

**United Nations Economics and Social  
Development**

**Council of Human Rights**  
Working Group on Indigenous Populations  
24<sup>th</sup> Session  
31<sup>st</sup> July – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2006  
Switzerland – Geneva



**Date:** July 30, 2006  
**No:** Ost.51-G3006

**Item 6c:** Follow-up to the World Conference against Racism,  
Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

**Title: Violation of Human Rights of Turkmen in Erbil**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,  
Honorable delegate,  
Ladies and gentlemen

Erbil is one of the important Turkmen cities, which has been heavily subjected to Kurdification. Since the Ba'ath regime offered this Turkmen city to the Kurds, as the capital of the Kurdish autonomous region, the city has been exposed to further Kurdish emigration following a "safe haven" policy introduced by the Americans in 1991. Consequently, the Turkmen of Erbil have remained at the mercy of the un-democratic Kurdish militant parties (KDP).

After the liberation of Iraq, the Turkmen have been undergoing campaigns by the Kurds in Turkmeneli in a manner often similar to that carried out on Kurds by Saddam Hussein. The Kurdish militant parties are attempting through various methods to eliminate Turkmen identity, especially from Erbil and Kerkuk provinces, in order to dilute them into Kurdish society.

However, in Erbil, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) which is headed by Mussad Barzani has adopted a policy of marginalization of the Turkmen in the region under his control. Turkmen organizations, particularly the Iraqi Turkmen Front offices, have repeatedly been exposed to the attacks of KDP militants in Erbil and Duhok. Several Turkmen were killed.<sup>1</sup>

On 31 August 1996, the troops of the Ba'ath regime invaded the area with the help of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Barazani and captured dozens of active political Turkmen. All of them have disappeared.<sup>2</sup>

- Turkmen political, social and cultural activities have been severely restricted. Conferences and congresses of Turkmen organizations have been prevented to take place outside of the organization's buildings.
- During election campaigns Turkmen were not allowed to hang their boards and flags, except on their own buildings. The election boxes were furthermore manipulated by Pashmargas.<sup>3,4</sup>
- In the Turkmen schools and in the education sector, Kurds imposed their will and hegemony by appointing Kurds to the Turkmen education office; deliberately downgrading the Turkmen education system by ignoring the requirements of the Turkmen students.

---

**SOITM**

Stichting Onderzoekcentrum Iraaks Turkmeense Mensenrechten  
Kan Pelsstraat 56, 6525 VZ, Nijmegen, The Netherlands  
Tel / Fax: 0031 (0) 844 14 14  
Mobile: 0031 (0)616262586  
E-mail: [soitm@chello.nl](mailto:soitm@chello.nl)  
Web site: [www.turkmen.nl](http://www.turkmen.nl)

- By appointing Kurds who cannot speak the Turkmen language as directors or head masters to most Turkmen Schools in the regions under their control, and by deliberately understaffing Turkmen schools, they targeted the Turkmen education system as a further element of Kurdification of the Turkmen regions.
- Kurdish language has been imposed in the Turkmen schools from the first class in primary schools. Turkmen students are forced to sing the Kurdish national anthem, although they have their own Turkmen national anthem, which is forbidden, and their history teaching books only contain Kurdish History.
- Since the late 1990s, cafés and public houses in Erbil city prevented by the Kurdish militia from operating a Turkmen TV and radio in their premises.
- Turkmen are being discriminated against and are seldom appointed in governmental offices or in the university in Erbil. Those who want to be appointed must show allegiance to Barzani and support his party's ideology. For these reasons very few Turkmen have been appointed in governmental offices in the Kurdish region.

On the 22 April 2005 the Kurdish militia lead by Massuad Barzani seized the Turkmeneli printing office and TV and radio transmission equipments in the Turkmeneli Party building in Erbil. Similar Moreover, armed Kurdish militia has also occupied the head office of the Iraqi Turkmen front in Erbil city, Turkmeneli Television & Radio station, Al-Shifa Dispensary building and the Turkmen Culture Association Center. The entire contents of these building have been ransacked and stolen.

In order to have democracy, stability and tranquility in Iraq, the Iraqi government must guarantee fundamental human rights for all citizens.<sup>5</sup>

We call upon the Working Group on Indigenous Populations to address these injustices through the direct involvement in improving the Human Rights situation in Iraq.

We also urge that you appeal to Secretary-General Kofi Annan to send a mission of investigation to document and shed light on the situation in Northern-Iraq, in particular the growing antagonism between Kurds and Turkmen, to facilitate action before the situation deteriorates further.

Thank you

---

**Reference;**

1. Durban Declaration, issue 9
2. General Report of SOITM "Summary of violation of the Human Rights of the Iraqi Turkmen and attempts to assimilate them during the Dictatorial Ba'ath Period", section: Disappearances, <http://members.lycos.nl/soitum/GR.pdf>
3. Statement presented to the 11th Session, Working Group on Minorities (30 May - 3 June, 2005), United Nations – Geneva, by SOITM: <http://www.turkmen.nl/StatementP.pdf>
4. Statement presented to the 23rd Session, Working Group on Indigenous People (16 - 22 July, 2005), United Nations – Geneva, By SOITM: <http://www.turkmen.nl/StatementPw.pdf>
5. Durban Declaration, issue 41

---

**SOITM**