

[redacted]

During a meeting with the Patriarch Nerses Bedros XIX Tarmouni of Cilicia of Armenia on 3 June, Pope Francis described the mass killings of Armenians during World War I as “the first genocide of the twentieth century”. This comment came when he was introduced to the Patriarch’s delegation, one of whom said that she was a descendent of genocide victims.

The comment has provoked an official complaint from the Turkish government, who also summoned the Papal Nuncio in Ankara.

Pope Francis has also referred to the events on 1915 as a genocide whilst he was Archbishop of Buenos Aires. It is worth noting that Argentina is one of the 21 countries which has officially recognised the massacre as a genocide (and the Vatican City also recognised it in a communiqué in 2000). Pope Francis was also close to the Armenian community in Buenos Aires.

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