
CATHOLICOS ARAM I CALLS ARMENIANS TO ARMS

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AVİM's Note: Catholicos Aram I, the spiritual leader of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia (Antelias), has demonstrated multiple times in the past that he is the most belligerent and Turcophobic high ranking religious functionary in the Armenian Apostolic Church. His statements mentioned below additionally demonstrates that he does not hesitate to abuse his position as a spiritual leader and pervert religion in the name of furthering the jingoistic and irredentist position of Armenia and the Armenian diaspora organizations that support it. Despite Aram I's attempts to cast the clashes over Upper (Nagorno) Karabakh as a sublime war akin to a crusade, Azerbaijan has repeatedly demonstrated that its only goal is to liberate its internationally recognized territories illegally occupied by Armenians for the last 26 years. Turkey has shown its clear support for Azerbaijan in this legitimate goal. Especially under the leadership of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Armenia has demonstrated that it has no intention of ending its occupation but is instead determined to solidify this occupation. Despite Aram I's delusional statements and the cheap propaganda disseminated by Armenia, there is no racist, genocidal, imperialist and pan-Turkic policy at play in the clashes over Upper Karabakh.

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On Sunday, October 25, His Holiness Catholicos Aram I issued a call to arms to Armenians all over the world. In his message, His Holiness spoke about the sacrifices of the armies of Artsakh [the Upper Karabakh region of Azerbaijan] and Armenia as they fight against the Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression.

1. The Armenian army continues to defend heroically the free and independent Republic of Artsakh and, by way of Artsakh, the security of Armenia and, by way of Armenia, the firm existence of the entire Armenian nation. This is how the Artsakh war must be seen. Therefore, this is not a conventional war: it is a war that will determine the fate of the Armenian nation and homeland. He added that fighting for the homeland is not only a duty, but an honor and a reason for pride.
2. Turkey stands next to Azerbaijan in this war, the Catholicos said. Turkey, he said, is trying to expand its presence from the Mediterranean to Eastern Europe through a newly reformulated pan-Turkic project. This is why the Artsakh war must be contemplated with a broader view beyond Artsakh, within the framework of the long-term objectives that drive Turkey. Unfortunately, he added, the Armenian people pay the price of all this.

3. Where is the world, and in particular the West, in view of Turkey's racist, genocidal, imperialist and pan-Turkic policy?, wondered His Holiness. Indeed, when we talk about the Genocide of 1915, we often wonder where the West was when a nation was subjected to extermination plan of Ottoman Turkey. One hundred and five years later, we wonder again where is the international community, when the same author of the Genocide, pursuing a new genocide, roams freely far from its immediate borders?

Catholicos Aram added that it was clear that enormous states are in practice participating in different manners in the war unleashed against our small nation. He went on to quote the father of Armenian history, Movses of Khoren, recalling the heroism of the Armenian soldiers in Artsakh, consciously sacrificing their lives to protect our homeland.

The people of Artsakh has asserted its self-determination right with independent statehood, he said. The self-determination of a people is one of the fundamental principles of international law. There can be no retreat from that, His Holiness said.

Therefore, from the Mother Monastery of Antelias we issue a call to arms in which every Armenian must take part, bringing their contribution in different manners to the sublime war for the independence and security of Artsakh, he said.

In this regard, he urged Armenia to coalesce around it all organizations from Armenia and the Diaspora to overcome the existential danger posed by this war to Artsakh and Armenia.

The Diaspora, His Holiness said, has an important role in the call to arms, contributing its potential in terms of networking, outreach, recruitment and material support. It must also help towards the recognition of the Artsakh Republic by the international community.

He concluded his message by calling on Armenians to think, plan and act in defense of the independence of Artsakh, a thriving Armenia and the eternity of our nation.

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