



**Iraqi Turkmen Human
rights Research
Foundation**

**One-sided Kerkuk Conference in the
Brussels Parliament**

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A conference on the Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution related to the Kerkuk Crisis was held in the Brussels regional parliament on 2 July sponsored by the Social Progressive Alternative group and chaired by Jan BEGHIN, the first deputy of the Brussels parliament.

It seems that the organizers from the Brussels government lack correct information about what is occurring in the north of Iraq and what the historical importance and geopolitical characteristics of the Kerkuk region is.

In addition to a large number of Kurdish speakers, several Belgian and Dutch speakers were invited. The two major components of the Kerkuk population were excluded and were not invited to the conference: The Turkmen, who are, without doubt the original native inhabitant and occupant of Kerkuk, and the Arabs who constitute an important part of the Kerkuk population and history.

Turkmen were represented by a pro-Kurdish Turkmen from Erbil who supported all the Kurdish policies. The well known Turkmen political and civil society organizations were excluded. The Chaldo-Assyrians did not attend the conference. There were no Arab speakers. A Yazidie speaker brought by the Kurds supported the Kurdish political views.

Apart from 2 or 3 non-Kurdish speakers, all speeches were in the favor of the Kurds. counterfeit parody were given about opinions of the other Iraqi communities: it is shown that as if all the other communities are supporting the Kurdish policies and recognition of Kerkuk Referendum, in contrary, almost all the Iraqi communities other than the Kurds are most robustly against annexation of Kerkuk region to the so-called Kurdistan.

In general the conference was not about the Article 140. But it was prearranged much more unilateral information on the Kurdish region. It was no more than just a Kurdish opinions presented on the history, geography and demography of the Kerkuk region. The Arabisation of Kerkuk region was discussed in details, the Kurdification, which is much intensive and longer duration, was not touched: nothing said on

- The half million Kurds which were brought by USA supported Kurdish parties and settled in Kerkuk region.
- The Complete Kurdification more or less all of the civil, police, security and military administration in Kerkuk region
- The huge manipulations which took place during the mockery General Iraqi elections and referendum which were organized by the fore-mentioned Kurdified administration.
- The 36,011 case presented to the Property Claim Commission of which more than 80% by Turkmen, 13% were only addressed.
- How the 367,000 Arabs will be exiled from Kerkuk?
- How and why the Kurds robbed ransacked and burned the land and population registry offices in Kerkuk?

Psychologically harmful video films on Ba'ath regime were shown, nothing was talked about what the occupation and Kurdish administration in north of Iraq is undertaking, which is not much less than what Saddam regime has done, if not worse !

As it is obviously seen in the behaviors and speeches of Massoud Barzani, the egotistical mentality of the Kurdish politicians, which created by the unlimited western support, was clearly pragmatic in the speeches of Kurdish politicians in this conference:

- The pseudo-minister of the Kurdish region, Mohammed Ihsan, described those who don't believe that Kerkuk is Kurdistan city as psychologically ailing peoples and he advised them to consult a psychiatrist. It is significant noting that Mohammed Ihsan is well known for his animosity toward the Turkmen and his request to deport the Iraqi Turkmen to Turkey.
- Kemal Kerkuki asserted that the Kerkuk referendum will be performed either peacefully or forcedly. He scoffed at the reports of International Crisis Group and the Baker – Hamilton report.
- Feleknas Uca, a European parliament member of Kurdish ancestry from Turkey, has presented a fanatical provocative speech. She talked about the great Kurdistan. She repeatedly asserted that Kerkuk is heart of the so-called Kurdistan.

Furthermore, Uca described the Turkmen Conference organized by UNPO, SOITM and ALDE in the European parliament in March as propaganda machine for Turkmen and stated that no Kurdish speakers were invited. In contrary, At Turkmen conference about the Kerkuk Crisis, held at the European Parliament from 26-27 March, two well known Kurdish politicians were invited as speakers: Burhan Jaf, the KRG Representative in the EU and Saadi Barzanji, a Kurdish origin Iraqi parliamentarian.

The Kurdish politicians attempt to misinform the international community by widely and continuously repeating false information. They entail to the western community that:

- Only small portion of the Iraqi Turkmen refuse the realization of the referendum. In fact, excluding those who were paid by the Kurds, all the Turkmen community and all political, civil society organizations are uncompromisingly against the realization of the referendum.
- There are no Turkmen organizations other than Iraqi Turkmen Front. This has been done in all Kurdish publication on the Turkmen conference in the European Parliament. No doubt that the Iraqi Turkmen Front is the largest Turkmen organization, there are a large number of Turkmen political and civil society organizations out of the umbrella of Iraqi Turkmen Front.

In Kemal Kerkuk replay to a question about the looting of the Kerkuk population and census registrations, he indirectly admitted that the Kurds had robbed Kerkuk's population and census registrations. Where, all the original registrations kept in Erbil city.

Unfortunately, there are a considerable number of western politicians and even academics who has a very superficial knowledge about the history, geography and demography of the north of Iraq. This makes them to perpetrate serious mistakes as Dr. Michiel Leezenberg. Robert Soeterik, who was greatly generous toward the Kurds in Amsterdam conference when he claimed that the Kerkuk province is historical Kurdish province and strongly supported the realization of referendum, was much cautious in his speech in this conference. He showed a sketch of the Iraqi map which shows that Saddam regime has detached half of Kerkuk province in 1976 to decrease the Kurdish concentration, but he forget to say that 2 of the three districts which were detached from Kerkuk province in 1976 were historically Turkmen districts Kifri and Tuz Khurmatu.

D. McDowall in his book "A Modern History of the Kurds", Page 3 says:

"Kerkuk City had a large Turkmen population as recently as 1958". "Few Kurds would claim quite as much today, but would still claim the city of Kerkuk, even though it had a larger Turkmen population as recently as 1958."

In page 305:

"In mid July 1959, ---; this time in Kerkuk, ---- Tension had been growing for some time between Turkmen, the originally predominant element, and Kurds who had settled during the 1930s and 1940s, driven from the land by landlord rapacity and drawn by the chance for employment in the burgeoning oil industry. By 1959 half the populations of 150,000 were Turkmen, rather less than half were Kurds and the balance Arabs, Assyrians and Armenians."

Hanna Batatu in his book titled "The old social classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq", in Page 913, mentions:

"Kerkuk, an oil center, ---, had been Turkish through and through in the not too distant past. By degrees, Kurds moved into the city from the surrounding villages. With the growth of the oil industry, their migration intensified. By 1959, they had swollen to more than one third of the population, and the Turkmen had declined to just over half, the Assyrians and Arabs accounting, in the main, for the rest of the total of 120,000."

It is the fundamentals of the justice to hear all the components of a legal trail. The subject is the fate of wealthy Kerkuk province, which has influence on the future of the Iraqi state. The complainers are all the Iraqi communities other than the Kurds. Absence of Turkmen, Arab, Assyrian and Shabak speakers in an evaluation of Kerkuk problem will facilitate misleading and has unconstructive impacts on the overall objective of resolving the conflict.

Note. The report reviewed for English language by Mohammed Kelenchy.