

1 [Armenian Genocide Commemoration Day - April 24, 2015]

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3 **Resolution declaring April 24, 2015, as Armenian Genocide Centennial Commemoration**  
4 **Day in the City and County of San Francisco.**

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6 WHEREAS, The Armenian people, living in their historic homeland of 4,000 years,  
7 were subjected to severe persecution by the Turkish government of the Ottoman Empire  
8 before and after the turn of the twentieth century, including widespread massacres, usurpation  
9 of land and property, and destruction of cultural institutions and monuments during the period  
10 from 1894 to 1896, again in 1909; and

11 WHEREAS, The horrible experience of the Armenians at the hands of the Ottoman  
12 Turkish government culminated in 1915 in what is known by historians as the first systematic  
13 genocide of the twentieth century; and

14 WHEREAS, The Ottoman Turkish authorities planned and executed the unspeakable  
15 atrocities committed against the Armenian people from 1915 through 1923, resulting in the  
16 deaths of 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children; and

17 WHEREAS, In response to the Genocide and at the behest of the President Woodrow  
18 Wilson and the U.S. State Department, the Near East Relief organization, the first  
19 Congressionally-sanctioned American philanthropic effort created exclusively to rescue the  
20 Armenian Nation and other Christian minorities, was founded and provided unprecedented  
21 relief, delivering more than \$117,000,000 of humanitarian assistance between 1915 and 1930,  
22 and saving approximately one million refugees, including 130,000 orphans of the Genocide;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term 'genocide' in 1944, and who was  
25 the earliest proponent of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of

1 the Genocide, invoked the Armenian case as a definitive example of genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup>  
2 century; and

3 WHEREAS, Those citizens of Turkey who speak the truth about the Armenian  
4 Genocide - such as assassinated human rights activist and journalist Hrant Din - continue to  
5 be silenced by violent means and/or imprisonment, in part due to Turkish law which  
6 criminalizes any expression which is considered to be insulting to the Turkish identity; and

7 WHEREAS, By honoring the survivors and consistently remembering and condemning  
8 the atrocities committed against the Armenian people as well as the persecution of the  
9 Assyrian and Greek populations of the Ottoman Empire, we guard against the repetition of the  
10 crime of genocide; and

11 WHEREAS, California has become home to the largest and most active population of  
12 Armenians in the United States, and those citizens have enriched our state through leadership  
13 in the fields of academia, medicine, business, agriculture, government, and the arts and are  
14 proud and patriotic practitioners of American citizenship; and

15 WHEREAS, San Francisco Armenian-Americans are predominantly descendants of the  
16 few remaining Armenian Genocide victims; and

17 WHEREAS, San Francisco is proud to join the Armenian-American Community in its  
18 Commemoration of the centennial anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in an effort to  
19 educate others about the tragic loss of life, land and human rights of the Armenian people and  
20 the crime of genocide committed against them; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
22 does hereby declare April 24, 2015, as Armenian Genocide Centennial Commemoration Day  
23 in the City and County of San Francisco.

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