

# Public Hearing on Human rights situation of Turkmen of Iraq

5 December 2011

Subcommittee on Human Rights  
European Parliament, Brussels



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**Brussels  
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## ABOUT UNPO

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) is an international, nonviolent, and democratic membership organization. Its members are indigenous peoples, minorities, and unrecognized or occupied territories who have joined together to protect and promote their human and cultural rights, to preserve their environments, and to find nonviolent solutions to conflicts which affect them. Although the aspirations of UNPO Members differ greatly, they are all united by one shared condition –they are not adequately represented at major international fora, such as the United Nations. As a consequence, their opportunity to participate on the international stage is significantly limited, as is their ability to access and draw upon the support of the global bodies mandated to defend their rights, protect their environments, and mitigate the effects of conflict.

Previous UNPO and Iraqi Turkmen collaborations include a series of conferences held in the European Parliament on the issue of minority issues in Iraq. The first conference in the series was convened in 2007, and entitled ‘Iraqi Turkmen: The Human Rights Situation and Crisis in Kerkuk’. The event aimed to bring representatives of Iraq’s new institutions together with outside policy makers in a bid to ensure that human rights were a priority in the reconstruction of the new Iraqi state. This was succeeded a year later in 2008 by the conference entitled ‘Kerkuk Problem and Article 140: Defining Alternatives - The Views of Kerkuk’s Turkmen and Arabs’, which examined the functioning of modern day Iraq, particularly the changes brought to the geographically disputed and oil rich city of Kerkuk.

The Iraqi Turkmen are represented at the UNPO by the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) which is an umbrella organisation of several parties, including the Iraqi National Turkmen Party (INTP), Turkmeneli Party (TP), Adalet part (AP), Islamic Movement of Iraqi Turkmens (IMIT) and the Independents Movement.

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## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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### THE TURKMEN OF IRAQ

The last reliable census data from Iraq, gathered in 1957, identifies the Turkmen as the third largest ethnic group in Iraq. Their population has long historical roots in northern Iraq, stretching back beyond the Islamic period, with ongoing settlement throughout subsequent centuries. Iraqi Turkmen communities rose to prominence during the Umayyad and Abbasids Caliphates, playing an important role as rulers and administrators under the Seljuks, Atabags, Mongols, Qara Qoyunlu, Aq Qoyunlu, and Safavids. Turkmen were also prominent administrators, merchants, and politicians under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, especially in urban areas such as Kerkuk, Erbil, Tal Afer, and in several districts in Diyala, Salah al-Din and Kut, where they lived as a majority. The decline of their influence and marginalisation first began after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of the First World War.

Under British rule and Iraq's Monarchy, the cultural rights of Turkmen communities were gradually eroded, and their activists frequently jailed. British rule is also widely viewed by Turkmen as the beginning of efforts to systematically misrepresent the true extent of their presence in northern Iraq – in what some have seen as an effort to remove vestiges of Ottoman rule as they sought to cement their own control.

Following the growth of a burgeoning oil industry in the 1930s, other communities and minorities, especially the Kurdish, began entering Iraq's northern cities in large numbers from mountainous areas in the east. This rapid demographic change produced ethnic tension and violence and Turkmen communities began to feel the effect of marginalisation. Tensions were exasperated further with the establishment of Ba'ath Party rule in 1968, opening a period during which the position of all minorities in Iraq became increasingly precarious.

After seizing power in 1979, Saddam Hussein's regime instigated a campaign of intensive "Arabisation" in regions of northern Iraq that opposed his rule, systematically expelling the Turkmen, Kurdish and Assyrians, encouraging the resettlement of Arabs, and redrawing constituencies to dilute the political influence of non-Arab communities. This period of violence and persecution effectively destroyed Turkmen civil society, forcing many of its political institutions underground or into exile abroad.

Rebuilding civil society remains the major challenge facing Iraqi Turkmen leaders as the Post-Ba'athist Iraqi state takes shape. Many Iraqi Turkmen communities believe that their historical presence and influence in the region has remained marginalised during the process of reconstructing the Iraqi state, and that more has to be done to correct the past injustices they have suffered. With limited representation in local administration and security forces, as well as in the vital Iraq Property Claims Commission, many continue to feel disenfranchised, despite the changes in Iraq. Perhaps most crucially, Turkmen communities have come to view the recent waves of immigration into Kerkuk as increasingly disproportionate, suspicious of the role this might play in the long deferred referendum on the city's future status.

The cities of Tal Afer and Erbil are also considered historical homes to large Iraqi Turkmen communities. Feelings of marginalisation and exclusion are also beginning to emerge in these cities, leaving many to fear for the future of Iraqi Turkmen communities in northern Iraq and the heterogeneity of Iraq's society as a whole. Many have already taken the difficult decision to become refugees, seeking refuge in neighbouring countries such as Turkey and Syria.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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### AGENDA

Subcommittee on Human Rights

### Public Hearing on Human rights situation of Turkmen in Iraq

5 December 2011

15.30 – 16.45

**Room: Altiero Spinelli (ASP) 1 G 2**  
**European Parliament, Brussels**

1. Introductory remarks by **Mr Metin Kazak, MEP**
2. **Professor Stefan Wolff**, Professor of International Security at the University of Birmingham,  
*on minority rights in Iraq and prospects for the Iraqi Turkmen within Iraq*
3. **Mr Hasan Özmen**, Member of Parliament, Council of Representatives of Iraq,  
*on the plight of the Iraqi Turkmen since 2003*
4. **Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci**, Director of the Centre for Transnational Studies at Regent's College,  
*on the effects of migration and the future security of the Iraqi Turkmen*
5. **EEAS Representative**
6. Discussion
7. Concluding remarks by **Ms Barbara Lochbihler**, Chair

The hearing can be followed online:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/committees/video?event=20111205-1500-COMMITTEE-DROI&category=COMMITTEE&format=wmv>

## SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS

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## OPENING REMARKS

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**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

**CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Turkmen live in a region of Iraq which is roughly located around the axis Mosul-Erbil-Kerkuk, the latter city being the most important. Situated on the border between Arab Iraq and the Kurdish territory, it is inhabited by a variety of groups, each with their own claims to the land. The Turkmen themselves, descendants of the Seljuq Turks and later of Ottoman officials, have lived in the area for many centuries.

Events and policies that have affected the demographic balance in the region date back to the British mandate and span the era of the Republic, Ba'athist Iraq and the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. Our focus today, however, is on the period after April 2003 and on human rights rather than demographics, although the effects of the latter on the concrete situation of the Turkmen implies that they will always be part of the equation when making an analysis.

The situation is very complex and very delicate and rather difficult to fathom, but what clearly emerges is that on a significant number of levels Turkmens' human rights are precarious at best and deserve our specific attention. I am hence pleased to welcome such a diverse array of speakers to share their experiences and expertise with us.

## INTRODUCTION

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**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

**CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

Firstly, may I give the floor to my esteemed colleague Mr. Metin Kazak, who has played a major part in the organization of this hearing, for the opening remarks.

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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**METIN KAZAK MEP**

**VICE-CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

Thank you very much Madam Chair.

It is my pleasure to open today's public hearing on the subject of the human rights situation of the Turkmen in Iraq. This hearing could not come at a more opportune time and I am grateful to the Chairperson of this Subcommittee and my colleagues for their interest and support. In the best spirit of the European Parliament, this meeting transcends the work of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and is of great importance to our colleagues in the Committee for Foreign Affairs and the Delegation for Relations with Iraq, amongst others.

The Chair has outlined the background to the situation facing the Turkmen of Iraq today and I would like to briefly focus on the key question of security. US forces will leave Iraq on 31 December 2011, and with less than a month to go, attentions are being turned to what this will mean for the balance of influence in Kerkuk and elsewhere. Within Kerkuk an American presence will remain but this will not be comparable to the joint patrols that have been successful in preventing the escalation of violence as was once feared.

Kerkuk remains a dangerous city, the accidental deaths of two bomb-makers on Sunday follows two coordinated bombs attacks on a bus and security services on Saturday in only the most recent attacks to shake the city. Against this background, as the Chair has noted, the human rights of the Turkmen in Iraq are precarious.

While the Kurdistan Regional Government has offered to extend security and development assistance to Kerkuk and other areas, this does not address the desire for equitable division of power between the city's many communities. Nor does it begin to address the future administration of the city and other Turkmen centres, either as new federal regions within Iraq, incorporated into the Kurdistan Region or in some other administrative arrangement.

However the belief in dialogue is not yet dead despite the daily bomb attacks and increasingly remote possibility of implementing Article 140 as originally intended. Hassan Turan, Turkman head of the Kerkuk Provincial Council has acknowledged the "transparent

and frank” discussions conducted with Kurdish authorities. It is in that spirit and because the issue of the Turkmen of Iraq also has an international dimension that cannot be ignored, that this hearing is of such importance. The perspectives our panel today will present are intended to demonstrate the international impact of policies towards the Turkmen of Iraq as well as placing the Turkmen situation alongside comparable cases.

I believe that the European Union and its member states have a rich experience that is of unique value to Iraqi Turkmen and to those seeking to address the complex questions of property reparations, security, cultural autonomy, and power-sharing that are central to the situation of the Turkmen of Iraq. This experience comes from our efforts, mistakes, and successes at building a Europe that has been largely at peace for longer than many of us can remember.

The intervention into Iraq in 2003 may have divided European opinion but now there is the opportunity for us to share our experiences. Just as I believe Turkmen and their compatriots can find inspiration from Europe and perhaps models to follow in their search for equitable solutions to the problems they face, so I also believe that Europe has much to learn from Iraq and its people. For too long the European Union presence in Iraq has been under-resourced and its positions pronounced without any substance to back them up. I hope that this hearing can be a step to addressing and supporting a new engagement between the EU and Iraq.

This hearing is focussed on the situation of the Iraqi Turkmen because, of all the communities in Iraq, I believe Turkmen have been amongst the most overlooked for a variety of reasons. It is therefore an attempt to raise the issue of the Iraqi Turkmen alongside that of other communities in Iraq and also to encourage Iraqi Turkmen to step into the breach and find the strength to decide both their own future and a future in which they can live in peace – as they had done for decades.

