

kNOW GENOCIDE

United Against Denial

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW ANTI-GENOCIDE COALITION TO HOLD FRIDAY RALLY AT STATE HOUSE

*Reilly, Healy to Join Armenian, Jewish, Rwandan and Other
Groups in Launching Campaign Against Genocide and Denial*

BOSTON, April 20, 2006 –Representatives of Boston area ethnic and religious organizations will hold a State House rally Friday to launch a new coalition to fight genocide denial and raise awareness of past and current genocide crimes. The event will occur on April 21, 2006 at 12:45 p.m. on the front stairs of the State House.

The group, called kNOw Genocide, was formed partly in response to a case pending in federal court in Boston seeking to introduce materials into Massachusetts classrooms denying that the Armenian genocide occurred. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the Turkish government and other Turkish groups, including the Assembly of Turkish American Associations, which filed the suit, have refused to acknowledge the genocide, which left more than a million Armenians dead and drove hundreds of thousands more from their homeland. (April 24th is the 91st anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide. On that date in 1915, the Ottoman Turk government began rounding up Armenian scholars and leaders.)

“Denial of the Armenian genocide or any other genocide leads to the kinds of killings we see today in Darfur,” said Anthony Barsamian, an organizer of kNOw Genocide. “When we refuse to confront these terrible crimes of the past, we give license to those who seek to engage in new ethnic and religious slaughters.”

The coalition includes the Armenian Assembly of America, the Massachusetts Council of Churches, the Jewish Community Relations Council, Rwanda Outlook, the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark

University, the Genocide Intervention Network, and the University of Minnesota Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

Among those expected to attend Friday's announcement are several survivors of the Armenian genocide (all in their 90's), Attorney General Thomas Reilly, Lt. Governor Kerry Healey, Congressman Edward Markey, State Representatives Rachel Kaprielian and Peter Koutoujian and State Senator Stephen Tolman.

The coalition will conduct a series of events in the coming weeks designed to draw attention to the court case regarding the Massachusetts curriculum and to build broad public support against the ATAA effort. Virtually every major genocide scholar and organization has recognized the Armenian genocide, including Nobel Prize Winner Elie Weisel, Pulitzer Prize Winner Samantha Power, the International Association of Genocide Scholars (the definitive group of scholars on the subject), the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem, and the Institute for the Study of Genocide.

The coalition will also support efforts to stop the genocide in Darfur. Some humanitarian groups estimate that more than 400,000 people have already died in the Darfur region of Sudan and more than a million have been driven from their homes and now face starvation and disease as they flee or are forced to live in refugee camps.

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