

Hellenic Electronic Center (HEC)

A Non-Profit Organization Registered in the US

with 38,000 Hellenes as members and 36 Hellenic

associations in the US and abroad

June 22, 2009 The following letter is intended to express our dismay for the well intentioned comments made by Navy Admiral Mike Mullen which not only gave praise to the Turkish government, but wrongfully asserted that Turkey fought on the side of the Allies during the Second World War. In truth, not only did Turkey not fight against the Axis powers during the Second World War, but in many ways attempted to emulate the racial policies of the Third Reich during that period. The American Jewish Committee in a 1947 letter to the State Department not only protested the horrific treatment meted out to Jews in Turkey during the War, but that treatment meted out to Greeks and Armenians as well. The letter from the AJC referred to "concentration camps" in Turkey which is where the members of the non-Muslim communities were shipped off to when they could not pay extortion style taxes meted out to "infidel" populations.

The strategic value associated with Turkey would seem to be severely displaced. Turkey refused to permit the United States to use their own bases in 2003 for the attack on the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Furthermore, media reports asserted that Turkish demonstrators showed solidarity with the regime of the dead dictator and condemned the United States. In 2005, Hitler's Mein Kampf was a best selling book in Turkey, and the film "Valley of the Wolves Iraq" which is rife with anti-American and anti-Semitic propaganda was a box office smash in Turkey. Islamic fundamentalism has been faring quite well in Turkey.

The assertions of Admiral Mullen are disturbing to the Greek Orthodox community of the United States which is deeply affected by the official terrorism that the Turkish "deep state" has been promoting. Our spiritual leader his holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I has been the target of at least six assassination attempts between 1993 and 2007. In the most recent effort, retired Turkish Army officers were arrested for conspiring to murder his holiness along with the Patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church Mesrob II. It is not accidental that the spiritual leaders of these two communities which were the victims of genocide and mass murder between 1914 and 1923 were targeted.

In addition, the Turkish State has been responsible for the invasions and ethnic cleansing of Cyprus from which 200,000 Greek Cypriots were displaced in furtherance of the goal of a greater Turkey. Their homes and property have been seized and given to settlers from Turkey. In 1996, Greek Cypriot protesters were slaughtered in cold blood by members of the Grey Wolves, an organization founded during the 1960's by an admirer of Hitler's. Therefore, we find the false assertion about Turkey's alleged role in the Second World War to be both historically

inaccurate, as well as profoundly insensitive.

The false attitude that all administrations have adopted toward Turkey has condemned the Christian populations of Asia Minor and Constantinople to extinction. Without any discernible protest, the Obama administration emulates its predecessors in bestowing upon Turkey honors it is unworthy of, and by betraying weak and defenseless Christian minorities in Turkey and Turkish occupied Cyprus who receive no sympathy or support from the powerful of the world.

Theodoros Karakostas

HEC Executive Committee

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 2, 2009 – The United States and the Republic of Turkey remain steadfast allies. The U.S. and Turkish governments are working together to strengthen the bilateral relationship. The annual conference provides a forum for U.S. and Turkish government, military, commerce and academic officials. Turkey fought on the allied side with the United States during World War II when the Soviet Union's demands threatened the relationship between the United States and Turkey today is "exceptionally strong" and "vitally important." Turkey is a secular Muslim republic of some 70 million citizens. U.S.-Turkish relations soured in March 1979. However, Mullen said, the United States in recent years has provided more support to Turkey in its fight against the PKK. The increased American support for Turkey in its battle against the PKK, Mullen pointed out, has contributed to the stability of the region. Mullen also cited President Barack Obama's early April visit to Turkey's capital of Ankara, where he addressed Turkish legislators that he supports Turkey's desire for membership in the European Union. Turkey also has good relations with Pakistan, Mullen said, noting that he has discussed that issue with Pakistani officials. The Pakistani military is currently engaged in an offensive against Taliban militants that operate in Pakistan.

Basbug, too, hailed U.S.-Turkish relations during remarks he made prior to Mullen's speech.

"Turkish-United States' cooperation in various areas has become a 'must,'" Basbug said, for resolving the

Turkey's strategic location amid Europe and the Middle East, Basbug said, means that the United States

Wrapping up, Mullen recounted his first experiences with the "open and warm" Turkish people during a

"We need your friendship," Mullen told the mostly-Turkish audience. "We need your support."

Biographies:

[Navy Adm. Mike Mullen](#)

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