As I have noted, today such a future is threatened by almost daily abuses of Turkmen human rights. Like other communities, Turkmen are targeted by bombings while lawlessness allows kidnapping for ransom a frequent and common threat. Without a solution to the question of property rights many have been left in poverty, dislocated within a country that has been their home for decades or centuries, and seeing very little future for them or their families in the short or medium term. It is important that these human rights be placed in the context of contemporary Iraq, Baghdad’s international obligations, and measures taken to ensure the age-old tolerances and coexistence that made Iraq a cultural capital of the Middle East are not lost forever.

Therefore, I hope that this hearing will prove insightful for my colleagues and a spur to constructive discussion and debate between Iraq’s communities. No one can be under any illusion that a solution will be easy to come by, but I hope that starting today we can build on past initiatives and see the goal of a peaceful settlement reached sooner rather than later.

Thank you very much.

## INTRODUCTION

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**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

**CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

It is now my pleasure to welcome Professor Stefan Wolff as our first guest speaker. Professor Wolff is professor of International Security at the University of Birmingham (UK), and specialises in, among other areas, the management of contemporary security challenges, particularly the prevention and settlement of ethnic conflicts. He has extensive experience in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Central and Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union, and has also worked on a wide range of conflicts elsewhere, including the Middle East, Africa, and Central, South and Southeast Asia. Bridging the divide between academia and policy-making, Professor Wolff has been involved in various phases of conflict-settlement processes, including in Iraq, Sudan, Moldova, Sri Lanka and Kosovo. He has published very widely and has held visiting professorships throughout the world. He will speak on minority rights in Iraq and prospects for the Iraqi Turkmen within Iraq.

## MINORITY RIGHTS IN IRAQ AND PROSPECTS FOR THE IRAQI TURKMEN IN IRAQ

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**PROFESSOR STEFAN WOLFF**

**PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

**UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

Thank you very much, and also thank you very much to the organisers of this meeting to give me the opportunity to address you on the issue of the current minority rights framework in Iraq and what that potentially means for the future prospects of the Iraqi Turkmen community.

By way of introduction, I just want to point out that Turkmen are the third largest group in Iraq and even though there are no particularly accurate figures about their size, estimates range from between 600,000 and 2 million Turkmen in Iraq. They live concentrated mostly in the north of Iraq and the Kurdistan region, but from a security perspective it is also important to note that the largest compactly settled group of Iraqi Turkmen live in the disputed territories, including in the city and province of Kerkuk. Turkmen have historically suffered greatly under Saddam Hussein, and their suffering has been recognized in the Iraqi Constitution - in the Preamble of the 2005 document. But notwithstanding the recognition of past suffering of Iraqi Turkmen, they are among those minority groups in contemporary Iraq that continue to be affected by both ethnic and sectarian violence and discrimination.

Now if we look at the legal framework of minority rights in Iraq, we have to look at three different aspects. First are the international standards to which Iraq has committed as a state. The second is the Iraqi Constitution of 2005 that I already mentioned, and also the Kurdistan Regional Constitution of 2009. In contrast to the legal framework in many other countries, to date there is no comprehensive minority rights or anti-discrimination law in

Iraq at the level of ordinary legislation. Even though there are a number of provisions in existing legislation, like for example the Criminal Code or the Labour Code, these are potentially quite problematic in that they might allow for discrimination on the basis of ethnic or sectarian religious belonging.

Now let me just briefly outline the international legal minority rights standards that are applicable in the case of Iraq. Iraq is a signatory to a number of relevant international documents and I just want to list them here in chronological order, not necessarily in order of importance. There is the ILO Convention, No. 111 that concerns discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. The two International Covenants – the one on Civil and Political Rights, and the one on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights. Also, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which Iraq has signed up. Of those, probably the most important is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, where Article 27 places a very concrete obligation on signatory states to make sure that people belonging to linguistic, ethnic or religious minorities do actually find an environment in which they can preserve their ethnic, religious or linguistic identity but also can develop it, and can do so without fear of discrimination. What is notable about the international standards is that Iraq is not a signatory to the ILO Convention, No. 169 on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries.

Constitutional provisions in the Constitution of Iraq in 2005 – I already mentioned the official recognition of the suffering of Turkmen under Saddam Hussein in the Preamble, but there are a number of other noteworthy articles. Article 3 recognises that Iraq is a country of multiple nationalities, religions and sects. Article 4 is the article about languages, and while it acknowledges that the only two official languages in Iraq at the statewide level are Arabic and Kurdish, it also makes provisions that the Turkmen language and the Assyrian language are two other official languages in the administrative units in which they constitute density of population. So basically, in those areas where a sufficiently large number of Turkmen live, there Turkmen can be recognized and used as an official language. Article 14 is the general non-discrimination article in the Constitution. Article 125 is perhaps more specifically important to members of non-majority communities – it guarantees administrative, political, cultural and educational rights of the various nationalities, and specifically mentions Turkmen among them.

Now what is a stark contrast here is the Constitution of the Kurdistan Region, which does actually not explicitly recognize Turkmen as a constituent community of the Kurdish region. But rather it notes in its Article 5 that the people of the Kurdistan region are composed of Kurds, Arabs, Chaldo-Assyrian-Syriacs, Armenians and others who are citizens of Kurdistan. In Article 20, the Kurdistan Region's Constitution determines a sort of general equality in front of the law and mandates non-discrimination on any grounds. Then there is an entire chapter in the Kurdistan Region's Constitution that is entitled 'Ethnic and Religious Rights of the Different Groups of the Kurdistan Region', and I don't want to go into much detail here, but just to point out Article 35 actually mentions specifically the Turkmen as having a right to national culture and administration autonomy wherever they represent a local majority of the population. The only other thing that is noteworthy about the Kurdistan Regional Constitution is Article 32, paragraph 2 which is actually a bit problematic from a minority

rights perspective. I would to quote this article in order to prevent any misinterpretation or misunderstanding. Article 32.2 states that:

“The Government of the Kurdistan Region shall be committed to preventing any intentional change in population percentages in the areas inhabited by ethnic or religious groups. This shall not affect the process of equitable restitution of the policies of Arabization and forced displacement practiced by the Ba’athist regime in Iraqi-Kurdistan, particularly in the city of Kerkuk.”

What is noteworthy also about this is that Kerkuk is of course at the moment, at least before any potential implementation of Article 140, not within the political boundaries of the Kurdistan region.

Now all of that I think leaves me with a rather ambivalent conclusion here. On the one hand, I think there is a relatively robust constitutional framework for minority rights in place in both Iraq and in the Kurdistan region. But in the absence of proper implementation of these relatively broad, and you might argue vague, constitutional provisions into actual law and policy, the situation for Turkmen in Iraq is still rather precarious. It’s precarious in the sense that there is still enough room for potential discrimination on ethnic, linguistic and religious grounds. But also, there are very few incentives in the Iraqi legal framework actually to prosecute violations of at least the latter, and of course also the spirit of the Constitution in terms of protecting minority or identity communities in Iraq. But the most pressing problem, and I want to conclude with this, is of course the security situation and as long as there is still a remarkable lack of security almost ten years after the end of Saddam Hussein’s regime, I think it’s an illusion to expect much progress on a better legal framework, on a better policy framework for the situation of the Turkmen, but also for other identity communities in Iraq.

Thank you very much.

## INTRODUCTION

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**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

**CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

It is an honour to have with us a colleague from Iraq, Mr Hasan Özmen, Turkmen Member of the Iraqi Parliament from the Diyala governorate. Having been active in Iraqi politics since the late 1970s, partly from exile, his experiences since the American-led invasion in 2003, from the perspective of a Turkmen and a fellow legislator and policymaker will be of particular interest to us. Mr Özmen has also published a great number of books, articles and reports over the years. Today Mr Özmen will speak in Turkish, for which we have interpretation.

## THE SITUATION OF THE TURKMEN OF IRAQ SINCE APRIL 2003

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**HASAN ÖZMEN**

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**

**COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ**

I am Hasan Özmen, member of the Iraqi Parliament from the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) and the al-Iraqiya list. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Mr. Metin Kazak and the members of the Human Rights Subcommittee for the organization of such an important meeting on the human rights situation of the Turkmen of Iraq.

According to census statistics, the validity of which are questionable, in 1957 Iraqi Turkmen constituted 9% of Iraq's total population. Had that population been allowed to grow at the rate of the rest of Iraq, the Turkmen might now number in the millions. However, due to gross acts of violence and degradation perpetrated over the past five decades, Turkmen population growth has been stunted. Residing mainly in the north and middle of Iraq which includes Mosul, Erbil, Salah al-Din, Diyala, Kut and Baghdad, the largest concentration of Turkmen can be found in Kerkuk, the linguistic, cultural and ethnic identity of which has been distinctly colored by their presence.<sup>[1]</sup>

On April 10, 2003, after the US occupation, Kurdish forces entered traditional Turkmen areas (including Tal Afer, Khanaqin and Kerkuk) and seized the administration of local governments. Under pressure from this new Kurdish government, Turkmen, Assyrians and Arabs were, and continue to be, subject to forced assimilation, intimidations, targeted killings, arbitrary detentions, assassinations and kidnappings. As a result of these seizures and the subsequent influx of Kurds, the demographic structure of the region has changed completely.

Kerkuk is an oil-rich city in Northeastern Iraq. Because the city sits on almost 10 billion barrels of oil, control of its administration and resources is highly contested.<sup>[2]</sup> Its population, originally Turkmen, have suffered severely from assimilation, both during the Ba'ath period and after U.S. occupation. Many Turkmen reside in the center of the province



while Arabs live mainly in the south and west and the Kurdish population can be found in the north and east. Due to its proximity to the center, the Turkmen populated region is the area most exposed to terrorist activity.

As a result of the demographic shift seen in all lands seized by Kurdish forces, Kerkuk's council elections and most recent census are seen as fraudulent by Turkmen as they do not accurately reflect Kerkuk's population.<sup>[3][4]</sup> Violating laws issued by the Iraqi parliament, the Kurds continue to dominate decision-making in the Kerkuk province.

