



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: July 22, 2013

CONTACT: Deborah Hay
TEL: 416-250-9807

Reflections on Yair Auron's Banality of Indifference Translation into Armenian



The Zoryan Institute welcomes the Armenian translation of Prof. Yair Auron's book titled *The Banality of Indifference: Zionism and the Armenian Genocide*, an important book in the effort to combat denial. The book, published originally in Hebrew in 1995, is a groundbreaking record of the reaction of the Jewish community in Palestine before the founding of the State of Israel to the Armenian Genocide. Seeing the importance of this pioneering work of comparative history, the Zoryan Institute invited Auron to Yerevan in 1995 to participate in the International Conference on "Problems of Genocide," the first on genocide held in independent Armenia.

While the official Jewish reaction to the Genocide was muted and largely self-interested, Auron documents instances of support. The Nili Group, for example, an underground intelligence organization, actively sought to aid the Armenian victims. Chaim Weizmann, a Zionist leader and later the first President of the State of Israel, and Nahum Sokolov, a Zionist leader and a pioneer of Hebrew journalism, publicly condemned the killings. Zionist writers and journalists expressed outraged identification with the Armenians and tried to arouse the conscience of the world. This book was made available to the English reading public by a Zoryan sponsoring its translation, editing and publication.

A new study by Auron was published in 2003 as *The Banality of Denial: Israel and the Armenian Genocide*. It dealt with the official policies of the State of Israel regarding the Armenian Genocide, which Auron decried as denial. The Zoryan Institute provided research, editorial and publication support. We hope that the *Banality of Denial* will also be made available to Armenian readers before the centennial of the Armenian Genocide.

Prof. Auron, a long-time member of the Zoryan Institute's Academic Board of Directors, has been a strong advocate of raising awareness of the Armenian Genocide in Israel. Auron was an early supporter and participant in Zoryan's Genocide and Human Rights University Program and has gone on to be a leading educator in Israel and abroad on genocide, as well as the Armenian Genocide in particular. He has developed a curriculum that is used in Israel and has been adopted in other countries and has published a series of books in Hebrew and English on the various major cases of genocide, including one on the Armenian Genocide earlier this year.

Prof. Yair Auron is a scholar of great originality, a strong advocate of universal human rights, and a soldier in the fight against denial. It is very gratifying that his work is being acknowledged and appreciated by the Armenian Writers Union and government officials.

The Zoryan Institute and its subsidiary, the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, is the first non-profit, international center devoted to the research and documentation of

contemporary issues with a focus on Genocide, Diaspora and Armenia.

For more information please contact the Zoryan Institute by email zoryan@zoryaninstitute.org or telephone 416-250-9807.