

**EXAMPLES OF UK GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONS ABOUT ARMENIAN CLAIMS
(Excerpts from Parliamentary Records/Hansard)**

January 22, 2007

During a Parliamentary debate in the British House of Lords, Lord Bishop of Manchester submitted a question concerning the British Government's position on Armenian allegations. On behalf of the British Government, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Parliamentary Affairs, Lord Triesman answered the question as follows:

"...For this Government, recognition of the so-called Armenian Genocide is not a condition of Turkey's membership of the EU. I wish to be straightforward and clear about that. Neither this Government nor previous British Governments have judged that the evidence is sufficiently unequivocal to persuade us that these events should be characterised as genocide under the 1948 UN convention on genocide"

November 17, 2007

Question from an MP addressed to and answered by Minister for Europe, Mr. Denis MacShane:

"Armenian Genocide

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is towards the (a) scale of, (b) responsibility for and (c) recognition of the Armenian genocide. [198403]

Mr. MacShane: The Government understands the strength of feeling about this terrible episode of history. The massacres of 1915–16 were condemned in explicit terms by the British Government of the day. We fully endorse that view. Historians disagree as to whether the Armenian massacres constitute genocide as defined by the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether recognition of the Armenian genocide is one of the political criteria that Turkey will be required to meet before EU accession. [198404]

Mr. MacShane: No."

March 4, 2008

"Armenia: Genocide

Baroness Finlay of Llandaff asked Her Majesty's Government whether they recognise the existence of genocide in Armenia in 1915.

The Minister of State Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown): The position of the Government on this issue is long-standing. The Government acknowledges the strength of feeling about this terrible episode of history and recognise the massacres of 1915-16 as a tragedy. However neither this Government nor previous Governments have judged that the evidence is sufficiently unequivocal to persuade us that these events should be categorised as genocide as defined by the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide.

As my right honourable friend the then Minister for Europe (Geoffrey Hoon) said in a debate in Westminster Hall on 7 June 2006 (Official Report col. 137WH) the work of establishing the truth must be conducted as a joint exercise by the parties directly involved if it is to help towards reconciliation. There needs to be a truth and reconciliation process owned by the people of Armenia and Turkey. Outsiders can commend the idea to the parties but they should not try to do the work for them-undertaking this is an important part of the confidence-building and reconciliation process for the parties themselves. The Government will continue to encourage the parties to embark on such a process. In the mean time we should resist the temptation to pre-empt its conclusions."

March 29, 2010

As response to the question addressed by Baroness Cox, on behalf of the British Government Baroness Kinnock: "...I shall now answer some of the questions that noble Lords asked. I say to the noble Baroness, Lady Cox, that Geoffrey Robertson concluded that while the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide could not be applied retrospectively, the term "genocide" should be applied to the Armenian massacres. "Genocide" is a precise term and its use is best assessed by a competent court. However, then as now, there is no court with the authority to make such an assessment. Therefore, it is inappropriate for the British Government to apply the term to events on which no legal judgment can be made."

November 20, 2012

“Asked by Lord Patten: To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the recognition by the Swedish Parliament that the mass killing of Syriacs in Turkey during 1915 was an act of genocide.

Baroness Warsi: The British Government do not recognise the events of 1915 as genocide. While we remember the victims of the past, our priority today should be to promote reconciliation between the countries and peoples affected.”