

The Iraqi Turkmen: Unveiling Repression in Iraq



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The conference was jointly organized by the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) and the Nonviolent Radical Party (NRP).

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Side Event Report

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**Palais Des Nations | United Nations |
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FOREWORD: UNVEILING POLITICAL REPRESSION

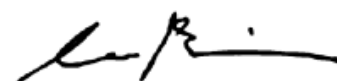
Iraq has been a veritable hotbed of ethno-religious violence since the American invasion in March of 2003. Sectarian violence has plagued the region as all ethnic and religious groups experienced losses of every imaginable degree. One group particularly afflicted during the course of this war is Iraq's Turkmen community. Not unlike their Kurdish and Assyro-Chaldean neighbors; Iraq's Turkmen dealt with the painful policies of Arabization under the Ba'ath regime, which included the suppression of the Turkmen language and culture, the closing of schools, and renaming of towns and villages. The Iraqi Turkmen, although constituting around 13% of the population, have been thus far severely discriminated and majorly neglected.

The persecution suffered by the Iraqi Turkmen has taken many forms, two of which have become increasingly troubling: land-grabbing and extrajudicial killings. The issue of land-grabbing is seen most prominently in the case of the city of Kirkuk, whose demographics have long been contested. The Ba'ath regime, in an attempt to gain a stronghold in the Kurdish and Turkmen northern provinces, began a slow, gradual, and deliberate Arabization policy wherein ethnically Arab Iraqis were brought in to populate strategically beneficial cities, like Kirkuk. Before Saddam Hussein's Arabization policy, Kirkuk was originally heavily populated by Iraqi Turkmen.

Confiscation of land was also one of the major features of the assimilation policies of the Ba'ath regime. Under the auspices of this regime, Turkmen lands and farms were arbitrarily seized and given to Iraqi Arabs, leaving the original inhabitants homeless. From 1968 to 2003, the sum of the lands which were confiscated in different provinces was estimated to total more than a half million acres. In 2003, after the fall of Ba'ath regime, Turkmen regions were exposed to serious Kurdification processes.

All too often, the Turkmen community has been caught up in the collateral damage of this conflict and many Turkmen feel both marginalised and victimised by their fellow Iraqis. Another issue the Iraqi Turkmen community faces on the day-to-day basis is the land confiscations, frequently referred to in the literature as 'land grabbing', by the State without any compensation. Land confiscation has been a part of a greater set of assimilation policies, joined by the bans on education in Turkish language and resettlement of the Arab population into the wealthy territory, which had historically been a Turkish region.

The Iraqi government has repeatedly pledged greater protection for the Turkmen community, but any action on the issue has not been forthcoming. In the aftermath of the side event, UNPO will continue to support the recognition of the Iraqi Turkmen as an important ethnic group and spread awareness about the issues the community is currently facing.



Marino Busdachin,
UNPO Secretary General

EVENT PROGRAMME

Room IX



14.00 **Welcome, introductions**
Mr. Antonio Stango, Nonviolent Radical Party

PANEL DISCUSSION:

14.15 **Human Rights situation in Iraq since 2003**
Ms. Sundus Abbas, Iraqi Turkmen Front

14.30 **What the U.S. Occupation left behind: a society in ruins, rampant human rights abuses, murder of the mind, a culture of death, and degradation of minorities.**
Mr. Dirk Adriaenssens, BRussels Tribunal

14.45 **Conflicts, Environments of Insecurity and Human Mobility: The Case of the Turkmen in Iraq**
Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Sirkeci, Regent's College London

15.00 **Q&A, open floor debate**

15.45 **Closing remarks**
Mr. Antonio Stango, Nonviolent Radical Party

Panel Discussion 1:

THE CURRENT HUMAN RIGHT SITUATION FOR IRAQI TURKMEN

Ms. Sundus Abbas

Introduction

On behalf of my people I would like to express our appreciation for having a chance to address the Human right situation of Iraqi Turkmen.

According to census statistics, the validity of which are questionable in 1957, Iraqi Turkmen constituted 9% of Iraq's total population. Today Iraq population estimated to be 32 millions which make Turkmen population not less than 3 millions.

Turkmen reside 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. [1]

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.[2]

Iraqi Turkmen have been subjected to intensive assimilation policies, forced emigration and cultural erosion. They have been victims of assimilation and ethnic cleansing campaigns, marginalized and denied their right of self determination or any role in the state affairs. No Turkmen has held a high position in any Iraqi government. This policy reached its peak during the old regime.

After the fall of the Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, all Iraqis had high expectations of the new administration established after April 9th, 2003. Turkmen expected to see democracy, justice, equality, fairness, an end to discrimination and an end to violence. Unfortunately, the opposite had occurred.

Confiscation of land

Confiscation of land was one of the major features of the assimilation policies of the Ba'ath regime. Through the Arabization processes by Saddam regime, Turkmen lands have been confiscated and given away to Arabs. During the thirty-five years of Ba'ath regime from 1968 to 2003, the sum of the lands which were confiscated in different provinces was estimated to be more than a half million acres, of which the most were belonged to Turkmen.

In 2003 after the fall of Ba'ath regime Turkmen regions were exposed to serious Kurdification processes after which the Kurdish parties controlled the Turkmen regions.

Changing the administrative boundaries and seizing the lands by resettling Kurds

About four and half million square meters in total, were occupied by the Kurdish families and Kurdish Peshmerga militias in different neighbourhoods in Kerkuk. Hundreds of luxury houses were built on these lands. More than two thousands of houses and 215 government buildings were occupied. Thousands of houses were built on sporadic regions on Turkmen and government lands. Several new neighbourhoods were appeared in Kerkuk city. [3] (satellite Map 1 - 5).

The surface area of the Kerkuk city increased about 23 sqkm. (Satellite Map No. 5) The building areas of the Kurdish villages and sub-districts of Kerkuk province increased several folds.

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.[5][4]

The total surface area of the lands confiscated in the Kerkuk region was 357,305,000 square meters, of which 80%, was own by Turkmen,

The number of complaint cases which is presented to the Property Claim Commission for all Iraq is about 145,000 cases, of which 45,000 are in the Kerkuk Province only, The majority of these complaint cases are from the Turkmen people. 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. Of these complaints, only 5% 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.

