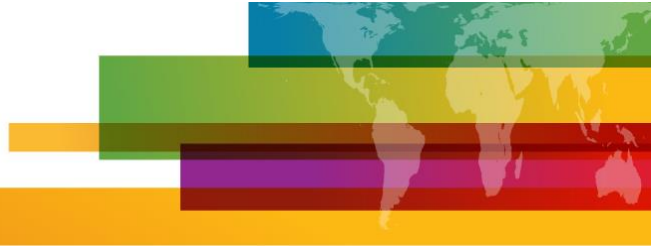




Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
and the United Church of Christ



Global Ministries welcomes President Biden's statement recognizing the Armenian Genocide *April 26, 2021*

After more than a century, President Biden on Saturday became the first sitting US president to recognize the devastating tragedy that befell the Armenian community of Anatolia as genocide. In his historic statement, issued on Armenian Martyrs' Day (April 24), President Biden stated, "Each year on this day, we remember the lives of all those who died in the Ottoman-era Armenian genocide and recommit ourselves to preventing such an atrocity from ever again occurring.... We honor their story. We see that pain. We affirm the history. We do this not to cast blame but to ensure that what happened is never repeated." Unequivocal recognition of this history as genocide by a US president has been promised, but only now has been spoken. His statement complements the 2019 recognition by the US Senate of the Armenian Genocide.

As churches with a long mission history of presence and witness among the Armenians for two centuries, we solemnly give thanks with our Armenian partners and friends for Pres. Biden's honest and clear acknowledgment of this tragedy of the early 20th century. This mission history includes Congregational missionary accompaniment of Armenians during the genocide era and events, witnessing, documenting, and advocating the US government for an end to the atrocities, while offering relief and raising awareness and funds for the care of the victims.

In 2015, both the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) adopted resolutions commemorating 100 years since the Armenian Genocide. Those resolutions drew attention to the 1.5 million Armenians and people of other religious and ethnic background who were killed, and another million who were displaced. Descendants of those survivors remain in the diaspora, and some of whom are pastors, leaders, and members of our churches today. The resolutions expressed the pride we have in our partnerships with the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East and the Armenian Missionary Association of America, and of our ecumenical relationships with the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The UCC and Disciples resolutions concluded by "reiterat[ing our] abhorrence when peoples and communities are made victims of violence, particularly when based on race, ethnicity, creed, or any other aspect of identity. Taken to the ultimate manifestation, such victimization constitutes genocide, a crime that should be prevented, halted, recognized, and acknowledged, in order to protect the communities, and offer recognition of the injustice it represents." This sentiment was echoed by President Biden on Saturday, when he concluded, "Today, as we mourn what was lost, let us also turn our eyes to the future—toward the world that we wish to build for our children. A world unstained by the daily evils of bigotry and intolerance, where human rights are respected, and where all people are able to pursue their lives in dignity and security. Let us renew our shared resolve to prevent future atrocities from occurring anywhere in the world. And let us pursue healing and reconciliation for all the people of the world." We pray that it be so here in our own country and around the world.

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