

From: eGram Gateway
Sent: 12 March 2010 14:16
To: eGrams eD EU DIRECTORATE
Subject: SWEDEN/TURKEY: RIKSDAG VOTE ON ARMENIAN GENOCIDE:Id=4119568

Swedish parliament votes to classify killing of Armenians by Ottoman forces during the First World War as genocide. Erdogan cancels his impending visit to Stockholm and recalls Turkish Ambassador. The Swedish government condemns the parliament's resolution and warns that it will have negative consequences for efforts to normalise relations between Turkey and Armenia and on Erdogan's attempts to move Turkey towards an EU future.

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DETAIL

2. The Swedish Parliament passed a resolution on 11 March to officially classify the killing of Armenians by Ottoman forces during the First World War as genocide. The motion was tabled by the opposition Social Democrats and passed by 131 votes to 130 when four MPs from the governing coalition crossed the floor.

3. Following the decision the Turkish Ambassador to Sweden was recalled to Ankara for consultations. She left saying that the resolution would have a "drastic effect" on bilateral relations which "was unlikely to be overcome in the short term". Later in the day Prime Minister Erdogan announced that he would be cancelling his visit to Sweden scheduled to take place on 17 March. The Swedish Ambassador to Turkey was summoned to the MFA in Ankara this morning.

4. The Swedish government's reaction to the vote has been swift and critical. Foreign Minister Bildt condemned the resolution, saying that it was not for MPs to interpret history. He warned that the Parliament's actions would have negative consequences for efforts under way to normalise relations between Armenia and Turkey and could play into the hands of Turkish nationalists. It would certainly not help Erdogan in his efforts to move Turkey closer to an EU future.

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Mitchell