Almost all the Turkmen regions in the so-called disputed areas were exposed to the same processes. The surface area of the Erbil city has hugely enlarged in the last two decades. In the later few years, the Kurdish authorities force the owners of the houses of the three oldest

neighbourhoods of Erbil city, which are mainly inhabited by Turkmen, to sell their houses to the

government. Several buildings of the Iraqi Turkmen front, which included also Turkmen radio and television station, were seized. These buildings have yet to be returned.

In Tuz Khurmatu city, Turkmen lands again was confiscated by old regime, the total lands was confiscated in Tuz Hurmatu was 50.000.000 M. sq. of which majority was possessed by Turkmen.

after 2003 Turkmen were hoping to get their lands back ,yet again this was far from reality, cases which is presented By Turkmen in this area to the Property Claim Commission in Iraq is about 4970 cases, of which 281 resolved the rest still in appellate court .Since then the Kurds

built thousands houses on the Turkmen lands in the neighbourhoods of Aksu, Yengi Damlar, al-Jumhuriya and Saylo region.

And controlled government buildings such as youth centres, stadiums on which they built houses for Kurds. Along several kilometres of the both sides of the high way road to Bagdad, they established businesses and companies on Turkmen lands.

In the Khanaqin district, the Kurdish authorities built several residential complexes for the incoming Kurds on the municipality and Turkmen lands. The Turkmen agricultural lands, which were confiscated by the Ba'ath regime and not returned yet to the owners. The same process took place in Maneli , Shahraban and Kifri cities.

The amount of the confiscated Turkmen lands by the Ba'ath regime in different districts and provinces were much more than that of the Kurds. Whilst the Kurdish lands were almost all returned, the majority of confiscated Turkmen lands are still not given back to the owners.

Terror against Turkmen

Since 2003 Turkmens started to be exposed to extensive attacks. Hundreds of bombing attacks, assassinations and kidnappings took place in Turkmen regions. And they are severely exposed to intimidations, large numbers of Turkmen are arrested, many are lost. Some of the casualties as follow:

- 9 September 2004 and in 5 September 2005: Telafer district has been attacked twice by helicopters, tanks and tens of thousands of Soldiers, more than 1350 dead, 2650 wounded, including a large number of children, women and elders. About seven thousand were arrested; one thousand are still in prison. During these catastrophes about 48.000 families were displaced from Telafer, of which about 13.000 families are still not returned.
 - The Turkmen of Tuz Hurmatu are suffering severely since the occupation until today. The attacks on Turkmens has been intensify in last two years , in ten years more than 1389 Turkmens killed and injured and 470 houses destroyed, Some of the attacks,
1. Attacks on peaceful Demonstration in Tuz Hurmatu killing 8 and injuring more then 20 On 24 August 2003.

2. Huge bombing in the village of Amirli leaving more than 128 dead and 425 wounded Turkmen.
3. Attacks on 23 January 2013 against the Turkmen funeral in Tuz Khurmatu of a civil servant assassinated the previous day, leaving at least 53 people dead and a further 117 injured.
4. On 16 December 2012 two Turkmen teachers were abducted, tortured and burnt alive.
5. On 13th June 2013 Attack on peaceful demonstration in Tuz Hurmatu to stop the terror against Turkmen in the region, killing at least 13 and more than 23 injured.

The attacks on this area is continues until today on daily bases and most of Turkmen in these area were either threatened or kidnapped and paid fees, their properties has been destroyed. More than 45000 Turkmen left the city to sake safe refuge in other areas.

Turkmen of Mosul city had suffered almost the same, even in recent years many Turkmen have been assassinated. The attacks on Kaz Koyu, villages of Kara, Bazwaya, and Sherihan left hundreds dead or injured.

In Kerkuk 95% of the terror attack targeted Turkmen, all the Turkmen academic staffs, businessmen , doctors have been threatened to be killed or kidnapped and killed or paid ransom. Turkmen neighborhoods left with no protection despite the heavily presence of security force which are protecting other non-Turkmen neighborhoods.

Some of the Major attacks on Turkmen are:

- Assassination of the Mosul province representative of the ITF on 22 November 2009
- Assassination of Colonel Sabah Kara Altun in Kerkuk on 3 June 2005
- On 20 June 2009, a massive explosion in Taze Hurmatu killed 82 and injured 228 Turkmen ,destroyed more than 80 houses.
- Assassination of Dr. Amir Said Selbi, academic staff in Mosul University on 8 March 2011
- The offices of the ITF were attacked occasionally.
- Assassination of Neurosurgeon Yildirim Abbas Demirci and his brother on 5 September 2011
- Assassination attempt of Abdul Emir, a guard of president of Kerkuk province council on 11 September 2011

- Kidnapping of two Turkmen academic staff of the faculty of technology, Kerkuk University; Sami Aslan Riza and Musa Mustafa Veyis, on 5 November 2011
- Bombing of the house of the Kerkuk province council member and the speaker of the ITF Ali Mehdi on 28 November 2011 which killed a neighbor and injured 15 people.
- Assassination Maj. Gen. Adnan Abdul Razzaq al-Bayyati, director general of internal affairs in Kerkuk province on 4th September 2012.
- Assassination of Dr. Reza Hamza Al Bayati in Kerkuk on 19th September 2012
- Attack on peaceful demonstration in Tuz Hurmatu killed Iraqi Turkmen Front Vice President Ali Hashim Mukhtar Oglu and board member of the Salahaddin Ahmed Koca On 13th June 2013
- Assassination of Maj. Gen. Aydin Mosa in Kerkuk on 11th September 2013

All the Turkmen medical staff in Kerkuk received a threat letter asking them to leave or pay a ransom[6]. The total amount of the ransom which paid by Turkmen is estimated to be more than 50 million US dollar until today.

Assassinations, threats and kidnappings systematically against the Turkmen people is to terrorize them and to force them to leave their cities and towns.

It can be easily concluded that the number of terrorist attacks on the Turkmen, particularly in Kerkuk province and Tuz Khurmatu district are much more than the number of terrorist attacks to

which both the Kurds and the Arabs were subjected. The followings are the statistics of the terrorist attacks to which the Turkmen were subjected, in only three Turkmen regions and in only the later eight months, from 1st January - until 30th August 2013

- Three hundred attacks took place in the province of Kerkuk
- Two hundred seventy attacks were in the Salah al-Din province.

Although every major group in Iraq has a strong militia power and have huge presence in the Iraqi Army, Turkmen are still not allowed to form their own defense security force, that what made them vulnerable to terrorist and ethnic attacks, Every Turkmen city had been a target of explosions that killed thousands of Turkmen so far.

