and Armenians*

Dear friends,

We, the undersigned Nobel laureates, issue this appeal directly to the peoples of Turkey and Armenia. Mindful of the sacrifice paid by Hrant Dink, the ethnic Armenian editor of *Agos* in Turkey, who was assassinated on January 19, 2007, and whose death was mourned by both Turks and Armenians, we believe that the best way to pay tribute to Mr. Dink is through service to his life's work safeguarding freedom of expression and fostering reconciliation between Turks and Armenians.

To these ends, Armenians and Turks should encourage their governments to:

- *Open the Turkish-Armenian border.* An open border would greatly improve the economic conditions for communities on both sides of the border and enable human interaction, which is essential for mutual understanding. Treaties between the two countries recognize existing borders and call for unhampered travel and trade.
- *Generate confidence through civil society cooperation.* Turks and Armenians have been working since 2001 on practical projects that offer great promise in creatively and constructively dealing with shared problems. The governments should support such efforts by, for example, sponsoring academic links between Turkish and Armenian faculty, as well as student exchanges.
- *Improve official contacts.* Civil society initiatives would be enhanced by the governments' decision to accelerate their bilateral contacts, devise new frameworks for consultation, and consolidate relations through additional treaty arrangements and full diplomatic relations.
- *Allow basic freedoms.* Turkey should end discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities and abolish Article 301 of the Penal Code, which makes it a criminal offense to denigrate Turkishness. Armenia also should reverse its own authoritarian course, allow free and fair elections, and respect human rights.

Turks and Armenians have a huge gap in perceptions over the Armenian Genocide. To address this gap, we refer to the 2003 “Legal Analysis on the Applicability of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide to Events which Occurred During the Early Twentieth Century,” which corroborated findings of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

It concluded that, “At least some of the [Ottoman] perpetrators knew that the consequences of their actions would be the destruction, in whole or in part, of the Armenians of eastern Anatolia, as such, or acted purposefully towards this goal and, therefore, possessed the requisite genocidal intent. The Events can thus be said to include all the elements of the crime of genocide as defined in the Convention.” It also concluded that, “The Genocide Convention contains no provision mandating its retroactive application.”

The analysis offers a way forward, which addresses the core concerns of both Armenians and Turks. Of course, coming to terms will be painful and difficult. Progress will not occur right away. Rather than leaving governments to their own devices, affected peoples and the leaders of civil society need to engage in activities that promote understanding and reconciliation while, at the same time, urging their governments to chart a course towards a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Peter Agre
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2003)

J.M. Coetzee
Nobel Prize, Literature (2003)

Jerome I. Friedman
Nobel Prize, Physics (1990)

Sidney Altman
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1989)

Claude Cohen-Tannoudji
Nobel Prize, Physics (1997)

Donald A. Glaser
Nobel Prize, Physics (1960)

Philip W. Anderson
Nobel Prize, Physics (1977)

Mairead Corrigan Maguire
Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)

Sheldon Glashow
Nobel Prize, Physics (1979)

Kenneth J. Arrow
Nobel Prize, Economics (1972)

Robert F. Curl Jr.
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996)

Roy J. Glauber
Nobel Prize, Physics (2005)

Richard Axel
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2004)

Paul J. Crutzen
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1995)

Clive W.J. Granger
Nobel Prize, Economics (2003)

Baruj Benacerraf
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1980)

Frederik W. de Klerk
Nobel Prize, Peace (1993)

Paul Greengard
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

Gunter Blobel
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1999)

Johann Deisenhofer
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1998)

David J. Gross
Nobel Prize, Physics (2004)

Georges Charpak
Nobel Prize, Physics (1992)

John B. Fenn
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002)

Roger Guillemin
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1977)

Steven Chu
Nobel Prize, Physics (1997)

Val Fitch
Nobel Prize, Physics (1980)

Dudley R. Herschbach
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986)

Avram Hershko
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004)

Roald Hoffman
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1981)

Sir Harold W. Kroto
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996)

Finn E. Kydland
Nobel Prize, Economics (2004)

Leon M. Lederman
Nobel Prize, Physics (1988)

Anthony J. Leggett
Nobel Prize, Physics (2003)

Rudolph A. Marcus
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1992)

Daniel L. McFadden
Nobel Prize, Economics (2000)

Craig C. Mello
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2006)

Daniel Kahneman
Nobel Prize, Economics (2002)

Eric R. Kandel
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

Robert C. Merton
Nobel Prize, Economics (1997)

Marshall W. Nirenberg
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1968)

Sir Paul Nurse
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2001)

Douglas D. Osheroff
Nobel Prize, Physics (1996)

Martin L. Perl
Nobel Prize, Physics (1995)

John C. Polanyi
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986)

Stanley Prusiner
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1997)

Aaron Klug
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1982)

Edwin G. Krebs
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1992)

Nobel Prize, Peace (1996)

Richard J. Roberts
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1993)

Wole Soyinka
Nobel Prize, Literature (1986)

Elie Wiesel
Nobel Prize, Peace (1986)

Betty Williams
Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)

Kurt Wüthrich
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002)

José Ramos-Horta