

An event of extreme gravity took place in Ottawa on April 8th. Though I made a statement at the time, I wish to refer to this matter again since it appears to have passed relatively unnoticed due notably to the Easter holiday and the Falklands crisis.

A Turkish diplomat, Mr. Kani Gungor, was attacked and shot twice by an unknown assailant. Mr. Gungor's life is now out of danger but, unfortunately, he remains paralysed. An organisation called the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) has claimed responsibility for this crime.

The Canadian Government wishes to emphasize that it unequivocally condemns this despicable act of violence and will continue its efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, both domestic and international. The Government has expressed its sincere regret and sympathy to the Turkish authorities in Ottawa and in Ankara, as well as to Mr. Gungor and his family.

An extensive investigation is being carried out and additional measures have been taken to protect Turkish diplomatic and consular personnel in Canada. Needless to say, the Government very much hopes that the perpetrator or perpetrators of this act will be apprehended and convicted. Responsibility for this criminal act cannot of course be attributed to Canadians of Armenian origin who have not only disclaimed responsibility but have dissociated themselves from all similar acts of terrorism.

The Government is, therefore, confident that the demonstration by Canada's Armenian community that will take place in Ottawa on Saturday, April 24th, will be conducted in a responsible and peaceful manner. While the freedoms of expression and association are fundamental aspects of Canadian life, all citizens who avail themselves of these rights must do so in strict accordance with Canadian law.