The on going dispute between the central government of Iraq and the regional government of Kurdistan has recently escalated and negatively affects the security situation in the region what is called disputed area which are dominated by Turkmen, as a result Turkmen paid heavily price from their lives and properties, these area are subjected to attacks on daily bases

despite the heavily presence of military forces from both Iraq and regional Kurdish government.

Despite that the European Parliament Resolution and many other international human Rights institutions calls on the Iraqi and Kurdish authorities to put measures into place that guarantee the safety and security of Iraqi Turkmen, yet no action have been taken by Iraqi and Kurdish authorities to protect Turkmen and the Kurdish authority opposed the recommendation to form security force in these area from Turkmen community to protect themselves, therefor Turkmen continue to be plagued by ethnic and sectarian violence and discrimination.

Different issues

- Turkmen are deprived from their share of ordinary and high governmental positions and given some symbolic posts and positions in the governing councils and parliament.
- The lack of appointment for Turkmen in governmental and municipality is clearly observed. While Turkmen appointments for higher governmental posts; for example, ministries and embassies is severe.
- In most of the Turkmen regions, one group dominate the security and police forces. All recent Iraqi elections have been organized while this group are dominating the administration, police and security in most these areas. All the election stages have been violated and exposed to fraud.

Conclusions

Despite the reference in the Constitution to the rights of Turkmen, they continue to be plagued by ethnic and sectarian violence and discrimination;

In view of the above stated facts, it becomes clear that the Turkmen of Iraq are suffering from genocide and ethnic cleansing; they are exposed to daily violation of human rights, their security is absent, their economic situation deteriorates and they flee from their land.

Turkmen welcome the statement by the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, where she highlighted the needs to use the many tools at the EU's disposal to put pressure on the Iraqi government to put measures into place that guarantee the safety and security of all Iraqi people and particularly those who are vulnerable to targeted violence; such as the Turkmen Turkmen Welcomes European Parliament Resolution to condemn the attacks on Iraqi Turkmen and it calls on the Iraqi and Kurdish authorities to provide protection for them.

The miserable situation of the Iraqi Turkmen, needs to be highlighted to get support from the regional and international Communities, particularly, the United Nations, the United States of America and the European Parliament.

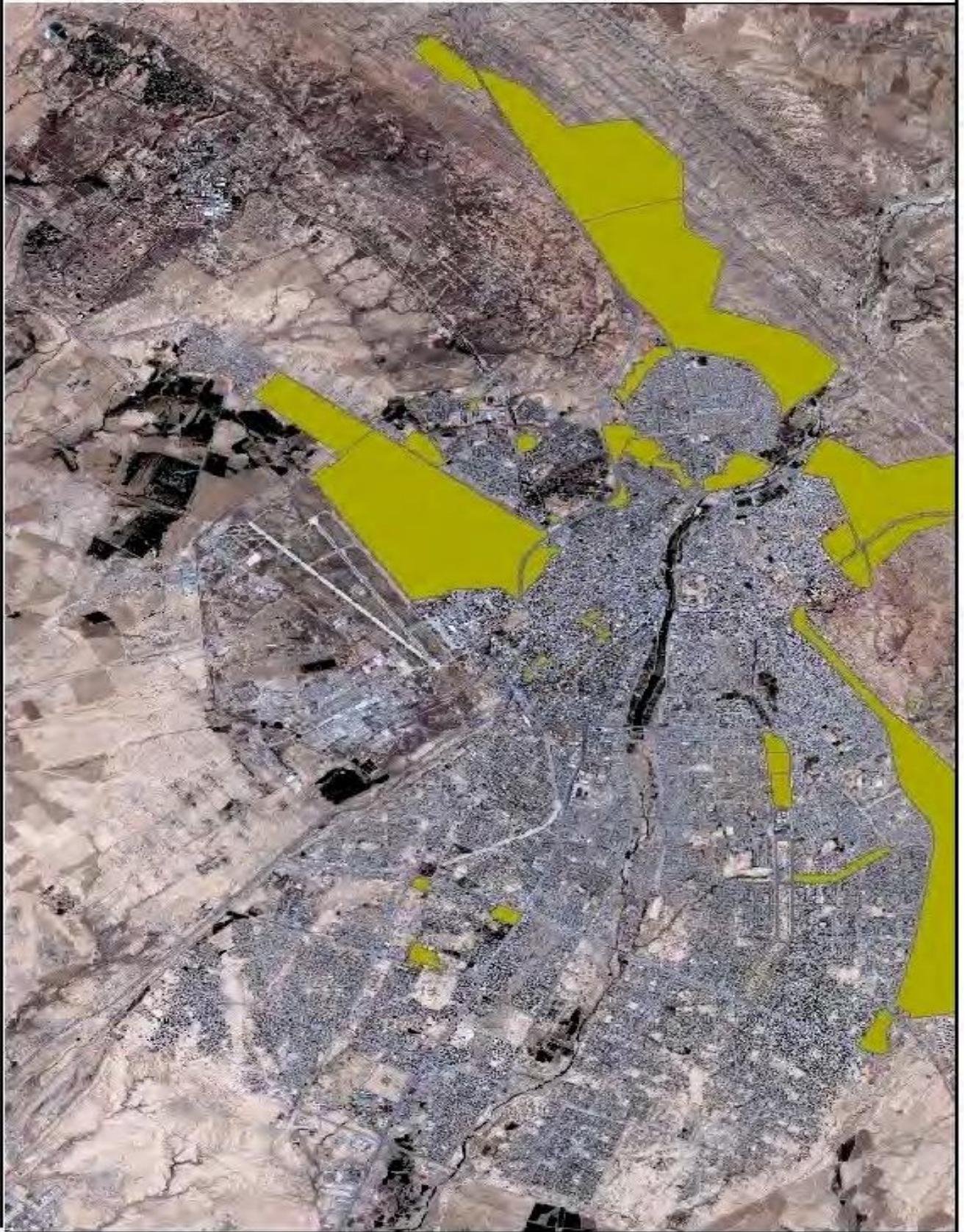
Turkmen of Iraq support a united democratic Iraq and expected to see justice, equality, fairness, an end to discrimination, the right to self-determination and an end to violence. Unfortunately, these expectations are far away from reality.

Turkmen request to obtain rights equal to those obtained by other groups and save what ever left of our unique culture and population. This will bring peace, stability and cooperation between all ethnic groups in the region which will make it a good model for the rest of the Middle East.