In this context, Iraqi Turkmen call for the implementation of fair, free and transparent elections organized according to international standards which demand:

1. Appointment of an United Nations commission to participate in the organization of elections
2. Review and amendment of voter lists

In addition, the Turkmen of Iraq suggest that the Kerkuk province be administered for 10 years jointly by Turkmen, Arabs, Kurds and Christians.

Confiscation of land was one of the major features of the assimilation policies of the Ba'ath regime. The total surface area of the lands confiscated in the Kerkuk region was 357,305,000 square meters, of which about 280 million square meters or 80%, was Turkmen-owned. In spite of property legislation demanding the return of seized lands, very little Turkmen land has been restored and very few Turkmen have been compensated for these confiscated lands. Currently, there are 41,874 complaints registered with the Property Claims Commission of Kerkuk. Of these complaints, only 3,236 cases have been decided, while most cases remain in appellate court. To speed this process, the Iraqi Turkmen Front presented a proposal to the Iraqi Parliament to regain these lands, but the proposal was rejected due to Arabic opposition.

Turkmen education suffers from many difficulties in Iraq, and especially in the Kurdish region. Large numbers of schools in Turkmen regions are still unable to use their mother tongue. If Turkmen language is offered at all, it is limited to one subject. The major difficulties within these schools are that a large percentage of teachers and all school materials are not paid for by the Iraqi Ministry of Education. Teaching staff and facilities are insufficient and there is shortage of experts and supervisors on Turkmen language and literature.

Targeting of Iraqi Turkmen by terrorists has only increased since 2003. Since that point, there have been hundreds of bombings and kidnappings in Turkmen regions.

For example, the Tal Afer district was attacked twice by helicopters, tanks and tens of thousands of soldiers on 9 September 2004 and a year later, on 5 September 2005. I will give you a picture of the attack by the numbers: 1,350 were left dead and 2,650 were wounded; about 7,000 citizens were arrested and 1,000 are still in prison; 3,658 houses, 563 shops and 469 cars were damaged; about 500 houses were completely demolished and



1,468 houses were robbed. During these catastrophes, about 48,000 families were displaced from Tal Afer and 13,000 of those families are still unable to return to the region.

Iraqi Turkmen have also suffered severe repression in Erbil. In April 2005, Kurdish security agents broke into Turkmen institutions and took over 24 buildings, including Turkmeneli Television and Radio.

The Turkmen of Tuz Hurmatu suffer even more greatly under the oppressive Kurdish regime because not only are they of Turkmen origin but they also practice Shiitism.

Since 2003, the total amount of ransom paid by Turkmen is estimated to be about 50 million US dollars.

The goal of terrorism in Iraq is to hamper the institution of a democratic state and to assimilate minority Iraqi communities such as the Turkmen, the Chaldea-Assyrians, the Yazidis and the Shabaks.

The Turkmen of Iraq are suffering from genocide and ethnic cleansing; they are exposed to daily violation of human rights, they have no physical and economic security and in many cases have been forced to flee from their land.

We the Turkmen of Iraq support a unitary democratic state and would like to broker a power sharing agreement in the Kerkuk province.

In view of the stated problems faced by the Turkmen in Iraq, I would kindly ask Mr. Metin Kazak and the Human Rights Subcommittee of the European Parliament to:

- Send a fact-finding mission to Turkmen areas of Iraq to investigate the human rights situation
- Consider organization of a meeting for Turkmen leaders with Mr. Herman Achille Van Rompuy, the President of the Council of the European Union, Mr. Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament and Mr. José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission
- Organize a presentation about the Iraqi Turkmen to the Foreign Affairs Commission of the European Parliament
- Support organization of a series of conferences in the European Parliament to present the human rights situation of the Iraqi Turkmen.

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#### References:

1. Edward Y. Odisho, City of Kerkuk: No historical authenticity without multi-ethnicity. North-eastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL U.S.A., Page 5 – 6.
2. Iraq Petroleum Company, <http://almashriq.hiof.no/lebanon/300/380/388/ipc/>
3. Provincial Councils Act No. 36, art. 23 adopted in 2008 prevented elections in Kerkuk, which asked that the voters and electoral billets should be reviewed.
4. Article 16 of the Parliamentary Election Law Article 6, 2009

## INTRODUCTION



**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

**CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

Our next guest speaker is Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci, professor of Transnational Studies and Marketing and Director of the Regent's Centre for Transnational Studies in the UK. He has taught at a number of universities and is the author of numerous academic publications. Specialising in demographic analysis, transnational mobility and ethnicity as some of his key areas of research, his expertise is particularly appropriate today in helping explore the issue of migration and the future security of the Iraqi Turkmen.

## THE EFFECTS OF MIGRATION AND THE FUTURE SECURITY OF THE IRAQI TURKMEN



**PROFESSOR IBRAHIM SIRKECI**

**DIRECTOR**

**CENTRE FOR TRANSNATIONAL STUDIES, REGENT'S COLLEGE**

Chair, thank you; honourable members, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon,

Thank you for the invitation. [...] I have been studying ethnic minorities, ethnic minorities in conflict situations and their international mobility for years and based on that I proposed a model on migration how to understand international human mobility in such conflict situations. Obviously in the original model, I am looking at and discussing a wide range of conflicts which involves quite latent tensions but on the other extreme wars, armed clashes and so on. Human migration is apparently responsive to conflicts in any area around the world and we have found so much evidence across the world including Iraq with the Turkmen Kurdish cases and also other minority cases mentioned already. In Lebanon, in Syria, in Mexico, in Turkey and you can find more examples to support the idea and the hypotheses there.

The Turkmen habitat in mostly northern Iraq has been part of a conflict zone for decades, if not longer. In similar conflict situations around the world and in the region, we have seen upsurges of immigration, of outmigration. For example after the conflict we have seen a sharp increase in the number of people seeking asylum in Germany and other European countries. We have seen similar sharp increases in Ethiopia to Europe again regarding Eritrean conflict. We have seen similar increases from Turkey to Germany regarding Kurdish conflict and from Iraq to Turkey and other European countries regarding Kurdish conflicts or Saddam's oppression of Kurdish minorities. Unlike the Kurdish, we have not heard much about the Turkmen minority but one important feature in all of these cases was that migration flows were not limited to the peak periods of the respective conflict situations but we have identified a period following the major conflict period of continuous outward

migration of those minority groups. So we are not referring to just mass refugee or asylum seeking flows. In my studies I have observed similar outflows of Turkmen from Iraq.

Another key feature is that while violent conflicts as we detect them are contributing to human insecurity as we call it, the human insecurity has two components: one is material and the other is non-material. You can easily find material indicators such as lack of job opportunities or increased life-threatening risks, persecution, death toll, etc. Whereas non-material is mainly referring to cultural rights and other forms of discrimination and human rights abuses. In the Iraqi Turkmen case we can easily identify such incidences. Arabisation policies already mentioned is such important life threatening, both material and non-material, elements in the environment of human insecurity.

Individuals and families that are faced with such conditions have options available to them. One such option is migration to another country. They may stay where they are or walk out of places they reside. Iraqi Turkmen with other ethnic groups have gone through several wars and invasions which are all part and parcel of that environment of human insecurity as we define. Here we see the change in stock of immigrant Iraqis in OECD countries after the 2003 invasion. There is almost a 50% rise between 2000 and 2006 and to a large extent, we can credit this to the invasion. Iraqi asylum-seeking applications to industrialised countries have risen from about 275,000 to over 400,000 during the 2000s, so within a decade we have seen almost a double of the total numbers of asylum seekers.

Such reactions to armed conflicts are most visible with changes in refugee and asylum seeking flows. In Iraq we have seen such peak periods marked by sharp increases in asylum applications during the 1990s and 2000s. [These include...] key events as such, like in 1988 we had chemical attacks on the Kurdish, in 1990 and 1991 first Iraq War and first Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, whatever you want to call it, then in 1998 we have seen Operation Desert Fox and in 2002 and 2003 we had weapons inspections and surrounding tensions followed by the allied forces' invasion. In 2006 sectarian violence broke out in the country, something which I believe is not solved yet. Turkmen emigration from Iraq is therefore not much different than other Iraqi groups. As you can see from these two graphs, they share a very similar pattern. I tried to correspond the dates between 1980 to 2004, which was the time I carried out field research in Iraq with the help of about 60 Iraqi research assistants.

In our study we collected information about the year of last migration and we did that for current and returned migrants, so to draw this graph to represent Iraqi emigration. I am not claiming these events have only affected Turkmen, but it seems evident that they caused a large-scale displacement relative to this particular group's population. The proportion of families with migrant members is higher than compared to other emigration source countries or sending countries. It amounts to about 35% or 36% of all households and more than 10% of all individuals. So at the time of the study, it is three times higher than the Iraqi averages which tells us only one thing – this particular community is suffering more than others in the same situation. In our survey in Iraq we found that about 60% of Iraqi Turkmen believed that migration would improve their cultural and political freedoms, and then about 40% considered terror and conflicts as main reasons for moving abroad. This goes up to 60% when political reasons are also added to the total. Further, 38%, that is about two-fifths, mentioned avoiding military service as their main reason for migration.

Iraqi Turkmen and other minorities are not homogenous groups regarding their religion and languages. That is important to note because this was a mistake as far as I have seen and I have spotted it also in political debates since the invasion. There are Sunni, Shi'ite and other religious groups within Turkmen, and most Turkmen speak Arabic, Turkman and some of them speak Kurdish so we should realise and understand there is to a certain extent a mixed community with mixed identities as well so trying to build a new Iraq based on either ethnic or religious identities would be a mistake. High levels of out-migration shrinks the share of Iraqi Turkmen in the rural population in Iraq, hence reduces political representation and opportunity for that particular group. There are sizable communities of Iraqi Turkmen in Turkey and other European communities but these are not recognized in all countries and therefore there is a need for recognition and documentation, so they can vote in Iraqi elections and they can contribute. There should also be some action to ensure these diaspora communities, if they wish, can go back to their homelands.

