

## **CALL TO ALL ARMENIANS AND FRIENDS**

### **COMMEMORATE THE CENTENNIAL OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE IN DIYARBAKIR, 22-24 APRIL, 2015**

#### *Why Diyarbakir (Dikranagerd)?*

The Gomidas Institute, with the support of the Turkish Human Rights Association, is organising a series of commemorative events in Diyarbakir between April 22-24, 2015 to mark the centennial of the Armenian Genocide. The focus on Diyarbakir is for good historical and political reasons.

#### **Diyarbakir was a Major Theatre of the Armenian Genocide**

The Ottoman province of Diyarbakir was a key theatre of the Armenian Genocide. Its governor Reshid Bey in 1915 played a prominent role in the mass murder of Armenians. Some of the victims - such as the local prelate Mgrdich Chlghadian - were killed in the city, thousands more were killed outside, and even more further afield.

#### **Diyarbakir already recognises the Armenian Genocide**

Today, the people living in Diyarbakir recognise the Armenian Genocide and wish to make amends. The city's co-mayors and regional representative's at the Turkish Parliament speak out on the Armenian issue with a clear voice. Diyarbakir city has already supported the reconstruction of Sourp Giragos church, one of the largest Armenian churches in the world. Armenians can live freely in this city. At last year's commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, the men and women who stood up for Armenians represented millions of people. They included prominent politicians, lawyers, human rights activists, and others.

#### **Making a Common Stand in Diyarbakir**

A strong Armenian presence in Diyarbakir this coming April will have great moral and political significance by strengthening reconciliation between Armenians and Kurds - many of whose ancestors participated in the destruction of Armenians - and challenging the official Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide.

**The Gomidas Institute has been active in Turkey since the 1990s.** While opposing the official denials of Turkish state intellectuals, the Institute has also built bridges with Turkish civil society and sought just resolution of outstanding issues. The Institute has organised successful projects in Diyarbakir before, including the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide - and this coming year's commemoration builds on earlier successes.

*Join us in Diyarbakir this April 2014.*

## COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMME DIYARBAKIR APRIL 22-24, 2015

### **April 22**

Gathering and welcome in Diyarbakir city.

### **April 23**

**Morning:** Visit the major massacre site where over 600 Armenians, including the Diyarbakir Armenian leadership, were slaughtered.

**Afternoon:** Visit the gravesite of Mihemedê Mistê of Êlih, the Kurdish tribal leader who opposed the Genocide of Armenians.

**Evening:** Gathering at Sourp Giragos with human rights activists and supporters in Diyarbakir's old city.

(The morning and afternoon trips will be from Diyarbakir by specially arranged transport).

### **April 24**

**Morning:** Visit the old prison and the governor's building, where many victims were held before being killed.

**Noon:** A commemorative ceremony in the ruins of St. Sarkis church followed by a public rally with featured speakers organized by the Diyarbakir Branch of the Human Rights' Association. This event will be followed by serving "helva" in memory of all the victims of 1915 and their descendants.

### **Additional Trip: Kharpert to Diyarbakir (April 19-22)**

For those interested: We plan to fly to Elazig (Kharpert/Harput) on April 19<sup>th</sup> and go to Diyarbakir overland, covering a major deportation route and crossing key sites related to Armenians and the Genocide of 1915.

*Please contact us if you are interested in coming to the Diyarbakir commemorations this coming April, including the overland trip between Kharpert and Diyarbakir. You may email us at [info@gomidas.org](mailto:info@gomidas.org) or write to Gomidas Institute, 42 Blythe Rd., London W14 0HA, England. Tel: 00 44 20 76037242. Please feel free to contact us.*