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. SOITM Report, “the summary of violation of the Human Rights of the Iraqi Turkmen and attempts to assimilate them during the dictatorial Ba’ath Period” dated 13th December 2003., http://turkmen.nl/1A_soitm/GR.pdf
4. 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.
5. Article 16 of the Parliamentary Election Law Article 6, 2009
6. “Annex1” Iraqi Turkmen Doctors’ Association Statement.

Building area in Kerkuk city between 2002 and 2007



Yellow colour points to the lands which were built between 2002 and 2007



Part of the eastern border of Kerkuk city
Satellite Map of Kerkuk province the Map of 2002 compared with the map of 2007



Part of the eastern border of Kerkuk city
Satellite Map of Kerkuk province the Map of 2002 compared with the map of 2007



East of Shorja neighbourhood
Satellite Map of Kerkuk province the Map of 2002 compared with the map of 2007

Panel Discussion 2:

CONFLICTS, ENVIRONMENT OF INSECURITY AND HUMAN MOBILITY: THE CASE OF TURKMEN IN IRAQ

Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci

Regent's Centre for Transnational Studies Regent's University London

Dr. Ibrahim Sirkeci of the Regent's Centre for Transnational Studies at Regent's University London delivered an informative and fact-driven discussion on migration patterns of Iraqi minorities and the consequences of war-driven migration on these cultures. His discussion slides are below.

Regent's Centre for Transnational Studies
Regent's University London



@isirkeci @RuRCTS #Transnational

Sirkeci, Ibrahim (2013). Conflicts, environment of insecurity and human mobility: the case of Turkmen in Iraq. Paper presented at the 24 Session of United Nations Human Rights Commission Side Event on *Iraqi Turkmen: Unveiling Repression in Iraq* organised by the UNPO, Palais des Nations, room XXIV, Geneva, Switzerland, 20 September 2013, Friday 14.00-16.00.

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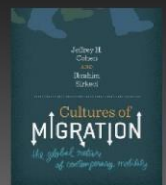
Conflicts, environment of insecurity and human mobility: The case of Turkmen in Iraq

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Wars and Conflicts in Iraq

Iraq has been a battlefield for decades:

1980-1988	War with Iran
1990	Invasion of Kuwait
1991	The First Gulf War
2003	War in Iraq
2006	Samara Shrine bombing

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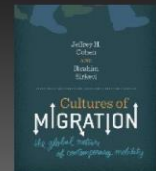
Arabisation

Systematic ethnic cleansing

Population engineering - displacements

= Environment of human insecurity

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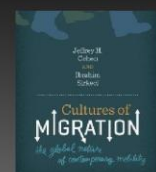


Conflict and international migration

International migration involves conflict at different stages and levels through the process:

- conflicts at the origin: ethnic clashes, tensions, wars, deprivation etc.
 - within community, households, regions
- conflicts on transit: visa regimes, border controls
- conflicts at destinations: recognition, discrimination
- conflicts on return: returnees vs. natives

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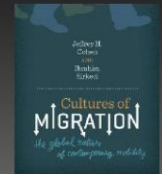
International migration is responsive to conflict

International human mobility is responsive to conflicts.

Major Cases:

- Conflict in Kosova → emigration to Germany
- Conflict in Somalia → emigration to Europe
- Conflict in Turkey → emigration to Germany
- Attacks on Kurds → emigration to Turkey and Europe
- Syrian crisis → mass refugee outflows

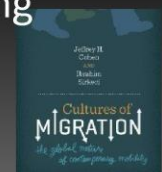
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Environment of Human Insecurity

- **MATERIAL:** War and conflict
= life threatening risks, lack of economic and political stability, so lack of employment, lack of public services, unfair and ethnic-oriented persecution by government; forceful internal displacement re: Arabisation policy.
- **NON-MATERIAL:** Arabisation: explicit and implicit pressures denying ethnic identity; forcing people to switch identity; formal and informal discrimination in employment and public service allocation; banning the use of mother tongue.

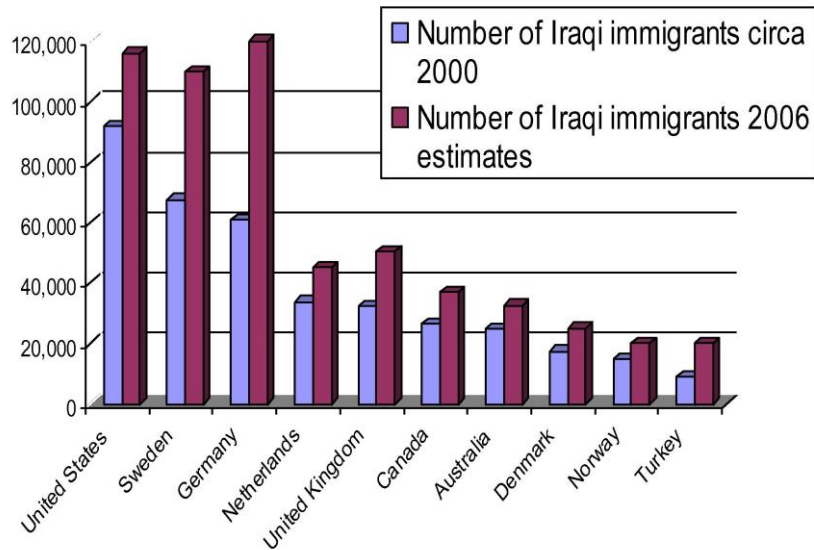
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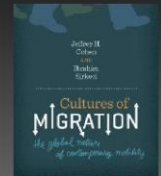
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Largest 10 Iraqi immigrant stocks in OECD