A high level of migration often means that many Turkmen have not been and will not be able to take part and contribute to the rebuilding of Iraq after the invasion. In theory, as I mentioned earlier, I expect the outflow of Iraqi Turkmen will continue beyond the key events or major conflicts in the country and therefore we don't know the actual size of displaced Iraqi Turkmen within and outside Iraq.

Finally I would like to say that long term hostilities and conflicts between ethnic and religious groups in Iraq are flourishing on the political system, which is largely based on ethnic and religious divisions. This is in my opinion a recipe for disaster in countries with mixed ethno-religious populations. A democratic system securing ethnic and religious rights and sanctioning discrimination is the only peaceful solution for Turkmen and other ethnic minorities in Iraq.

Thank you very much for listening.

## INTRODUCTION

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**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

**CHAIR**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

In order to provide some insight into the EU's policy on the matter, we are happy to welcome the EEAS Representative, Mr. Dominic Porter, Deputy Head of Division, Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Iraq.

## RESPONSE FROM EEAS

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**DOMINIC PORTER**

**DEPUTY HEAD (ARABIAN PENINSULA, IRAN, IRAQ)**

**EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS)**

Thank you very much and good afternoon to everybody, thank you Madam Chair and thank you to all our speakers.

The event today, as everybody has pointed out, is an extremely timely and extremely important opportunity to raise awareness to the situation of the Turkmen populations in Iraq as well as those who have left. We have heard rather worrying messages and some slightly more hopeful messages. I have heard a number of speakers including of course Mr. Özmen with his description of the long standing discrimination and suffering and the plight of the Turkmen populations in northern Iraq which reminds us here in Europe of the problems that we have had ourselves on our doorsteps during the 1990s and that of course we risk having just a little further afield in Iraq amongst other countries and in particular in what is often called the powder keg of Iraq which is the city of Kerkuk. What I have heard, which has been more appealing or at least more reassuring, is the desire that has been expressed by the speakers, and particularly by Mr. Özmen, to build a stable and a peaceful multicultural community around the area of Kerkuk, to seek [...] solutions through dialogue; that is very much the view that we share.

This is an event of awareness raising. It is important that we raise our own [awareness] across the EU, the EEAS and the European Parliament; [that] we raise our own level of vigilance; that we raise our readiness to help where we can, and if need be, that we raise our voice in defence of Turkmen and indeed any minorities which are the victims of discrimination. As you know, at the level of the EU we have been doing our best, in very difficult circumstances it must be said, to promote the long term stability of Iraq and one of the fundamental things that stability depends upon is reconciling sometimes competing impulses. The impulse of course to build a functioning but unified inclusive stable state, and the need of course to account for the diverse groups and regions within that state. These competing impulses must become complementary. As I said before, we as Europeans are as aware as anybody, if not more, about how important it is to turn diversity into a positive force and not a negative one. Having said that, I shall not pretend that we have all the

answers. All I can say again is that dialogue rather than defiance should probably be the guiding principle.

What do we do in the EU? I will run very quickly through it because in this Committee you know very well essentially the stance that the EU has on human rights issues. Generally on the issue of protection of minorities, we have three basic ways that we try to approach the subject: either through bilateral dialogue with the authorities in Iraq where we have an on-going conversation with the embassy here, through our Delegation with the authorities locally and of course through the reform of political dialogue between the EU and Iraq which we hope will become more regular, more frequent and more deep as the partnership and cooperation agreement is signed. We also use multilateral fora as you all know very well. I will simply mention the United Nations fora - the Human Rights Council and recall in this context the recommendation which was made and agreed to by the Government of Iraq at the February 2010 Universal Periodic Review of Iraq. As you know every country is subjected to that review where the government has agreed now to and I quote:

‘Ensure the rights of religious and ethnic minorities. In this regard, respect and guarantee the rights of Iraqi Turkmen and other peoples who are integral with Iraq in accordance with relevant international obligation’

We heard about those obligations as well as the constitutional obligation under Article 125 of the Iraqi Constitution.

The third thing apart from dialogue and multilateral fora is of course cooperation, assistance and help. I won't go through the long list of things that the EU has done or is continuing to do but I should mention that we are funding, if you like, human rights at a systemic level through support to the new independent national Human Rights Commission for example. We have a longstanding rule of law mission, the EUJUST LEX mission, in Iraq that tries to promote the rule of law more widely as a sort of founding principle of a stable and just nation. We also have some very specific activities, for example in Kerkuk we have provided support for the Kerkuk Centre for the Victims of Torture under the EIDHR. So there are various ways in which we try to help.

Many people raised the issue of security. I receive text messages from the EU Situation Centre, and should mention that 16 Shi'a were just killed in Hillah City in Iraq in the last hour or two. This I'm afraid is still a virtually daily occurrence that there is violence of a sectarian nature, violence of an ethnic nature and the security situation, whilst of course it has stabilised since the low points in 2006 and 2007, is still extremely fragile and I think Iraq is one of the cases, if not the case, where this sort of nexus between security, human rights and development is at its most essential and vividly illustrated.

Many have raised the subject of Kerkuk and the disputed territories. I will finish just by saying a couple of words on that. Kerkuk is an incredibly difficult and complex place, even in Iraqi terms so certainly in global terms. The United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) has been working on, if you like, the implementation of Article 140 of the constitution, making Article 140 work for a number of years and the EU has been supporting that work throughout and where it can. At the moment, the lead

remains with the UN and I think it is right that it does. But we stand ready to help as and when requested. What they have been seeking to do, and admittedly I think there has been something of a hiatus in their work over the last six months to one year, but what they are trying to do is to facilitate a productive dialogue and we will be meeting the day after tomorrow [7 December 2011] with Martin Kobler who is the new Special Representative of the UN in Iraq, and asking for his latest update on what he declared himself to be his number one priority actually in Iraq which is addressing the problem of the disputed territories.

I will stop there because I see that it's your forum and it's for the Members to discuss as much as they can. Thank you very much indeed.

## DISCUSSION

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**FRIEDA BREPOELS MEP**  
**MEMBER**  
**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Thank you Madam Chair,

I would like to thank all the speakers for the interesting presentations they have made. I would like to ask a number of specific questions.

I heard with interest Mr. Wolff's presentation. He spoke about the Iraqi Constitution and also the Kurdish Regional Constitution, and the issue of minority rights in that text and I believe in general terms that everything is written there into the constitution but unfortunately nothing has been done on the ground at a political level. That is the first question.

My second question concerns the possibilities of using the Turkmen language. You said at one point that if one can show that there is enough Turkmen who live in a particular area, then that language will be able to be used as an official language but that hasn't really been defined. What is meant by sufficient? I'd like some figures there.

I have another question on the region and city of Kerkuk. Mr. Özmen says that Kerkuk is not part of Kurdistan, that has been settled, but that Article 140 of the Constitution says that a referendum should be organised on the question. Now as far as I can tell this referendum has not taken place yet. Is that something that is planned for the future or will it not be done at all? What do you see happening down the track there?

Now the final thing I'd like to raise concerns the EEAS. I would like to know, with regard to the partnership agreement, in which the Commission made a proposal a few years ago and it's still in the pipeline as it has not got through the Council. At the European Parliament level we have debated it some time ago now but unfortunately there is no progress on the issue; we can't seem to get the thing off the ground. How does the EEAS see the future work with regard to this subject?

Thank you.

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**STRUAN STEVENSON MEP**

**CHAIR**

**DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH IRAQ**

Thank you very much Madam Chair, and thank you very much to the speakers for their presentations.

I think what all of the presentations have helped to focus on is the current situation inside Iraq. The Americans are leaving at the end of this year and are telling the world that they are leaving behind a functioning democracy that this is a model for the Middle East and the Arab Spring to follow. Indeed when I was in Baghdad in April [2011] some of the government ministers I met said to me that the Arab Spring is a reaction to the freedom and democracy that we have achieved here. They want it and the rest of the Middle East. Well I have to say God help the Middle East if they achieve the functioning democracy that the Americans have left behind in Iraq. We have just heard of another 16 people killed today. The security situation is dire. There were only four hours of electricity a day in Baghdad and many of the citizens don't have access to clean water. There is massive unemployment. It is a shambles and a broken country thanks to America, Britain and the other countries that intervened there.

It was of course great to get rid of Saddam, a dictator. But what have we put in place instead of Saddam? We have a coalition government formed under the so-called Erbil Agreement. Virtually none of the conditions of that agreement, none of the articles have been implemented. The key ministries of frontier security and defence still are held within the Prime Minister's office, giving him massive power and the result is we see the discrimination and the hostility towards minorities, including sizable amounts of the population like the Turkmen, that are continuing unabated.

You know I spoke in Beirut a few weeks ago at a conference on the oppression of minorities in the Middle East and there was a lot of the conference focused on Iraq, and I mentioned in my speech how since the fall of Saddam, the Christian minority in Iraq of 1.5 million has virtually been decimated. There are now around 450,000. The Turkmen, Professor Wolff said that no one is sure whether there are two million or only 600,000 because of the internal displacement, the external displacement and the fact that they have been discriminated against and the theft and confiscation of their land and property. This is happening to sizeable chunks of the population, not just minorities and this is happening across Iraq.

The first thing I have to say is that the government in Iraq needs to get its act together. They have now got oil production back to Saddam levels, they have massive resources and the resources don't seem to be spent properly on the population. The second thing I want to say is there is continuing interference in the internal affairs by the neighbouring countries, notably Iran. Iran is a malign influence on the geopolitical stability of the whole Middle East, never mind Iraq, so that must stop. The third thing that I would say is our presence, the EEAS presence, we have appointed our former colleague Jana Hybášková as the Ambassador who is going a great job, but she has a skeleton staff. Most of her staff are located in Jordan

and Oman. We have an enormous staff in Afghanistan but because of the cost of security we have a tiny staff in pathetic little offices that we rent from the British Embassy in Baghdad. We need to beef up the EEAS presence in Baghdad and we need to open an EEAS office in Erbil. Kurdistan is the only part of Iraq where there is economic growth, where there is stability and where there is something to be proud of because they have sealed the border with 130,000 Peshmerga to stop the infiltration of any terrorists into the KRG territory. This is an example to the rest of Iraq and I wish that Iraq would follow that example.

