

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 30, 2009

His Excellency Serzh A. Sargsyan
President of the Republic of Armenia
26 Baghramian Avenue, Yerevan, Armenia

His Excellency Abdullah Gül
President of the Republic of Turkey
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Köşkü
Çankaya, Ankara, Turkey

Dear President Sargsyan and President Gül:

As members of the United States Congress who care deeply about Armenia and Turkey and seek peace, security and prosperity in the Caucasus region, we are writing to you to express our support for ongoing efforts to normalize and ultimately establish diplomatic, political and economic relations between your two nations. We appreciate these efforts, which are unprecedented in scope and nature and deserve the highest level of support in the United States and the international community.

We were encouraged last April when Armenian and Turkish leaders endorsed “establishing peace, tolerance and stability in the region.” We believe this olive branch, in addition to other governmental, civil society and non-governmental meetings, including the decision to extend mutual invitations to attend a World Cup qualifier match in Yerevan in September 2008 and to a reciprocal match in Turkey this year, have laid the foundation for an historic opening in bilateral relations. Given that differences – although not insurmountable – still exist between your two countries, it is critical that members of the United States Congress endorse Armenian-Turkish rapprochement, which we hope will lead to the removal of barriers that separate your two countries and people.

The success of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement is also critical to addressing other pressing regional issues, including the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which we hope will come to fruition in the near future. A Caucasus region where there is lasting security, stability and freedom will further benefit your countries, the region, and the national security interests of the United States.

It is essential that the building blocks of trust and cooperation are established between Armenia and Turkey to heal open wounds, mend broken hearts and create a better future for both nations and peoples. As members of Congress who agree that lasting Armenian-Turkish rapprochement

should be a top priority for the United States, please know we are ready to assist your nations' efforts to normalize relations and build a better future for generations of Armenians and Turks. This process is difficult and at times painful, but we remain hopeful that ongoing bilateral engagement will lead to a positive breakthrough that forever changes the dynamics of the region and opens the door to new possibilities and brighter futures for Armenia and Turkey.

Sincerely,



Robert Wexler
Member of Congress



Ike Skelton
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



John P. Murtha
Member of Congress

Cc: Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State

Tigran Sargsyan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

Marie L. Yovanovitch, United States Ambassador to Armenia

James F. Jeffrey, United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey

Tatoul Markarian, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to the United States

Nabi Şensoy, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United States