

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 21, 1996

Dear Mr. Leader:

I am writing to respond to your letter regarding Armenian Remembrance Day. There is little question about the immense suffering the Armenian people endured eighty years ago in the Ottoman Empire. I appreciate your concern for Armenians and for Armenia, a nation with which the United States has developed close ties.

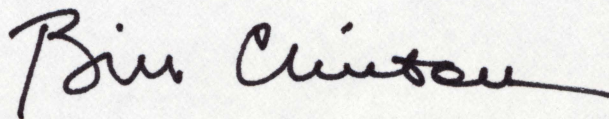
I am strongly committed to helping Armenians become an independent, secure and prosperous people in their homeland, the Republic of Armenia. Our country remains by far the single greatest contributor of humanitarian aid to the Armenian people during this difficult transition period. Lasting security and prosperity for Armenia and its people, however, will turn not only on our assistance but on its ability to achieve peace with all its neighbors.

The United States also benefits from close ties to Turkey, a key NATO ally and partner in Europe, the Middle East, and Eurasia, as well as a country with which we share important strategic interests.

Our policy has been to encourage a negotiated peace to the tragic conflict surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh and to promote normal relations between Armenia and its neighbors. To this end, we have encouraged efforts by all sides to overcome their historical differences. Likewise, we pursue a policy of moderation on Armenian issues.

I trust you, too, support a practical course of action that serves Armenian interests as well as broader U.S. interests in this region.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Robert Dole  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510-1601