Thank you very much.

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**JUAN KHIOKA**  
**SECOND SECRETARY**  
**EMBASSY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF IRAQ**

Thank you Madam Chairperson,

I will be very brief in my intervention and concentrate on our Constitution which is our way to solve our problems domestically in Iraq. Allow me to thank you for organising this meeting and to welcome all distinguished Members of Parliament and guests. My Delegation took note of what has been said at the meeting and would like to highlight the following notes:

We would like to confirm that the new Iraq guarantees for all Iraqis, including its minorities equal rights before the law. This right is stipulated in the Constitution approved democratically by the Iraqis in the 2005 referendum. The fundamental principles in the Iraqi Constitution states in Article 3 that Iraq is a country of multiple nationalities, religions and sects.

In Article 4, the Constitution ensures the right of all Iraqis to educate their children in their mother tongue, such as Turkmen, Assyrian and Armenian in government educational institutions and in any other language in private educational institutions. The Iraqi Constitution also guarantees civil and political rights for all Iraqis without discrimination linked to nationality, origin, race, gender, religion or opinion. The Constitution ensures the administrative, political, cultural and educational rights to the various nationalities such as Turkmen, Caldanese, Assyrians and all other constituents, and this shall be guaranteed by law.

In the new Iraq for the first time all minorities have the right to have their representatives in the House of Representatives and the right to express their concerns and have their voice heard through peaceful means. In case of any legal disputes or differences in opinions, the Iraqi constitution enshrines the domestic remedies to solve them through the legal and constitutional institutions.

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**PROFESSOR STEFAN WOLFF**  
***PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY***  
***UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM***

Thank you very much for your questions. I want to keep my answer brief because your two questions are very closely linked and there is not that much to say.

Yes, you are absolutely right, there is a very good constitutional framework in place as far as constitutional frameworks go. But you don't actually have any implementation legislation so there is no in a sense comprehensive human rights or minority rights law. To the extent that you have individual laws that take account of human and minority rights issues, they are sometimes ambivalent in terms of how they can be interpreted and that goes very much to the core about the issue of language use. Yes, I can only give you what the Iraqi Constitution says because there is no minority rights or minority language law so we don't actually know what exactly that means. If a particular community lives locally in a density, is that 10%, 20% or 30%? So I think that from that perspective there is a practical legal matter that at some point in the future, this needs to be codified. But what I can say from my own experience with the different population groups in Kerkuk, locally there is a genuine effort to translate these fairly vague provisions of Article 4 of the Iraqi Constitution into some real practice. So in Kerkuk for example, there is now an effort to have official languages, not just Kurdish and Arabic but also Turkman. To have names of streets, places and buildings in three languages. But then there is already a problem of what script do you use. So there are lots of things that even where there is goodwill, it is very difficult actually to come up with a proper framework because of a lack of implementation legislation.

The other question that you raised about Article 140, well again it's not clear. Theoretically the period until which Article 140 was to be implemented has expired; that was the end of December 2007. But by the same token if you say well that has expired now and it was not implemented, does that mean that the 2005 Constitution is now invalid? What are the follow-on consequences of that? I think the most difficult issue is not so much the situation in Kerkuk where the local communities have found a way of trying to coexist with each other, it's the outside influences. Kerkuk is in many ways a pawn between Baghdad and Erbil and to some extent also other regional interests in that. So I really don't think there is any very clear or straightforward solution in particular in the absence of a genuine willingness of all parties to compromise and I think this is also very much what was said by the EEAS – you can't resolve an issue as complex as that by simply pointing, well Article 140 we haven't had it yet or Article 140, it's long past the deadline. There needs to be genuine compromise on this issue.

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**HASAN ÖZMEN**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ**

Thank you Madam Chair.

Concerning Article 140 and the question that was asked, there are three stages that are part of Article 140. There is normalisation and then there is a census and the third stage is a referendum. We haven't gone from the first to the second stage yet and the reason for that is that the demographic changes under Saddam have not been adapted [to correct these changes]. We think that we need to take into account what happened before 2003 and what happened after 2003, and the demographic changes over that period before moving onto the census which I have just talked to you about. We have mentioned this to the relevant authorities and ministries, the statistical authorities, and the reasons I have just mentioned, we haven't had the census yet and if circumstances permitted if there were a normalisation, which we are not against – we want there to be a normalisation, and the demographic diversity be taken into account prior to 2003 and after 2003 in order to be able to organise a census.

Madam Chair, I would also like to add that the Kurdish Constitution is in the draft stage. It's not a final document. We have a range of proposals that we are still looking at with regards to that constitution. As regards languages and the laws concerning linguistic diversity, these laws will be debated in the Parliament and is to be adopted by the Parliament in the coming months. The Turkmen and the Syriacs will be able to use their own language in those regions where they live. As regards density, we have asked for a definition of what is meant by a sufficient density. The Constitutional Council has said that it involves a sufficiently visible presence of the ethnic group, so this is a draft law which is before the Parliament, a draft law that we will contribute to in terms of its drafting and we will be able to speak our own languages.

## CLOSING REMARKS

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**BARBARA LOCHBIHLER MEP**

***CHAIR***

***SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS***

Thank you to all the guests and experts for their very good analysis and also their political demands. I thank my colleague Mr. Kazak for taking the initiative to have this hearing. I take it for granted that Mr. Stevenson within the work of the Iraq Delegation will follow the situation of the Turkmen minority and I think his point that the EU Delegation in Iraq is so small, I think three and a half staff, this needs our attention too. I hope that the EEAS also looks more into detail in the situation of the Turkmen. I think that several times now it has been raised that there is expertise needed on how to carry out a census. That could perhaps be supported from this side as well. So thank you again. With a report of this meeting, we will also present to our enlarged Bureau and the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Today's hearing offered the possibility to hear from academic experts and experts 'on the ground' as it were, about an area and a group of people who seem to be forgotten in broader debates about the region.



## PHOTOGRAPHS



(l-r) Metin Kazak MEP, Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci, Secretary of the Commission, Barbara Lochbihler MEP, Professor Stefan Wolff, Hasan Özmen



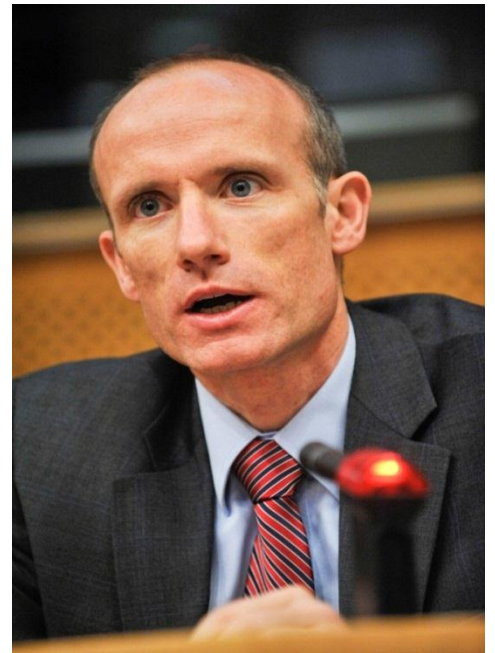
Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci



Hasan Özmen



Barbara Lochbihler MEP



Professor Stefan Wolff



Metin Kazak MEP



Representatives from the Iraqi Embassy in Brussels



## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

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### **KAZAK, Metin**

Bulgarian MEP in the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), Metin Kazak MEP currently serves as Vice-Chair to the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament. He is also a member of the European Parliament's Committee on International Trade, and of the Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee.

Prior to his election to the European Parliament, Mr. Kazak served on the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria between 2000-2001, and was head of cabinet of a minister without portfolio in the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria between 2001-2005.

### **LOCHBIHLER, Barbara**

Chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights and Member of the European Parliament's Conference of Committee Chairs, Barbara Lochbihler is a German MEP in the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance. Before her election to the European Parliament, Ms. Lochbihler served as a personal parliamentary liaison officer in the Bavarian Regional Assembly for the Greens Parliamentary Party between 1987 and 1991. She also held the position of General Secretary for Amnesty International Germany between 1999 and 2009, and as General Secretary for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom between 1992 and 1999.

Ms. Lochbihler is a founding member of the German Human Rights Institute (Berlin) and of the Human Rights Foundation (Berlin). She also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Roland Berger Foundation (Munich), and is a member of the German UNICEF Committee.

### **ÖZMEN, Hasan**

Co-founder of National Turkmen Party, Hasan Suliman Özmen currently serves as a Turkmen Member of the Iraqi Parliament, representing the Diyala Governorate Community in northern Iraq. Prior to his election to the Iraqi Parliament, Mr. Özmen served as a member of the Iraqi National Congress from 1992-2003. During his tenure in this position, he participated in the Iraqi National Opposition in Beirut, as well as co-founding both the Iraqi Turkmen Front, for which he currently serves as Head of Information, and the Turkmen Eli Foundation, which provides humanitarian assistance to Turkmen in Iraq.

Mr. Özmen has also participated in meetings held by Human Rights Committee in General Council in Geneva, as well as written various publications on the Turkmen.

### **PORTER, Dominic**

Current Deputy Head of the Division for the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq, which is part of the Geographical, Multilateral and Global Affairs Departments of the European External Action Service.



**SIRKECI, Ibrahim**

Director of the Centre for Transnational Studies at Regent's College in London, Ibrahim Sirkeci has previously worked as an assistant professor in Ankara, Turkey and later as a Leverhulme Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship at the University of Bristol. In addition to his current position at Regent's College, he serves as managing editor of *Migration Letters*, an international scholarly journal which focuses on the study of migration and population and associate editor at *Border Crossing: Transnational Working Papers in Higher Education*.

Sirkeci's research is currently concentrated on marketing segmentation, transnational consumers and ethnic marketing, and in 2011, he contributed to a publication by the World Bank entitled *Migration and Remittances during the Global Financial Crisis and Beyond*, which analysed recent trends in remittance flows and the effect their probable decline could have on the current global economic milieu. He has also served as a consultant to the World Bank, Euromonitor and the European Commission.