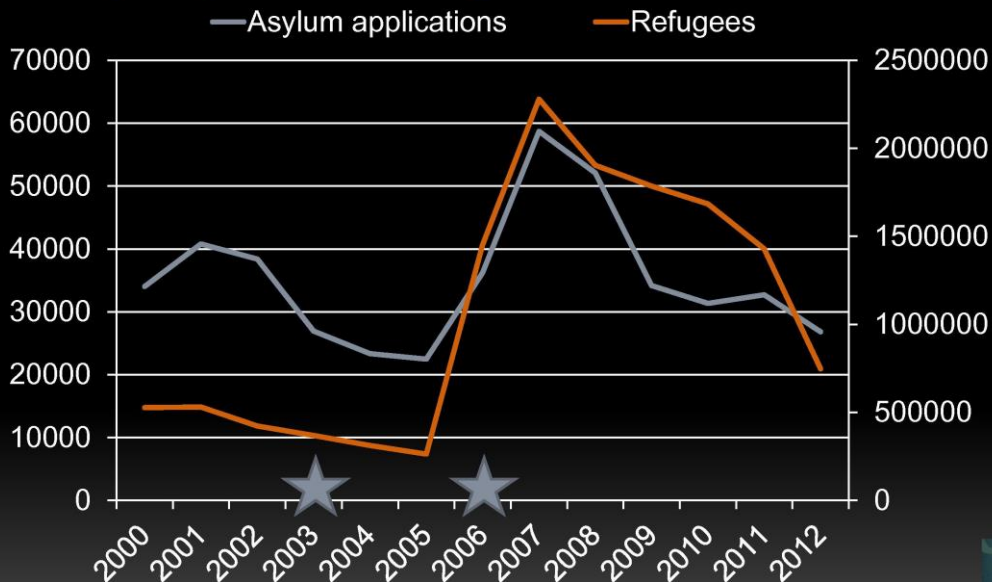
Total in OECD: 348,527 (2000) → 490,000 (2006)

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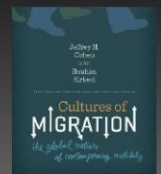
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Iraqi asylum & refugees, 2000-2012



★ Key events

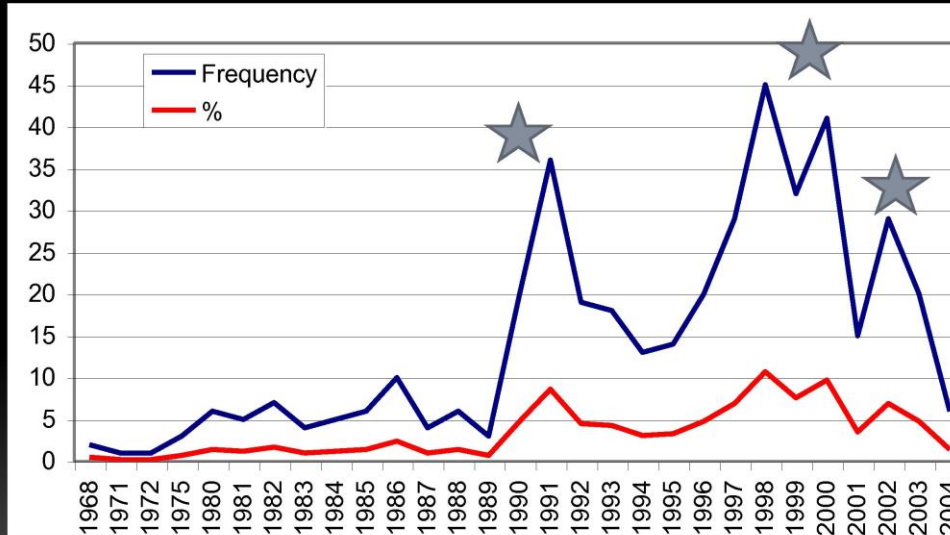
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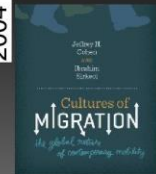
Turkmen Emigration from Iraq

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Key events such as operation desert fox, invasion, war etc.

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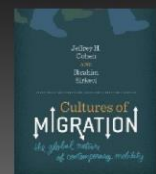


Characteristics of Turkmen, 2004

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- More than one in three households sent members abroad; among individuals overall emigration rate is about 10 %.
- Majority described they live well on sufficient and mostly average resources.
- More than a quarter with university level education.
- Only about a quarter think it is easier to find job abroad.
- Only a small fraction of Turkmen willing to emigrate.

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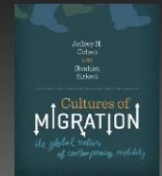




Impact of emigration

- These outflows reduced the population of Turkmen in Iraq
- Created a sizeable Turkmen immigrant minority in Turkey
- Weakened the Turkmen claims based on population size in Iraq's reconstruction
- Also helped Turkmen avoid the sufferings of war and Arabisation to some extent
- Created a transnational diaspora community

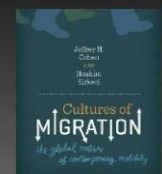
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Conclusions (in 2004)

- Normalisation of life in Iraq will take many more decades
- So international migration will continue in response to internal conflicts and instability
- Smaller ethnic minorities (e.g. Turkmen) likely to suffer further if ethnic oriented politics continue
- And lose more to emigration as they lack strength to survive

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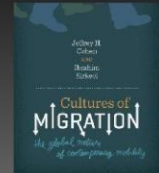




Conclusions contd.

- Ethnicity or religion based reallocation of resources in Iraq will nurture long term hostilities and conflicts
- Minorities are often heterogeneous with a diverse ethnic or religious characteristics
- The recent improvement of relations between Turkmen and Kurds in KR is promising
- Turkmen's best interest lies with a truly democratic Iraq that will not allow ethnic or religious discrimination
- Multi-lingual, non-religious, democratic secular governance is the solution for all minorities

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SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES



MS. SUNDUS ABBAS (UK)

Ms. Sundus Abbas Saqi worked as a director for a London-based advocacy organization for women with a focus on women's rights. Originally from Kerkuk, Iraq, she is very active in the Iraqi Turkmen community and is currently the Iraq Turkmen Front representative to the United Kingdom. She has a Bsc in Civil Engineering degree from Salahaddin University in Iraq, followed by a degree in computer science from Greenwich University, London.

MR. DIRK ADRIAENSENS (BELGIUM)

Mr. Dirk Adriaensens is Coordinator of SOS Iraq and a member of the executive committee of the BRussels Tribunal. He is also co-Coordinator of the Global Campaign Against the Assassination of Iraqi Academics. Between 2003 and 2005 he was a member of the International Organizing Committee of the World Tribunal on Iraq. As an author he has co-authored 'Rendez-Vous in Baghdad' (EPO, 1994), 'Cultural Cleansing in Iraq' (Pluto Press, London, 2010), 'Beyond Educide' (Academia Press, Ghent, 2012), and is a frequent contributor to GlobalResearch, Truthout, The International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies and other media.



