

## **Turkey Continues its Brutal Suppression of Kurds Despite the EU Bid**

The recent turn of events in Northern Kurdistan has great cause for concern. Turkey, a so called democratic country which is in preparation to become a full member of the European Union, must offer an explanation to the public regarding this issue. A government that is in pursuit of joining an association of democratic nations such as the European Union must prove it is worthy. A nation that refuses to grant its citizens the basic rights to liberty and life must not become a member of the EU. The validity of the entire organization must come into question if such a rogue state is allowed to take part without overhauling its unjust ways.

Although Kurdish parties have abandoned many of their demands for the sake of peace and reconciliation and have been advocating a very compromising policy criticized by many Kurds, the Turkish state does not seem to give positive responses. Reforms and some small steps have been promised yet the implementation has never been fulfilled. That is the reason many people believe, these so called reforms do not have any meaning and they are only for cosmetic purposes. Unfortunately the Turkish state with its practice and persistent denial policies leaves little doubt of the reality of this view.

Last November, a bomb attack was carried out by Jitem, the secret service of the Turkish army at a bookshop in Shemdinli, Hakkari. Despite the fact that eye witnesses caught those who committed the terrorist act, the Turkish state not only freed the terrorists but also started an investigation of the public prosecutor in charge of solving the crime. In the same month the Turkish army killed fourteen PKK members in Mush province of Northern Kurdistan. Serious allegations have been made indicating that Kurds were murdered by chemical weapons. This is a heinous crime against humanity, in violations of the Geneva accords. This campaign of killing without impunity is continuing today as evidence by more killings in February and March of this year.

Turkey has also been pressuring the Danish government to close down the Kurdish TV channel - Roj TV. Instead of respecting the language and culture of over 25 million Kurds and granting their rights, Turkey is putting pressure on Denmark to close down their media outlets. The government of Turkey is also planning to prosecute the Kurdish mayors who signed a declaration of support for Roj TV and to arrest those who appeared on programs aired by the TV station.

During the Kurdish New year (Newroz) celebrations and demonstrations against the oppressive policy of Turkey, many people were harshly beaten by the police and many were arrested in Amed, Wan, Batman, Siirt, Merdin and a number of other cities.

The Kurdish National Congress of North America condemns the brutal suppression of recent demonstrations in the Kurdish cities. Kurdish people took to the streets in Amed, Wan, Batman, Siirt Merdin and a number of other cities and demonstrated against a regime that has used chemical weapons against innocent civilians and human rights

activists. In Diyarbakir alone, 4 Kurds were killed and hundreds of people were injured as a result of police fire which shows the explosive and critical nature of the situation. The Turkish regime has continually denied the existence and basic human rights of Kurds. We support our Kurdish brothers and sisters in their peaceful struggle for freedom and democracy. Demonstrations are part of a democratic and civilized society. Should Turkey wish to join the ranks of nations with high standards of democracy, it has to respect the rights of the Kurdish people and start a dialogue with all involved Kurdish parties. Until this occurs, we strongly oppose any action that brings Turkey closer to a seat in the EU. We will publicize the horrific crimes the Turkish regime has, and continues, to commit, until they cease their brutality against the Kurds.

We also call on all Kurdish parties and organizations in Northern Kurdistan to form an alliance in order to be effective in ending the suffering and bring the struggle of our people to victory.

Media Contact: Soraya Serajeddini (408) 834-5557

Date published: Thursday, March 30, 2006