



ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

1140 19th STREET, NW • WASHINGTON, DC 20036-6608 • (202) 393-3434 • FAX: (202) 638-4904 • E-mail: info@aaainc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 22, 2006
Web: www.aaainc.org

CONTACT: Karoon Panosyan
Phone: (202) 393-3434
E-mail: kpanosyan@aaainc.org

ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY COMMENDS JOURNEY FOR HUMANITY ACTIVISTS AT EVENT

Los Angeles, CA – On December 10, the Armenian Assembly joined with the Armenian community of California to welcome back a group of activists from Journey for Humanity, who five months ago, embarked on a cross-country walk to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide and other crimes against humanity.

Executive Director Bryan Ardouny thanked the marchers for their activism and efforts to advance the cause of genocide prevention, during an event held at the Glendale Civic Auditorium. Serving as master of ceremonies, Ardouny commended the group for walking 3,000 miles from Los Angeles to Washington, to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide and other crimes against humanity. Along the way, the members held rallies in several major cities to honor the victims and survivors of all genocidal acts.

The afternoon program included special guests Glendale City Council Member Ara Najarian, Reverend Manouk Markarian of St. John Armenian Apostolic Church, Sociology Professor Matthew Jendian PhD of Fresno State University, Reverend Vazgen Movsisian of St. Peter Youth Ministries and Director/Producer Carla Garabedian of the movie *Screamers*. The event also included an exhibition of photos, articles and diary entries relating to their experiences, a silent auction and a musical performance.

The group was greeted by the Assembly when they concluded their trip to Washington, last month. Together with Ardouny they met with Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Joseph Knollenberg (R-MI), as well as various community members and activists. On December 8, Representative Pallone made a statement on the floor of the House of Representatives commending Journey for Humanity as well as the Armenian Assembly for their efforts in raising awareness.

“As Americans, it is our collective responsibility to inform our country about atrocious crimes against humanity, in an attempt to prevent future episodes,” said Pallone. “I commend their courage and passion, as well as the Armenian Assembly, for their efforts in raising public awareness and affirmation of these crimes against humanity. I heartily support their endeavors.”

In continuation of their efforts to advance the cause of genocide prevention as well as honor the victims and survivors of all genocidal acts, Journey for Humanity plans on creating a speakers bureau which will tour universities and colleges as well as high school and middle school campuses. The activists also have made plans to write a book and make a documentary about their experience.

The Armenian Assembly of America is the largest Washington-based nationwide organization promoting public understanding and awareness of Armenian issues. It is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization.

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NR#2006-114

Photograph:



Caption: Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny flanked by Vahe Abovian, left, and Albrik Zohrabyan.

Below is the complete text of the statement made by Representative Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ):

**Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr.
Special Order
"The Journey for Humanity" March in Washington**

December 8, 2006

Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor a group of young individuals from Journey for Humanity, of which I along with my Armenian Caucus Co-Chair, the gentlemen from Michigan, Mr. Knollenberg, had the opportunity to meet with last month. Their goal is to raise awareness and

recognition of the Armenian Genocide, as well as other human rights atrocities occurring around the world today.

Last month the group arrived in Washington, having walked across the country. The 3,000-mile Journey for Humanity walk began approximately five months ago in Los Angeles, CA with the support of the Armenian Assembly of America. Since then, the marchers have crossed a dozen states and held rallies in eleven major U.S. cities to honor the victims and survivors of all genocidal acts and advance the cause of genocide prevention.

The group marched twenty miles a day until it reached the nation's capital. Although the walk officially concluded, the Journey continues with hopes for a documentary and a book to archive their efforts at genocide awareness and prevention. They also have plans for a series of lectures across college campuses to promote this important human rights message.

For decades we've all heard the words "never again," yet we continue to see the same type of horrors happening today. With the death toll in the Darfur region of the Sudan nearing 400,000, these young people hope to show the importance of learning from the past and to prevent future genocides.

As descendants of genocide survivors, these young men and women, carry the memory and live in the reality of the consequences of genocide. As Americans, it is our collective responsibility to inform our country about atrocious crimes against humanity, in an attempt to prevent future episodes.

I commend their courage and passion, as well as the Armenian Assembly, for their efforts in raising public awareness and affirmation of these crimes against humanity. I heartily support their endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, next Congress I, along with my Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Joe Knollenberg and my fellow Caucus colleagues Adam Schiff and George Radanovich, plan to re-introduce a resolution affirming the Armenian Genocide. The truth of the past must be told and acknowledged as a first step to genocide prevention. I encourage all Members of this body to cosponsor this important resolution.

Thank you.