**WOLFF, Stefan**

Professor of International Security at the University of Birmingham, Stefan Wolff specializes in conflict settlement and post-conflict reconstruction. Professor Wolff has acted as a consultant in this capacity during conflicts in the Balkans, Northern Ireland and the former Soviet Union. In 2003, he served as an expert consultant on three rounds of negotiations on power sharing arrangements in Kerkuk, Iraq.

Currently, Wolff is an advisor in settlement discussions between Transnistria and Moldova, as well as a member of the Governing Council of the European Centre for Minority Issues and an International Associate at the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-determination at Princeton University. He is the founding editor of *Ethnopolitics*, a scholarly journal dedicated to conflict and resolution study, and has published thirty six publications which include sixteen books. Among numerous honours, in 2006, Wolff was awarded the UK Defence Academy's Distinguished Visiting Fellowship.

## MEDIA COVERAGE

December 5, 2011 – Timeturk: *Iraklı Türkmenlerin sorunları AP'de ele alındı*

The screenshot shows the Timeturk website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Ana Sayfa', 'Günün Haberleri', 'Günlük Gazeteler', 'Anasayfam Yap', 'Arşiv', 'Sitene Ekle', 'Linkler', 'Bize Ulaşın', 'Künye', and 'Reklam'. Below this, there's a section for 'Türkiye' with sub-links for 'Röportaj', 'Teknoloji', 'Yorum', 'İslam', 'Spor', 'Aile-Sağlık', 'Eğitim', 'Ekonomi', 'Çevre', 'Dünya', 'Kültür-Sanat', 'Yazarlar', and 'Foto'. The main content area features a large headline: 'Iraklı Türkmenlerin sorunları AP'de ele alındı'. Below the headline, there's a sub-headline: 'Iraklı Türkmenler seslerini duyurmak için Brüksel'deki Avrupa Parlamentosu'nda (AP) bir araya geldi. Türkmenler istikrarlı, çok kültürlü ve barışçıl bir Irak yönetimi için Avrupa'dan destek istedi. Avrupalı yetkililer ise baskı altındaki Iraklı Türkmen yanında olduğu mesajlarına yer verdi.' The article is dated '05 Aralık 2011 Pazartesi - 16:34'. There's a small image of a man speaking at a podium. To the right, there's a sidebar with a photo of a man and a list of links: 'Sarrazin, bu kez baltayı taşa vurdu', 'Hayatını yeniden inşa ediyor', '4 futbolcu kadrodan çıkarıldı', 'G-8, Yunanistan'ın Euro'da kalmasını istedi', 'Kamalak: 'Avrupa Birliği'ne 'hayır' diyoruz'', 'Anıç'a TRT sorusu', 'Meteoroloji 4 ilı uyardı', and 'Bu mehterin enstrümanları başka...'. At the bottom, there's a banner for 'İNSANLIK ŞİMDİ SURİYE İÇİN'.

<http://www.timeturk.com/tr/2011/12/05/irakli-turkmenlerin-sorunlari-ap-de-ele-alindi.html>

December 5, 2011 – Türkiye Gazetesi: *Iraklı Türkmenler, AB'de درمان arıyor*

The screenshot shows the Türkiye Gazetesi website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'GÜNÜN HABERLERİ', 'EKONOMİ', 'SPOR', 'YAZARLAR', 'SERİ İLAN', 'E-TÜRKİYE', 'BUGÜNKÜ TÜRKİYE', 'BİZİM SAYFA', 'ABONE', 'ARŞİV', and 'ARA'. Below this, there's a section for '1. SAYFA' with a large headline: 'Iraklı Türkmenler, AB'de درمان arıyor'. Below the headline, there's a sub-headline: '05 Aralık 2011 Pazartesi - 18:35'. The article is dated '05 Aralık 2011 Pazartesi - 18:35'. The main text of the article is: 'Iraklı Türkmenler seslerini duyurmak için Brüksel'deki Avrupa Parlamentosu'nda (AP) bir araya geldi. Türkmenler istikrarlı, çok kültürlü ve barışçıl bir Irak yönetimi için Avrupa'dan destek istedi. Avrupalı yetkililer ise baskı altındaki Iraklı Türkmenlerin yanında olduğu mesajlarına yer verdi.' The article is dated '05 Aralık 2011 Pazartesi - 18:35'. There's a small image of a man speaking at a podium. To the right, there's a sidebar with a photo of a man and a list of links: 'Sarrazin, bu kez baltayı taşa vurdu', 'Hayatını yeniden inşa ediyor', '4 futbolcu kadrodan çıkarıldı', 'G-8, Yunanistan'ın Euro'da kalmasını istedi', 'Kamalak: 'Avrupa Birliği'ne 'hayır' diyoruz'', 'Anıç'a TRT sorusu', 'Meteoroloji 4 ilı uyardı', and 'Bu mehterin enstrümanları başka...'. At the bottom, there's a banner for 'İNSANLIK ŞİMDİ SURİYE İÇİN'.

<http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?NewsID=436>

December 7, 2011 – Telgraf Turk: APde Iraklı Türkmenler tartışıldı

## APde Iraklı Türkmenler tartışıldı

May 21, 2012

AP İnsan Hakları Alt Komitesi Başkan Yardımcısı Metin Kazak'ın girişimiyle düzenlenen toplantıda Irak Parlamentosu Milletvekili Hasan Özmen, Birmingham Üniversitesinden Prof. Dr. Stefan Wolff ve Regent's Koleji'nden Prof. Dr. İbrahim Sirkeci Türkmenlerin sorunlarıyla ilgili sunumlar yaptı.

Toplantıda konuşan Türk asıllı Bulgar AP Üyesi Kazak, farklı kültürlerin bir arada yaşadığı Irak'ta Saddam dönemi ve sonrasında en mağdur kesimlerden birinin Türkmenler olduğuna dikkati çekerek "Iraklı Türkmenlerin karşı karşıya bulunduğu tehditlerin aşılmasını sağlayacak yeni düşünceler ve politikalar için tartışmalar derinleştirilmeli" dedi.

Saddam döneminde 10 yıl sürgün hayatı yaşayan Irak Parlamentosu Türkmen Milletvekili Hasan Özmen ise Kerkük başta olmak üzere Irak'taki Türkmenleri katletme ve sürme politikasının devam ettiğini belirterek AB'nin artık bu soruna eğilmesini talep etti.

Haber Kaynağı : Haber7.com



<http://www.telgrafturk.com/dunya/apde-irakli-turkmenler-tartisildi-h24086.html>

December 11 - 17, 2011 - EU World: Iraq's minorities need action from EU

## NEW EUROPE EU WORLD

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IRAQ

## Iraq's minorities need action from EU

No easy solution, but time is running out

By Metin Kazak MEP

When people are kidnapped in Kirkuk they disappear. Some do return to their families after large ransoms are paid while others become the victims of their kidnappers. Bombings are a daily occurrence and no one knows the target of two terrorists that accidentally killed themselves assembling a bomb on Sunday. It is no wonder that the Turkmen community of Kirkuk and other so-called disputed areas are under siege. Many are searching either for a way out or the support at home and abroad needed to sustain their centuries-old communities that, like others, have been rocked by the instability that is only now beginning to ebb from Iraq. As many of my colleagues that deal with Iraq have agreed, the European Union has to play a more joined-up and constructive role in Iraq as the United States draws down its forces before exiting completely on 31 December 2011. To date I have not seen the signs that this is happening. This sentiment is shared amongst colleagues, civil society, and observers from all manner of backgrounds, party, and experience.

The EU's delegation within Iraq remains woefully small, under-resourced, and under-staffed. More worrying is the complacent, or at worst disengaged, attitude that seems to characterise the approach to Iraq from the European Commission, and newly formed EEAS. The EU has projected itself as an international actor and has been



An Iraqi man inspects the damage at a Christian Catholic Church after double attacks in central Kirkuk, northern Iraq on 15 August 2011. [Euronews.com]

believed, especially by those that follow it from afar, and in this I include Kirkuk.

Kirkuk reflects many of the gnawing deficiencies within Iraq today. The 2005 constitution has still to be formally adopted, a process for normalising relations between communities remains dormant, and all the while demographic change, dislocation and insecurity is eating away at Turkmen communities, livelihoods and futures as the city's cultural fabric is eroded bomb by bomb. Every week Turkmen professionals, including much needed doctors, are leaving after facing

death threats, intimidation or discrimination in the workplace. Their children have limited prospects with little if any tuition in their mother tongue, excluded from state jobs, and with no signs that the thousands of property claims will be resolved soon.

But when the Subcommittee on Human Rights convened on 5 December 2011 it did so with a clear desire – to raise awareness of the situation facing the Turkmen of Iraq and to make the first step in identifying the action that should – and can – be taken to safeguard the future of

Iraq's communities, of which Turkmen are the third largest. It was a meeting believe strongly has been long overdue and the interest from colleagues and the public was a demonstration of the European Parliament acting in concert with the real interests of policy makers and European citizens.

The message from invited academics was also clear, namely that the situation in Kirkuk is acute and the risks are real. In identifying the dangers, the existing and mostly failed initiatives to solve them, and drawing comparisons I believe we are closer to understanding one of the world's most complex conflicts. We cannot pretend that a solution is easy or imminent but we know that time is running. The coming year will be a time when my colleagues and I intend to support the discussions into community security, property reparations, multi-lingual education, confidence building measures, and parliamentary capacity building needed to help make a solution realistic. The European institutions must be part of this and I hope to bring to their attention the realities facing Turkmen and their neighbours today.

Soon a new year will be dawning for the EU in Iraq and with new years should come resolutions. The EU has to resolve to demonstrate its commitment to the people of Iraq as a whole and to the Turkmen especially. As a community the Turkmen have been listening to the EU make promises for too long and for almost a decade they have seen nothing. That must change in 2012.

<http://www.neurope.eu/article/iraqs-minorities-need-action-eu>

## APPENDIX I

### TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The following timeline chronicles the situation for the Turkmen community in Iraq from 2003 until 2011. It represents only an overview but reflects the political, security and social developments to have taken place and affect Iraqi Turkmen communities over this timeframe. The source articles can be located by following the highlighted and embedded web links.