DR. IBRAHIM SIRKECI (UK)

Prof. Dr. Sirkeci is Professor in Transnational Studies and Marketing in the Marketing and Strategy department at the European Business School London, Regent's College, and Director of Regent's Centre for Transnational Studies. He received a BA in Political Science from Bilkent University, Ankara, an MA in Economic and Social Demography from Hacettepe University, Ankara, and a Ph.D. in Human Geography from the University of Sheffield. Prior to joining Regent's College, London he was a Leverhulme Research Fellow at the Centre for Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship, University of Bristol. He is the managing Editor of Migration Letters, an international scholarly journal of population and migration studies. He authored several books including 'Culture of Migration' and 'The Environment of Insecurity in Turkey and the Emigration of Turkish Kurds to Germany'.

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.

In a world where over 90 per cent of conflicts are intra-state, the UNPO has been established to fill this gap by providing an international forum through which its Members can become effective participants and contributors to the international community. In an increasingly interdependent world, it is ever more important that those who continue to be denied their rights or remain excluded be given an opportunity to present their cases. The UNPO therefore works to address the consequences of marginalization, working with its Members to promote their democratic causes, to provide information, and to articulate creative and nonviolent strategies for progress. Above all, the UNPO works to ensure that the voices of its members are heard.

Founded in 1991 at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the UNPO is unique as an international organization in that it is built entirely by its Members. Through this strong connection to those suffering the consequences of exclusion that the organization seeks to address, the UNPO has since grown into a prominent and respected international organization.

The UNPO's membership has also grown steadily from its original fifteen founders, and now represents almost 50 Members worldwide. The work of the UNPO adapts continually to meet the challenges of its Members and the nature of the international political climate. Members remain committed to respecting the five principles enshrined in the UNPO Covenant: nonviolence, human rights, democracy and self-determination, environmental protection, and tolerance.

The UNPO remains committed to offering an increasing number of nations and peoples an entry point into the international community, enabling its Members to learn from one another, lending support where setbacks are encountered, and sharing successful experiences.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1:

PRESS RELEASE

24 September 2013

<http://www.unpo.org/article/16414>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Side Event for the Iraqi Turkmen during the Human Rights Council's 24th Session in Geneva, Switzerland

On the 20 September 2013, the UNPO with sponsorship from the Non-Violent Radical Party hosted the side event: "Iraqi Turkmen: Unveiling Repression in Iraq." The panel discussion focused on the human rights abuses against the Iraqi Turkmen minority of Iraq, and more specifically, the issue of land-grabbing and extrajudicial killings. This side event was moderated by Mr. Antonio Stango, a representative of the Non-Violent Radical Party. The UNPO was honored to welcome the expertise of Mr. Dirk Adriaensens of the *BRussels* Tribunal, Dr. Ibrahim Sirkeci from Regent's College, London, and Ms. Sundus Saqi, a representative from the Iraqi Turkman Front. This special side event took place during the Human Rights Council's 24th Session in Geneva, Switzerland.

Ms. Sundus Saqi started the panel discussion with a brief history of the Iraqi Turkmen and the epic struggle that they have faced as an ethnic minority in Iraq. She highlighted the specific instances and degrees of attacks that have been carried out against the Iraqi Turkmen, which include, but are not limited to, kidnappings, extrajudicial killings, and land grabbing in Turkmen-inhabited areas.

Mr. Dirk Adriaensens added to the conversation with an overview of the human rights abuses that all minorities have faced since the U.S. invasion in March of 2003. Mr. Adriaensens discussed the power vacuum left in Iraq and the problems that this poses for Iraq's numerous minorities, including the Assyrians and the Mandaean. Mr. Adriaensens pointed out that the violence against Iraqi minorities is not unique, but is certainly disproportionate.

Our panel discussion was concluded by Dr. Ibrahim Sirkeci, who discussed the long-term effects of the violence against the Iraqi Turkmen and the possible future of this group in their native homeland. Dr. Sirkeci explained that because the Iraqi Turkmen compose the third largest minority, their impact has been disproportionate to other minor groups. One of the most frequent after effects of the violence has been internal and external displacement, which Dr. Sirkeci explained will continue to happen in response to internal conflicts and instability. Dr. Sirkeci also incorporated elements from his research into the panel discussion, where he explained a culture of migration: once a cultural migration is established, people continue to migrate rather than stay and fight the difficult problems they face.

The purpose of this side event was to introduce the UN community to the plight of the Iraqi Turkmen nation. The overall safety of all Iraqi minorities has been severely threatened in the last ten years, and the tribulations faced by the Iraqi Turkmen are no exception. The UNPO has worked tirelessly with other unrepresented nations, like the Iraqi Turkmen, to shed light on these issues through UN and European Parliament advocacy in the hopes that these minorities do not suffer in silence. The aim of the Iraqi Turkmen is to live in a democratically unified Iraq that respects minorities and gives them a voice in government. The UNPO hopes to further discuss and highlight the issues faced by the Iraqi Turkmen and other Iraqi minorities during the Universal Periodic Review of Iraq in November 2014.

APPENDIX 2:

