

Turkmen Message to the European Union

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Before I start to explain the situation in Northern Iraq, I would like to identify some facts:

What Do We Want from the European Union?

In view of the injustices of the Kurdish administration against the other ethnicities in the North and to establish an ever lasting peace, justice and fairness in Northern Iraq, we demand the European Union, European governments, European Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)s to pressure the Kurdish administration, the Iraqi government and the American Government to replace the Mentality of the Force with justice fairness and equality.

Therefore, in order to avoid ethnic conflict and miseries of war in the North, we demand the Kurdish administration to:

- 1- Stop claiming Kerkuk and other Turkmen towns in Kerkuk province, Salahaddin and Diyale provinces as part of Kurdistan.
- 2- Remove all its armed militias present in the form of army and police forces from the non-Kurdish areas of Northern Iraq and replace them with local forces.
- 3- Remove all its Kurdish administration personnel from non-Kurdish areas of Northern Iraq and replace them with local administration personnel.
- 4- Allow all non-Kurdish ethnicities of the North to establish its own self ruling governments (i.e. the Turkmen government, the Chaldo-Assyrian government and the Northern Arab government) beside the Kurdistan Regional Government.
- 5- Establish an equal partnership between the three major ethnicities, the Kurds, Turkmen and Arabs with a contingent for the Chaldo-Assyrians and form of The Federation of Northern Iraq which will be a federation of the four local governments (Kurdish, Turkmen, Arab and Chaldo-Assyrian) and still be part of the Federal Iraq.
That will be much more acceptable to every body instead of forcibly including them into Kurdistan.

Forcing and persistence in applying unfavorable decisions by the Kurds upon other peoples will bring intimidation, vengeance, hate and endless conflict to Northern Iraq. Whereas, tolerance, co-existence and respect of others rights will bring prosperity, cooperation and peace.

The Turkmen desire the establishment of a Turkmen government that is secular, peaceful, democratic and based on human rights and wish others to do the same.

The Facts:

- 1- Northern Iraq, unlike the rest of the country, is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious area.
There are the Kurds with both linguistic groups, the Behdinans and the Sorans, and there are the Turkmen, the Arabs, the Syriacs (Assyrians and Chaldeans) as well Ezdis (Yazidis) and the Shahbeks.
- 2- There is no absolute majority of any ethnic group over the others. But rather, some are more than the others.
The Kurds (combining both the Behdinans and the Sorans) are more than the Turkmen, who are more than the Arabs, who are more than the Syriacs and so on. However, the Kurds in total are less than the others combined.
- 3- Until today, since the end of World War I, there has not been a single accurate census in Iraq in general and in the North in particular. All figures declared so far were approximate

and the numbers of non-Arab ethnic populations in general and the Turkmens in particular, were tampered with for political reasons. This situation was valid until the fall of Saddam in 2003. The same situation applies to non-Kurds in Northern Iraq after the fall of Saddam.

- 4- Changing demography and forced migrations by the rulers to their advantage, was and is the common method before and after 2003. Erbil was known as a Turkmen city until the fifties. However, the government forced Kurdish rebels to settle in Erbil in order to control them. Therefore, Erbil became a Kurdish majority city nowadays. Kerkuk was known as a Turkmen city until the seventies. But it became a disputed area between the government and the Kurds who both wanted to control it for its oil wealth. Therefore, each side settled enormous numbers of their ethnics in order to change the demography to their advantage. While the Arab rulers in Baghdad, until 2003, settled too many Arabs in Northern Iraq particularly in Kerkuk city and province as well as Musul and Diyale provinces, the Kurdish rulers of the North, after 2003, settled too many Kurds in the same areas.
- 5- In reality, the Kurds control by force all of Northern Iraq, way beyond the area of Kurdistan, including, Musul, Kerkuk and northern Diyale provinces. The process nowadays is to incorporate these areas "officially" into Kurdistan by using pretexts such as article 140 of the constitution.
- 6- Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution has been legally expired. Because the constitution was particular about carrying it out in December 2007. There is no legal way to amend it or delay it.
- 7- The Turkmens, until the end of the First World War, have been the rulers or among the ruling elite in Iraq and particularly in the North for a millennium. They are mostly urbanized and educated. They are non-violent and always tended to establish justice, peace and stability in the area.

The ideal Situation:

Based on the above mentioned facts, it is logical to say that the ideal administration for the North would be in the form of Equal Partnership between the three major ethnicities, the Kurds, the Turkmens and the Arabs of the North.

As the Kurds are entitled to self government, so do the other ethnicities of the North. The Turkmens, Arabs and Syriacs are distinct societies with ancient history and bright cultures who deserve autonomy just as the Kurds do.

Status-Quo:

But in reality, one ethnic group, the Kurds, took advantage of the unconditional support of the American Administration to them as well as the non-violent nature of the Turkmens and the Syriacs. Using their armed militias, the Peshmergas, they controlled the whole of Northern Iraq by force.

Currently, they control all government and public life, the army, the police, the municipalities, the economy, the resources and the public services.

Instead of acting as equal partners with the other major ethnicities of the North (the Turkmens and Arabs), they treat them along with the Syriacs as Minorities who should be subject to their rules, laws and regulations and governed by the Kurdish Regional Government in Erbil.

They are working persistently to officially incorporate all non-Kurdish areas of Northern Iraq into their Kurdistan. To achieve this, they brought hundreds of thousands of Kurdish families from the mountainous regions of the North as well as from Iran and Syria and settled them in Kerkuk, Musul and Diyale provinces. Giving them fake identities, ration cards and land titles, they are claiming that those are the original people driven by Saddam from their lands. They manipulated and tampered with every election in Musul, Kerkuk, Salahaddin and Diyale provinces in order to win the majority of the municipal assemblies.

Thus they created a status-quo and deceived the world that they are the absolute majority in Northern Iraq.

The Turkmens long demanded that the United Nations interfere and act as a judge in the conflict of the North. But the actions and speeches of the UN envoy Mr. De Mestora is not helpful.