Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise today to call the nation's attention to the solemn anniversary of the Armenian genocide. In 1915, the Ottoman Turkish Government launched an extermination campaign against all Armenians on its territory. The result of that gruesome policy was the death of about 1.5 million people, the destruction of a once flourishing community, and the scattering of the survivors around the globe.

Many Armenians came to America, where they have rebuilt their communities, prospered and become a vital part of the American body politic. They have nurtured our democracy, while maintaining their traditions and always remembering the circumstances that forced them from their homeland. Meanwhile, their brothers and sisters in Armenia endured communism and Joseph Stalin, but despite the different fates of these two communities, they remained stubbornly and proudly Armenian, even when contact between them was difficult.

In 1991, Armenia became an independent country and has worked hard to consolidate its independence since then. Today Armenia is a respected member of the international community, its progress toward democratization and economic well-being promoted by the worldwide Armenian Diaspora and by supportive governments, especially the United States.

Independence confers freedom, but not necessarily freedom from hardship. Apart from the devastating December 1988 earthquake, Armenia has also endured the consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the adversities caused by blockades imposed by neighboring Azerbaijan and Turkey. Happily, the Nagorno-Karabakh cease-fire has held since May 1994, offering grounds to hope that the conflict will be peacefully resolved in the foreseeable future. All the parties to this dispute must pursue a peaceful resolution through the OSCE process, and with active American involvement, bring about a lasting, stable peace.

In the spirit of reconciliation and looking toward Armenia's future, President Ter-Petrosyan said in Washington last year that "Armenia has no enemies." All of us who are friends of Armenia are working for precisely that future, for an Armenia without enemies, while remembering the victims of the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. President, in light of the fact that, for the first time since World War II, there are international tribunals investigating two current genocides, one in Bosnia and one in Rwanda, it is very important that all of us remember the first genocide of the 20th century, and dedicate ourselves to the proposition that there will be no new genocides in the future.

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HONORING THE VOLUNTEERS OF HOSPICE CARE, INC.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize the volunteers of Hospice Care, Inc. in southwestern Fairfield County, CT. For 15 years Hospice Care has provided care and comfort to people with terminal illnesses. But beyond palliative care, Hospice is a program for individuals who are dealing with the emotional and spiritual changes that follow the diagnosis of a life-ending illness.

Hospice could not offer its many meaningful services without its volunteers; they are an integral part of Hospice. Together with professional staff,
ARmenian GenoDe

Mr. Sarbanes. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues in commemorating the 81 years since the tragedy of the Armenian genocide and its deniers. Today we pause to remember the victims of this great tragedy and to pay our respects to the survivors.

Indeed it is important that we take this occasion to educate ourselves about the extent that Americans held the Armenian genocide, and to resolve never to remain indifferent in the face of such assaults on humanity. Respect for the memories of the Armenians who were martyred in this great tragedy demands that humanity never forget this day. It gives us an opportunity for people of goodwill to honestly confront the past and move to genuine reconciliation.

We are also pleased that after centuries of oppression, the Armenian people are again free and independent. The Republic of Armenia is proof that the Armenian spirit is alive and vibrant and, despite enormous outside pressures, is making progress and flourishing. As Armenia struggles to reenter the society of nations, it is instructive for us to recognize the sacrifices of the victims of the genocide.

The anniversary of this tragedy holds special meaning to Armenians everywhere and, in spite of a history of many hardships, difficulties and adversity faced by the Armenian people, the community has strengthened its resolve to survive and prosper. Armenian-Americans are one of the best examples of an indomitable human spirit. The tremendous contribution of the Armenian community to the cultural, social, economic, and political landscape of America is a source of great strength and vitality in our Nation. Americans of Armenian origin have kept alive, and not let tragedy shatter, the rich faith and traditions of Armenian civilization.