FLYER



Iraqi Turkmen: Unveiling Repression in Iraq



An Expert Panel Discussion on Land Grabbing and Extrajudicial Killings



September 20 | 2013

14:00-16:00 | Room XXIV

Palais des Nations | Geneva

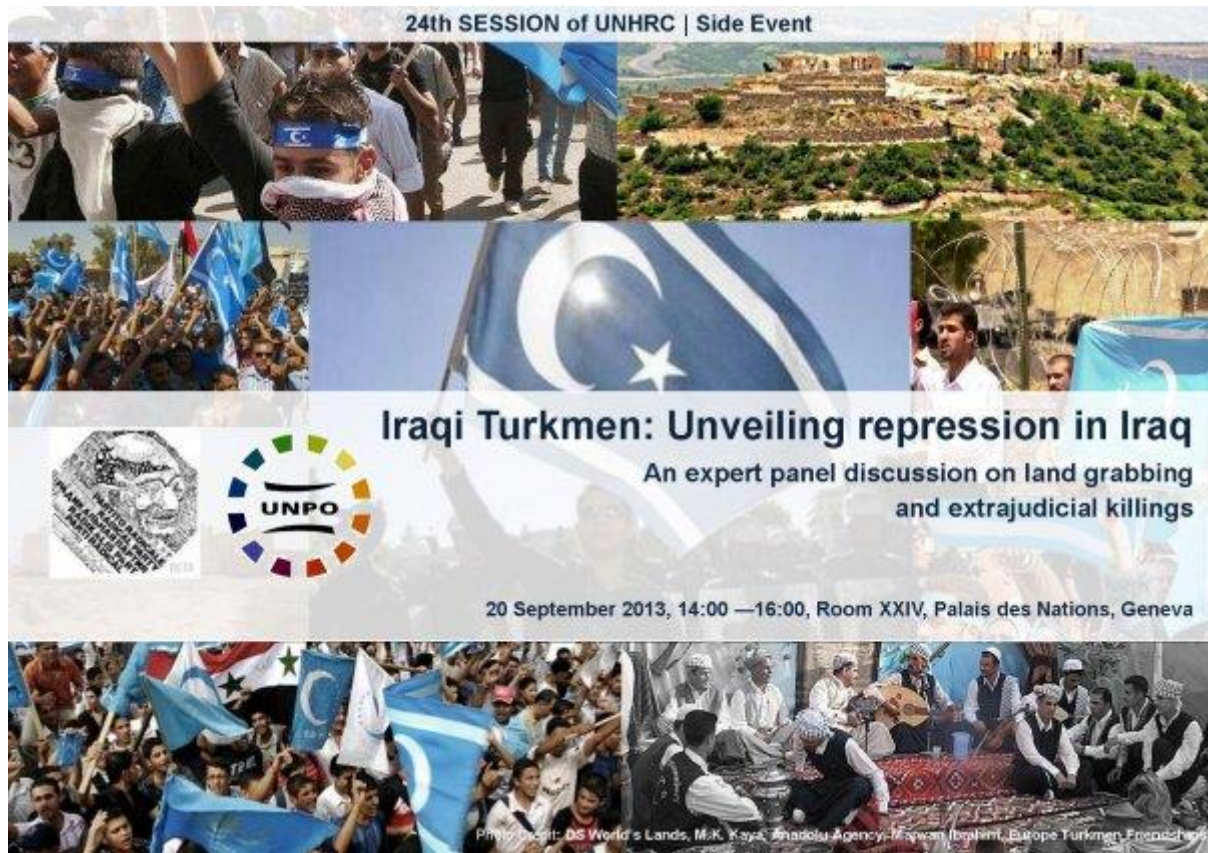


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APPENDIX 3:

BANNER



APPENDIX 4:

FACT SHEET



Briefing Note

May 2013

The Turkmen Reality in Iraq

Introduction

The Iraqi Turkmen are a community of just under 3 million, predominantly present in the Iraqi provinces of Mosul, Erbil, Kerkuk, Salahaddin and Diyala, Baghdad and Wasit. They represent the third largest ethnic group in Iraq (13% of the population). Kerkuk is considered by the Turkmen as their capital city. This area, within the 'Turkmen' region of Iraq, produces nearly 70% of the Iraqi petroleum and 2.2% of the world's. The Turkmen are primarily politically represented by The Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF).

Historical Background

Originating from Central Asia, the Turkmen are descendants of the Oghuz tribes. Throughout the 1920's both Turkmen and Kurdish minorities resisted British authority and the Hejazi Hashemite monarchy, and as a result the cultural rights of Turkmen communities were gradually eroded. In the 1930's a rapid demographic change produced ethnic tension, and Turkmen communities began to feel the effects of marginalisation. Violence continued to escalate until 1959, when communist and separatist militias massacred Turkmen leaders along with hundreds of Turkmen in the city of Kerkuk. Tensions were later exasperated even further with the establishment of Ba'ath Party rule in 1968. The 1970s were in fact characterised by other breaches of Turkmen human rights such as the 'Arabisation of Kerkuk' in 1971, and by their discrimination through employment opportunities, unfair dismissals, deliberate measures to exacerbate their living conditions, forced displacement and deportation, and interference with right of ownership.² After seizing power in 1979, Saddam Hussein's regime instigated a campaign of intensive "Arabisation", systematically expelling the Turkmen, instead promoting the resettlement of the Arab population. This period of persecution effectively destroyed Turkmen civil society, forcing many of its political institutions underground or into exile abroad.

Unfortunately, despite the regime change in Iraq in 2003, the Turkmen tragedy continues. Many Iraqi Turkmen communities believe that their historical presence and influence 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.



Land Grabbing

The confiscation of land ('land grabbing'), was one of the major features of the assimilation policies of the Ba'ath regime. The village of Beshir, situated South West of Kerkuk, presents a perfect case study of the consequences of such policies. The inhabitants of Beshir were landowners and farmers, whose ancestors had settled in the area several centuries ago. During the Ottoman rule, Beshir's inhabitants officially registered their lands in their names, and were issued official land property certificates, which they renewed in 1921. In the early 1980s, after the start of the Iraq-Iran war, Iraqi security forces arrested and executed hundreds of intellectuals from the village, accusing them of being activists in the outlawed Islamic Da'wa Party. In 1986, while the young men of Beshir were fighting in the war against Iran, their families were given 48 hours to pack their personal effects and leave their homes. Houses were razed to the ground and agricultural lands were confiscated, to be later given to Arabs brought by the Ba'ath regime. Each Arab family was given 10,000 Iraqi Dinars in cash as an incentive to build their house on Turkmen lands, while the Turkmen families received no compensation. Meanwhile the former regime had arabised the name of the village calling it "*Al-Bashir*" instead of Beshir.

In 2003 when the U.S. military occupied northern Iraq, they did not take control of the area around Beshir and the Arabs which had been installed there by the previous regime, remained in the village. The original Turkmen inhabitants of Beshir started to return demanding their lands. U.S. occupation authorities intervened, leading a

² And also suppression and intensive assimilation policies, forced cultural erosion that ranged from political persecution and exile, to terror, massacres and ethnic cleansing. (Large numbers of Turkmen intellectuals were accused of political activities and disappeared after their arrest during the Baathist regime; nothing has been heard of them since.)



Briefing Note

May 2013

controlled “mediation”, however the latter did not settle the property dispute. Nearly a decade has passed since this attempt to mediation, but little has changed since. The original Turkmen families of Beshir who were victims of deportation, in 2005 handed their complaints together with copies of their deeds, going back to Ottoman times, to the Property Claims Commission in order to retrieve their confiscated lands and be compensated for the destruction of their houses and for their loss of earnings since 1986. In spite of property legislation demanding the return of seized lands, there are currently still 41,874 complaints registered with the local Property Claims Commission. Of these complaints, only 3,236 cases have been decided. Since 2005 therefore, approximately only 2.000 out of 45.000 files belonging to Turkmens have been processed.