2003	
March	In advance of international intervention in Iraq, Turkmen groups call for any resulting regime change to lead to <a href="#">proportional representation</a> in a parliamentary state based on democracy.
May	<p>Iraqi Turkmen Front expresses desire for United States to ensure new institutions are <a href="#">rooted in democratic and inclusive principles</a>.</p> <p>Turkmen representatives <a href="#">call for a census</a> that can accurately identify Turkmen population after decades of Ba'athist Arabisation policies.</p>
2004	
September	Turkish Government <a href="#">condemns military operations</a> by Coalition forces that leave scores of Turkmen citizens dead in Tel Afar.
2005	
March	<p>Turkmen and Arabs largely <a href="#">boycott parliamentary elections</a>, with Kurdish parties subsequently securing majorities in Kerkuk and elsewhere.</p> <p><a href="#">Iraq's 2005 Constitution</a> includes Article 140 that calls for a census and referendum to decide the status of disputed areas such as Kerkuk.</p>
2006	
August	Turkmen <a href="#">demonstrate in Kerkuk</a> calling for recognition of their rights as a population group
2007	
May	Controversy over the status of Kerkuk leads to delays on finding agreement to constitutional amendments as <a href="#">talks stall</a> .
November	<a href="#">Increase in tensions</a> , as elections in Kerkuk are delayed further. According to a directive, the proposed election, which had been due to take place 15 November, is now supposed to take place by the end of the year.



<b>December</b>	Deadline for a referendum that is intended, under <a href="#">Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution</a> , to resolve the status of disputed areas such as Kerkuk.
<b>2008</b>	
<b>December</b>	<p>A <a href="#">restaurant bombing in Kerkuk</a> leaves almost fifty dead and over a hundred injured, mostly Kurds.</p> <p>UNAMI report reiterates that <a href="#">Turkmen and minority communities remain targets</a> for assassination.</p>
<b>2009</b>	
<b>January</b>	The <a href="#">festival of Ashura is marked in Kerkuk</a> by Turkmen and Arabs amid high security, including military helicopters.
<b>May</b>	A fact-finding mission to Kerkuk, organised by the Iraqi parliament, <a href="#">ends in failure</a> .
<b>June</b>	<p>Death toll reaches over seventy, following a <a href="#">truck bomb in Kerkuk</a>.</p> <p>Car bomb detonates killing at least twenty-five people in Kerkuk, following the <a href="#">handover of the city</a> from US forces to domestic forces.</p>
<b>July</b>	<p>Bomb attacks leave at least <a href="#">thirty four dead and seventy injured</a> in the city of Tal Afar.</p> <p>Tamin Province, of which Kerkuk is the capital, is <a href="#">excluded from provincial elections</a> over fears that violence will erupt.</p>
<b>August</b>	Iraq <a href="#">abandons plans to hold its first census</a> in twenty years, due to fears it might increase tensions among Arab and Kurdish groups.
<b>October</b>	<p>Decision on the date for Iraq's general election is prolonged as <a href="#">tensions between communities in Kerkuk and other disputed areas continue</a>, particularly over the issue of updated voter rolls.</p> <p><a href="#">Suicide bomber kills and wounds tens of people</a> in an attack on Friday Prayers in Tal Afar.</p>
<b>December</b>	A total of <a href="#">226 people were killed</a> as a result of bombings in Kerkuk during 2009, while a further 675 were wounded.
<b>2010</b>	
<b>January</b>	<a href="#">Joint patrols of Arab and Kurdish troops</a> begin amid opposition from politicians in disputed areas such as Kerkuk.
<b>February</b>	Budget allocation for Kerkuk <a href="#">criticised as being too meagre</a> to support the region.

<b>February</b>	Reports emerge in which General Raymond Odierno, Commander of US Forces in Iraq, <a href="#">calls upon the retention of a US brigade to remain in Kerkuk</a> amidst ongoing tensions.
<b>March</b>	Parliamentary elections see coalitions of Arab and Turkmen <a href="#">political parties reversing earlier majorities</a> held by Kurdish parties in an election noted for its peaceful nature.
<b>April</b>	Following a successful alliance with the nationalist Al-Iraqiyah list of former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, the Iraqi Turkmen have <a href="#">expressed new hope for their political future</a> .
<b>June</b>	Iraqi Turkmen Front strongly <a href="#">criticises an attack on a local councillor's house</a> in Kerkuk.
<b>July</b>	Amidst the election to the Kurdistan presidency, Masud Barzani <a href="#">stresses need to follow Article 140</a> , despite opposition from Baghdad and serious concern expressed by the UN.  Iraqi Arab and Turkmen leaders <a href="#">appeal for increased security in Kerkuk</a> .
<b>August</b>	<a href="#">Prime Minister Al-Maliki and President Barzani meet with observers</a> hoping the occasion will see moves to a resolution of the disputes between communities in Northern Iraq.  <a href="#">Car bomb damages Christian church</a> in Kerkuk that leaves a priest injured and the church closed.
<b>October</b>	<a href="#">Plans for a census</a> as a step to resolving the status of Kerkuk is postponed to December amid ongoing disagreements between communities in the region.
<b>November</b>	<a href="#">Three car bombs explode</a> , targeting the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in Kerkuk.
<b>December</b>	The Kurdistan Alliance <a href="#">threatens it will not participate in the new Iraqi cabinet</a> , unless a paper outlining its nineteen demands is signed.  <a href="#">Proposed census due to take place in Kerkuk is cancelled</a> amid ongoing disputes over the city's status.
<b>2011</b>	
<b>January</b>	Iraqi Turkmen Front <a href="#">appeals to the Iraqi government to put an end to the violent attacks</a> against innocent civilians.
<b>February</b>	<a href="#">Bomb attacks target police and Kurdish security services</a> in Kerkuk, leaving seven dead.

<b>March</b>	<a href="#">Peshmerga deployment to Kerkuk</a> to prevent terrorist attacks sparks controversy and some calls for a power-sharing agreement between the city's communities.
<b>May</b>	<a href="#">One hundred people killed or wounded</a> in worst bomb attack to target police and civilians in Kerkuk in two months.
<b>October</b>	<a href="#">Turkmen demonstrate in Kerkuk</a> in the latest of protests calling for the return of village land appropriated and redistributed by the Ba'athist regime.
<b>November</b>	<p>Head of UNAMI declares Kerkuk one of its <a href="#">top three priorities</a> following the withdrawal of US forces.</p> <p>Kerkuk Provincial Council member <a href="#">confirms withdrawal of US forces</a> within days from Kerkuk.</p> <p><a href="#">Additional battalion created</a> to join the Golden Lion Forces composed of three battalions of Iraqi Army, Kurdish Peshmerga, and Kerkuk Police units.</p> <p>Turkmen MP is amongst minority deputies <a href="#">abstaining from a vote in the Kurdistan Parliament</a> in protest at amendments to election laws that are seen to compromise minority communities.</p>
<b>December</b>	<p><a href="#">First hearing of the Iraqi Turkmen</a> convenes at the European Parliament.</p> <p>Governor of Kerkuk announces <a href="#">allocation of funds</a> for the development of the Kerkuk region.</p>

## APPENDIX II

### KEY LEGAL DOCUMENTS

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#### -The Iraqi Constitution

##### Article 3:

Iraq is a country of multiple nationalities, religions, and sects. It is a founding and active member in the Arab League and is committed to its charter, and it is part of the Islamic world.

##### Article 4:

First: The Arabic language and the Kurdish language are the two official languages of Iraq. The right of Iraqis to educate their children in their mother tongue, such as Turkmen, Syriac, and Armenian shall be guaranteed in government educational institutions in accordance with educational guidelines, or in any other language in private educational institutions.

Second: The scope of the term “official language” and the means of applying the provisions of this article shall be defined by a law and shall include:

- A. Publication of the Official Gazette, in the two languages;
- B. Speech, conversation, and expression in official domains, such as the Council of Representatives, the Council of Ministers, courts, and official conferences, in either of the two languages;
- C. Recognition and publication of official documents and correspondence in the two languages;
- D. Opening schools that teach the two languages, in accordance with the educational guidelines;
- E. Use of both languages in any matter enjoined by the principle of equality such as bank notes, passports, and stamps.

Third: The federal and official institutions and agencies in the Kurdistan region shall use both languages.

Fourth: The Turkomen language and the Syriac language are two other official languages in the administrative units in which they constitute density of population.

Fifth: Each region or governorate may adopt any other local language as an additional official language if the majority of its population so decides in a general referendum.



**Article 14:**

Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, origin, color, religion, sect, belief or opinion, or economic or social status.

**Article 125:**

This Constitution shall guarantee the administrative, political, cultural, and educational rights of the various nationalities, such as Turkomen, Chaldeans, Assyrians, and all other constituents, and this shall be regulated by law.

**Article 140:**

First: The executive authority shall undertake the necessary steps to complete the implementation of the requirements of all subparagraphs of Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law.

Second: The responsibility placed upon the executive branch of the Iraqi Transitional Government stipulated in Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law shall extend and continue to the executive authority elected in accordance with this Constitution, provided that it accomplishes completely (normalization and census and concludes with a referendum in Kerkuk and other disputed territories to determine the will of their citizens), by a date not to exceed the 31st of December 2007.

## **-Kurdistan Regional Constitution of 2009**

### **Article 5:**

First: The people of the Kurdistan Region are composed of Kurds, Turkmen, Arabs, Chaldo-Assyrian-Syriacs, Armenians and others who are citizens of Kurdistan.

### **Article 20: Equality**

First: All are equal before the law.

Second: All forms of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, language, social background, nationality, origin, religion, belief, thought, age, social, political or economic status, or handicap are prohibited. The principle of equality shall not prevent redressing the effects and consequences of past injustice perpetrated by former regimes against the citizens of Kurdistan-Iraq and its ethnic, religious and linguistic groups.

Third: Men and women shall be equal before the law. The Government of the Region must seek to remove all obstacles hindering equality in all spheres of life, and in civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights. The Government of the Region guarantees that all shall enjoy their rights, as stipulated in this Constitution and the international charters signed by the State of Iraq.