As we recall the Armenian genocide, it is important to recognize that it was the culmination of an abhorrent pattern of persecution against the Armenian community living in the Ottoman Empire. During the period 1894-1918, and again in 1909, tens of thousands of Armenians lost their lives. On April 24, 1915, 31 religious and political leaders, and professionals were rounded up by Ottoman authorities and taken to remote parts of Anatolia from where they never returned. At least 250,000 Armenians who loyally served in the Ottoman army were expelled and forced into labor battalions where executions and starvation were common. Men, women, and children were deported from their villages and obliged to march for weeks in the Syrian desert where a majority of them lost their lives.

The unfortunate campaign against this community earlier in this century resulted in widespread deportations and death. More than 1.5 million innocent men, women, and children, out of a total of 2.5 million Armenians living within the Ottoman Empire, lost their lives. Entire families were destroyed, and thousands of survivors were scattered around the world. In fact, contemporaneous newspaper accounts in the United States, these atrocities inspired Americans to contribute $113 million in humanitarian assistance from 1915 to 1930 to help the survivors. Americans eventually adopted 132,000 Armenian orphans into this country.

One of the most prominent and reliable accounts of the Armenian genocide is provided by the distinguished United States ambassador to the Ottoman Empire at the time, Henry Morgenthau. His account was published in the Red Cross magazine in 1918. Morgenthau described the wide-scale and systematic attempts by the Ottomans to crush the Armenian community as, “the Greatest Horror in History.”

Aram Elkus, Morgenthau’s successor, also called the State Department that the Young Turks policy against the Armenians was an “unchecked policy of extermination through starvation, exhaustion, and brutality of treatment hardly surpassed even in Turkish history.”

Both the German and Austrian ambassadors, apprised about the attacks against the Armenians, convened their concerns directly to the Ottoman leadership. In July of 1915, Hans Von Wangenheim, the German ambassador to the Ottomans, advised his own government to distance itself from the Ottoman leadership for what he viewed as a campaign to rid “the Armenian race in the Turkish empire.”

Extensive documentation, and first hand accounts have been collected over the years regarding this dark period, much of which is held in our own National Archives. In 1987, it was fitting that the Holocaust Council expressed its support for making the Armenian genocide part of the permanent exhibits at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. In its statement, the council declared that “the fact of the Armenian genocide should be included in any discussion of genocide in the twentieth century.”

Several years ago, Elie Wiesel spoke at a Holocaust memorial service here in the Congress and expressed the importance of recognizing the Armenian genocide. He stated, “Before the planning of the final solution, Hitler asked, “Who remembers the Armenians?” He was right. No one remembered them, as no one remembered the Jews. Rejected by everyone, they felt expelled from history.”

Mr. President, we must never forget the moral lesson of the Armenian genocide and honor it by renewing our commitment to human rights and democratic principles.

Commemorating the 81st Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

Mr. Pell. Mr. President, each year on this day, we solemnly join Armenians worldwide in observing the anniversary of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenian people between 1915 and 1923.

Eighty-one years ago today, Ottoman leaders launched a systematic campaign to eradicate the Armenian people from Ottoman Empire territory. In that year, hundreds of Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were rounded up and exiled, or murdered. During the next 8 years, an estimated 1.5 million Armenians were executed. Many were raped, tortured, or enslaved. In addition to those killed, an estimated 500,000 Armenians were expelled from the Ottoman Empire. Many of those exiles found their way to freedom in the United States where they and their descendants have made—and are continuing to make—a significant contribution to the cultural, political, and commercial life of this country.

Despite the many challenges they have faced over the years, the Armenian people have demonstrated a high degree of independence, resilience, and national pride. I believe the anniversary of the genocide offers an opportunity to reflect upon the challenges Armenia is facing today. In particular, Armenia continues to struggle under blockades by its neighbors, and as a result, it continues to depend heavily on humanitarian assistance. I would note that the United States has responded to Armenia’s plight. Armenia receives more assistance per capita than any other Newly Independent State. I know we all look forward to the day when Armenia—a country of great human resources—will be a donor, rather than a recipient of assistance.

In fact, despite the blockades, Armenia has made significant economic