Security Challenges

It remains challenging to illustrate the extent to which the Turkmen community in Iraq has been exposed to ethnic cleansing for decades without having been attended to by the international community. Permanently lurking fears of explosive power struggles particularly over the control of the ‘powder-keg’ city of Kerkuk, and the deepened sectarian divides after the U.S. invasion only serve to further place the Turkmen in a precarious position. The Tal Afer district of Iraq (Ninevah governorate) was attacked twice by helicopters, tanks and tens of thousands of soldiers in 2004 and a year later, in 2005: 1,350 were left dead and 2,650 were wounded. In December 2007, a suicide bombing in Kerkuk shook its residents and stoked security fears, killing at least 55, and injuring another 120. On 17th of December 2012, the bodies of two abducted teachers were found near the Humera village, located 35km south of Kerkuk, both carrying signs of torture and being burnt alive. In January 2013, a crowded tent full of Turkmen mourners in Tuz Khurmato was transformed into a mass killing ground by a suicide bombing with genocidal intent, that left at least 35 people dead and 117 wounded.

On the 14th of March 2013, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution (welcomed by UNPO) on the plight of minority groups in Iraq, and specifically the Iraqi Turkmen. The resolution states that the European Parliament condemns the recent attacks on the Turkmen community and affirms that ‘despite the reference in the Constitution to the rights of Turkmen and other minorities, these minorities continue to be plagued by ethnic sectarian violence and discrimination’.

Human Rights Concerns

Perhaps one of the most noteworthy aspects characterising Iraq constitutionally, is the fact that to date it possesses no comprehensive minority rights or anti-discrimination law at the level of ordinary legislation. What is furthermore 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. The unfortunate consequences of this lack of implementations are evident in the UNAMI report on Human Rights concerns of January to June 2012, which documents a countless number of violations in regards to the Turkmen minority, including the afore mentioned imminent threat to civilian's security, arising from frequent terrorist attacks. Other noteworthy bearings include the mistreatment of Turkmen detainees in Iraqi prisons, the unregulated enforcement of capital punishment, several recorded incidents of children victimised by human rights abuses, and the recurrent disappearances and suspected executions of Turkmen intellectuals and health practitioners.³ Additionally the poor living conditions of the Turkmen population in heavily neglected areas, the challenges faced by the barely surviving Turkmen education in local schools, and the frequent bombing of religious sites (in the last 12 years over 65 churches were destroyed in the region), remain constant sources of a growing preoccupation.

About UNPO

The UNPO is an international, nonviolent, and democratic membership organisation established in 1991. Its members are indigenous peoples, minorities, and territories who have joined to protect and promote their human rights through nonviolent solutions.

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³ There is evidence that at least 46 Turkmen health practitioners in the province of Kirkuk alone were threatened, kidnapped or killed since April 2003. The accounted number of missing persons in Iraq (which includes Turkmens) between 2003 and 2010 hovers around 137,520. 14 mass graves were recently discovered in the Kerkuk Region.

APPENDIX 5:

PROGRAM HANDOUT - BACK AND FRONT

PROGRAMME	
"IRAQI TURKMEN: UNVEILING REPRESSION IN IRAQ"	
Friday, September 20, 2013	
14:00-16:00 Room XXIV	
14.00	Moderator, NRP: Welcome, introductions
PANEL DISCUSSION:	
14.15	Ms. Sundus Abbas: The Current Human Rights Situation in Iraq
14.30	Mr. Dirk Adriaenssens: What the U.S. Occupation left behind: a society in ruins, rampant human rights abuses, murder of the mind, a culture of death, and degradation of minorities.
14.45	Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Sirkeci: Conflicts, Environment of Insecurity and Human Mobility: The Case of the Turkmen in Iraq
15.00	Q&A, open floor debate
15.45	Moderator, NRP: Closing remarks



IRAQI TURKMEN: UNVEILING REPRESSION IN IRAQ

This event will serve as a platform for raising awareness about the current human rights situation with respect to the Iraqi Turkmen. There will be a specific focus on Land Grabbing and Extrajudicial Killings. Historically, **land grabbing** was one of the major assimilationist tools used by the Ba'ath Regime in Iraq and the consequences of the land grabs can still be felt today. This policy of assimilation followed by **massacres** directed at the Turkmen community has led to the decay of Turkmen civil society; this event is designed to inform the public of the issues concerning **land grabbing and extrajudicial killings** faced by the Iraqi Turkmen. This event will also provide a platform for discussion on the future of, and the injustices suffered by the Iraqi Turkmen.

SPEAKERS

MS. SUNDUS ABBAS (UK)

Sundus Abbas Saqi worked as a director for a London-based advocacy organization for women with a focus on women's rights. Originally from Kerkuk, Iraq, she is very active in the Iraqi Turkmen community and is currently the Iraq Turkmen Front representative to the United Kingdom. She has a Bsc in Civil Engineering degree from Salahaddin University in Iraq, followed by a degree in computer science from Greenwich University, London.

MR. DIRK ADRIAENSENS (BELGIUM)

Mr. Dirk Adriaensens is Coordinator of SOS Iraq and a member of the executive committee of the BRussels Tribunal. He is also co-Coordinator of the Global Campaign Against the Assassination of Iraqi Academics. Between 2003 and 2005 he was a member of the International Organizing Committee of the World Tribunal on Iraq. As an author he has co-authored 'Rendez-Vous in Baghdad' (EPO, 1994), 'Cultural Cleansing in Iraq' (Pluto Press, London, 2010), 'Beyond Educide' (Academia Press, Ghent, 2012), and is a frequent

contributor to GlobalResearch, Truthout, The International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies and other media.

PROF. DR. IBRAHIM SIRKECI (UK)

Prof. Dr. Sirkeci is Professor in Transnational Studies and Marketing in the Marketing and Strategy department at the European Business School London, Regent's College, and Director of Regent's Centre for Transnational Studies. He received a BA in Political Science from Bilkent University, Ankara, an MA in Economic and Social Demography (transferred to Sheffield) from Hacettepe University, Ankara, and a Ph.D. in Human Geography from the University of Sheffield. Prior to joining Regent's College, London he was a Leverhulme Research Fellow at the Centre for Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship, University of Bristol. He is the managing Editor of Migration Letters, an international scholarly journal of population and migration studies. He authored several books including 'Culture of Migration' and 'The Environment of Insecurity in Turkey and the Emigration of Turkish Kurds to Germany'.



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