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20 April 2015

Release to the public

As members of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey's Board of Founders who attended the 26th Annual Meeting of the Foundation, which took place on March 28th, 2015, we would like to share our opinion and sorrow over the pioneer and most bloody genocide of modern times, on its 100th Anniversary, which the ancient communities such as Armenians, Assyrians, Yazidis and Pontic Greeks were exposed to.

On the spring of 1915, as a project of the Committee of Union and Progress, Armenians, Assyrians, Yazidis and Pontic Greeks who are the citizens of Ottoman Empire got deterritorialized from the lands they were living on for thousands of years. All of them, including women, children and elders, were forced to a death march to the Deir ez-Zor desert, which lies within the territory constituting present day Syria. During this relentless march, women and children being in the first place, almost one and a half million people lost their lives due to the attacks, rapes, slaughts and exhaustion, starvation and diseases. Furthermore, whether the State, dominant classes and coteries or some Turkish and Kurdish landlords of that time seized and plundered the possessions of the forced emigrants and murdered.

This indescribable and unbearable pain will remain forever as a shame on our minds and in our hearts.

We believe that it is essential to face the past and take the necessary actions for all parties to recognize this genocide in order to recognize the pain of each other, bind up our wounds and never let such suffering happen again. Facing the past and recognizing the genocide are one's right to know the Truth and a demand of Justice. As human rights defenders, we call on everyone to give voice to this demand stronger.

HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION OF TURKEY

The Founders' Board