### **Article 35:**

This Constitution guarantees ethnic, cultural and administrative rights to the Turkmen, the Arabs, the Chaldeans, the Syriacs, the Assyrians, and the Armenians, including autonomy, wherever any of those components represent a majority of the population.

This shall be regulated by law.

### **Article 32.2:**

Second: The Government of the Kurdistan Region shall be committed to preventing any intentional change in population percentages in the areas inhabited by ethnic or religious groups. This shall not affect the process of removing the effects of the policies of Arabization and forced displacement practiced by the Ba'athist regime in the city of Kerkuk and other areas of Kurdistan-Iraq.

## **-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

### **Article 27:**

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language

## **-ILO Convention 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation**

## **-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

## **-International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights**

## **-International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**

## APPENDIX III

### PRESS RELEASES

#### European Parliament Hearing Focuses on the Current Threats and Policies For a Turkmen Future in Iraq

15h30 – 16h30

5 December 2011

Room ASP 1G2, European Parliament, Brussels

*Brussels, 1 December 2011*

At the initiative of **Mr Metin Kazak MEP**, Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, the European Parliament will convene the first hearing to examine the human rights situation of Turkmen communities in Iraq when the **European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights** meets on **5 December 2011 at 15h30**. The hearing comes amid the withdrawal of American combat forces from Iraq, continued debate over the long-delayed implementation of Article 140 of Iraq's Constitution, and the ongoing targeted assassination, discrimination and marginalization of Turkmen in Kerkuk and throughout Iraq.

Caught in the midst of disputes between Iraq's communities, the Turkmen of Kerkuk live atop the vast oil wealth of Kerkuk that makes resolution of the disputed territory politically contentious but also key to the economic development of Iraq as a whole. Overlooked but caught up in the instability and insecurity of Kerkuk and other Turkmen areas are questions of reparations for dispossessed Turkmen, kidnapping of civilians and minors for ransom – all of which has contributed to a debilitating brain-drain of Turkmen from Iraq that is undermining the country's recovery and historic cultural heterogeneity.

Mr Kazak noted his belief that **“a constructive discussion is urgently needed, both to deepen understanding and to raise the level of debate so that new policies and new thinking can meet the challenges facing Iraqi Turkmen.”** The hearing will complement the EU's growing interest and capacity in Iraq, something Mr Busdachin, General Secretary of the UNPO, believed **“builds upon a cross-party interest – our past conferences on Kerkuk, Article 140, and the situation of Iraq's communities have proved this, and for the Subcommittee to take this further is incredibly valuable at this time.”**

The hearing will include perspectives from **Professor Stefan Wolff** (University of Birmingham), **Mr Hasan Özmen** (Member of the Iraqi Council of Representatives), **Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci** (Regent's College), and the **European External Action Service**, before closing remarks by **Ms Barbara Lochbihler**, Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights. The hearing is organised by the **Office of Mr Metin Kazak MEP** and the **Secretariat of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights**, with the collaboration of the **Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization** and supported by **Iraqi Turkmen organizations** from the European Union and Iraq.

**This press release is issued by the Office of Metin Kazak MEP  
and the  
Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization**

For more information on the situation facing the Iraqi Turkmen, please contact the

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## بيان صحفي

### للتنشر الفوري

جلسة البرلمان الأوروبي تركّز على  
التهديدات والسياسات الحالية من أجل مستقبل التركمان في العراق

وقت عقد الجلسة 15:30 - 16:30

5 كانون الأول 2011

القاعة 1G2 ASP، البرلمان الأوروبي، بروكسل

بروكسل ، 1 كانون الأول 2011

بناء على مبادرة السيد متين كازاك **Metin Kazak** عضو البرلمان الأوروبي **MEP** ، نائب رئيس اللجنة الفرعية لحقوق الإنسان، سيعقد البرلمان الأوروبي أول جلسة له للنظر في حالة حقوق الإنسان بالنسبة للمكونات التركمانية في العراق وذلك خلال إجتماع اللجنة الفرعية لحقوق الإنسان في البرلمان الأوروبي في الساعة 15:30 من يوم 5 كانون الأول 2011. إن الجلسة، التي تتعدّد إبان انسحاب القوات الأمريكية المقاتلة من العراق، ستواصل مناقشة تنفيذ المادة 140 من الدستور العراقي التي طال انتظارها، والاعتقال والتمييز والتهميش الجاري والموجه ضد التركمان في كركوك وفي عموم العراق.

في خضمّ النزاعات بين المكونات العراقية، نرى بأن تركمان كركوك يعيشون فوق ثروة نفطية هائلة في كركوك وهذا مما يجعل هناك جدلاً سياسياً مستمراً حول القرار بشأن الأراضي المتنازع عليها ولكن تُعتبر هذه الثروة أيضاً عنصراً أساسياً في التنمية الاقتصادية في العراق ككل. وبالتغاضي عن عدم الاستقرار وانعدام الأمن في كركوك والمناطق التركمانية الأخرى نستدرك مسائل تعويضات التركمان المحرومين، واختطاف المدنيين والقاصرين من أجل الحصول على فدية - والتي ساهمت جميعها في هجرة التركمان ذوي العقول المُنهكة من العراق والتي أدت إلى تفويض انتعاش البلاد وعدم التجانس الثقافي التاريخي.

لقد أشار السيد كازاك **Kazak** إلى اعتقاده بأنه "هناك حاجة ملحة لإجراء نقاش بناءً، من أجل تعميق التفاهم ورفع مستوى النقاش بحيث يمكن للسياسات والأفكار الجديدة مواجهة التحديات التي تواجه التركمان في العراق". ستكون الجلسة مكتملة لمصلحة الاتحاد الأوروبي وقدرته المتناميتين في العراق ، إن السيد بوسداخن **Busdachin**، الأمين العام لمنظمة الدول والشعوب غير المُمثلة **UNPO**، يعتقد بأنه "بناءً على مصلحة الأطراف المتبادلة - فإن مؤتمراتنا السابقة بشأن كركوك، والمادة 140 ، وحالة المكونات في العراق قد أثبتت هذا الأمر ، وإن قيام اللجنة الفرعية بالمضي قدماً في هذا الأمر سيكون في هذا الوقت أمراً قيماً وبشكل غير معقول."

ستتضمن الجلسة وجهات نظر كل من البروفسور ستيفان ولف **Professor Stefan Wolff** (جامعة برمنجهام)، والسيد حسن عثمان (عضو مجلس النواب العراقي) ، والسيد إبراهيم سيركجي **Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci** (كلية ريجنت) ، وهينة العمل الخارجي الأوروبي، قبل أن تُختتم التصريحات من قبل السيدة باربرا لوخبيلهر **Ms Barbara Lochbihler** ، رئيسة اللجنة الفرعية لحقوق الإنسان. سيتم تنظيم الجلسة من قبل مكتب السيد متين كازاك **Metin Kazak** عضو البرلمان الأوروبي **MEP** والأمانة العامة للجنة الفرعية لحقوق الإنسان في البرلمان الأوروبي، بالتعاون مع منظمة الدول والشعوب غير المُمثلة **UNPO** وبدعم من المنظمات التركمانية العراقية في الاتحاد الأوروبي والعراق.

صدر هذا البيان الصحفي من مكتب السيد متين كازاك **Metin Kazak** عضو البرلمان الأوروبي **MEP**

وكذلك

منظمة الدول والشعوب غير المُمثلة **UNPO**

من أجل المزيد من المعلومات حول الظروف التي تواجه التركمان في العراق، يرجى الاتصال

بمنظمة الدول والشعوب غير المُمثلة **UNPO**

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## First European Parliament Hearing on Human Rights of Iraqi Turkmen Ends with Call for Greater EU Engagement

*Brussels, 5 December 2011*

The situation in Iraq and Kerkuk, where most Turkmen live, is at a critical juncture as the United States concludes its withdrawal from Iraq on 31 December 2011 with many measures to safeguard continued security and stability still to be found. At the prompting of **Mr Metin Kazak MEP**, the hearing was convened so that deputies of the European Parliament could hear of the dire human situation facing one of Iraq's oldest communities, as Mr Kazak expressed, "of all the communities in Iraq, I believe Turkmen have been amongst the most overlooked."

Echoing these concerns, **Barbara Lochbihler MEP**, Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, believed the Turkmen situation to be "precarious" and subsequent questions from both **Struan Stevenson MEP** and **Frieda Brepoels MEP** demonstrated the fears for future security in Iraq, need for deepening European commitment to Iraq and the desire to understand better the maturing constitutional situation in Iraq. This came after interventions from academics, Turkmen representatives and the **European External Action Service** all respectively demonstrating the opportunity, need, and commitment of the European Union to support positive and lasting change to Iraq's communities.

Stressing to deputies that "Yezidis, Shabak, Turkmen all need support...[and] ask for you to become involved" in normalizing the situation The Turkmen community **Mr Husan Özmen**, member of the Iraqi Council of Representatives said his community "want a multicultural society...[and] stress the importance of dialogue." Outlining abuses perpetrated against the Turkmen community, Mr Özmen believed the solution lay in establishing a structure in Kerkuk that could, over ten years, bring Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmen together to work together with the aim of forming a special federal region for Kerkuk.

Bringing contextual knowledge from his studies of similar post-conflict areas, **Professor Stefan Wolff** of the University of Birmingham spoke of Iraq's obligations to protect civil and political rights noting that the "suffering [of Turkmen] has been recognized by the Iraqi constitution" but there remained a gap between constitutional provisions and the implementation of these into law and policy. With the impact that migration was having on the Turkmen community, **Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci** noted that assimilation policies and conflict had both enervated the Turkmen community, but their claims remained strong although there was a need for new research into the contemporary situation.

**Marino Busdachin**, General Secretary of the UNPO and facilitator of the conference with the Office of Mr Metin Kazak and the Subcommittee on Human Rights remarked at the close of the hearing that "an important new phase has opened in Iraq and for the Turkmen this hearing has sent important signals, now our hope is for matching commitments"

**This press release is issued by the Office of Metin Kazak MEP  
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