



Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation

No.: WSa.10-B1106

Date: February 11, 2006

United Nations Economic and Social Council Commission on Human Rights

62nd Session
Mart 13th – April 21st 2006
Agenda Item 6(a)

Title: Iraqi Turkmen

The Iraqi Turkmen currently constitute one of the main ethnic groups in Iraq, in addition to the Arabs and the Kurds. Since the beginning of the last century Iraqi Turkmen have been exposed to forced emigration, cultural erosion and intensive assimilation policies; reaching its peak during the Ba'ath regime. Consequently, Arabification was augmented in the region and Turkmen exposed to persecution, execution and deportation. In the census of 1977, 1987 and 1997, the government forced Iraqi Turkmen to register either as Arabs or as Kurds, and during the 1990s the Turkmen experienced enforced changing of ethnicity.

Regrettably, the fall of the Ba'ath regime did not entirely ameliorate the Turkmen situation, as Turkmen have continued to be subjected to marginalization during the establishment of the Governing Council and the Interim Iraqi government. Turkmen regions continue to be exposed to demographic changes and reports allege that voting processes in the regions have been subject to manipulation.

In particular, IFPRERLOM would like to bring awareness to the situation in Kerkuk. US military authorities established the first Kerkuk council by the Kurdish-Christian majority. The council appointed a Kurdish governor, Kurdish Mayor and Kurdish police chief. The Property Claims Commission in Kerkuk, staffed mainly by non-Turkmen, refuses to return tens of thousands of hectares of lands, confiscated by the Ba'ath regime, to rightful Turkmen owners. It is to be noted with concern that Turkmen do not enjoy fair representation, but experience discrimination in access to position of high-ranking staff, governmental offices and police personnel.

According to the new Iraqi constitution, the fate of Kerkuk is to be determined in accordance to the will of the people of Kerkuk in a census to be held no later than 31 December 2007. Some Turkmen human rights organizations have expressed concern in regard to this process, and fear an outcome unfavorable to protecting the rights of the Iraqi Turkmen.

In view of the abovementioned issues faced by the Iraqi Turkmen, IFPRERLOM urges the Human Rights Council;

to ensure the Durban Declaration is fully implemented to encompass and protect the rights of all minorities in current Iraq; and

to call upon the UN and the international community to engage directly in the upcoming census concerning the future of Kerkuk.

SOITM

Stichting Onderzoekcentrum Iraaks Turkmeense Mensenrechten
Kan Pelsstr. 56, 6525 VZ Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Tel: 0031 (0)616262586 email: soitm@chello.nl
Website: www.turkmen.nl