



*Permanent Delegation of Türkiye
to the European Union
Ambassador*

Z-2025/70946263/40027611 -

Brussels, 21 May 2025

Dear Mr. Papandreu,

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

I am writing to you to express our dismay at your statements that aimed to distort historical facts regarding the Turkish War of Independence for domestic political purposes, and share some facts regarding that period of time, if you are interested in facing the truth.

The so-called "Pontian Greek Genocide" is a brazen allegation that has no basis either in history or in international law. As you must be well aware, the Greek army intended to invade western Anatolia, taking advantage of the fall of the Ottoman Empire, starting from 15 May 1919 with the instigation and active support of the Entente powers, and local Greek terror groups and irregular bands, formed, provoked and armed by Greece and the Entente powers started an atrocious ethnic cleansing campaign against the Turkish civilian population along the Turkish Black Sea coastal region with the aim of creating an ethnic "Pontian-Greek state". During the invasion that lasted until the triumph of Turkish forces in late 1922, the Greek army and local Greek insurgents and bandits committed unspeakable crimes against Turkish civilian population in the regions under occupation.

In view of the alarming reports of atrocities perpetrated by the invading Greek army and their local fifth columns, the Entente powers were obliged to investigate those war crimes by establishing a "Commission of Inquiry". The Commission had to admit in its report that the Greek occupation, which had created a scene of cruelty, had turned into a disgraceful invasion. The atrocities were eventually put on the record in the Lausanne Peace Treaty of 1923, which was signed following the victorious end of the Turkish War of Independence. The article 59 of the Treaty established that the acts of the Greek army in Anatolia violated the laws of war, and obliged Greece to pay compensation thereof. In short, contrary to the unsubstantiated claims of Greek irredentism, it was Greece itself that engaged in a brutal campaign of invasion of Anatolia, committed unspeakable atrocities against Turkish civilian population, and finally admitted to its crimes and was obliged to compensate under the Lausanne Peace Treaty.

Nikos PAPANDREOU
Parlement européen
Bât. ALTIERO SPINELLI 14G202
60, rue Wiertz B-1047 Bruxelles

In the following period, Türkiye and Greece decided to put the hostility aside and started to cultivate good-neighbourly relations. The nomination of Atatürk to the Nobel Peace Prize in 1934 by the then Greek Prime Minister Venizelos (who had also been Prime Minister during the Greek occupation) is a clear testimony to this fact. Historical facts cannot be changed by political manipulation. Nor should they be re-written to serve some short-sighted populist agendas. Attempts to draw hostility from history will bring no good other than instigating conflict and hatred among peoples and countries. Historical episodes, including the controversial ones, should be the subject of a dispassionate study of scholars and historians, not politicians or propagandists.

In this context, I would also like to remind that "genocide" is not a generic word, but a legal term defining the gravest crime against humanity under international law that must be used responsibly. According to the 1948 UN Genocide Convention, there are specific requirements and criteria to establish whether a genocide occurred or not (concrete evidence, an intent to destroy and a verdict by a competent court) and none of them apply to the events that took place during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

Common sense and wisdom should prevail to maintain the positive momentum in relations between Türkiye and Greece as well as the democratic credibility and prestige of the European Parliament by not allowing such travesty of history to be replayed once and for all. Atatürk and Venizelos already set the moral standard and a way forward to follow suit in this regard.

Sincerely yours,



Faruk KAYMAKCI