

Turkish Elections

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Press Release

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History in the Making

Since 1994 Kurdish politicians have been unable to win any seats in Turkish Parliament, because of the 10% barrier. Based on Turkish laws, to win seats in parliament a party must have a minimum of 10% of the national vote. The Kurdish parties failed to attain the 10% required by law.

However, in this recent election the Democratic Society Party (DTP) successfully managed to go around this law by asking their candidates to participate in the election as independents. Although the Kurds should be represented by 25-30% of the representatives, Kurdish candidates won 20 seats, a number great enough to create the first Kurdish block in Turkish parliament.

The success serves as an important test of the democratic environment in Turkey for both DTP and the Turkish public's political maturity. It will also present a good chance for making progress in resolving the Kurdish question.

Turkey has an opportunity to enter the European Union by respecting the will of its citizens to exercise their rights democratically, but if it fails this test it could lose the opportunity to become a full member of the European Union and lose its chance.

The road to self-determination is not easy, but the persistence of our people to gain their rights democratically will show the world that Kurds always seek peaceful means to solve their problems unless they are forced to defend their rights otherwise.

The Kurdish National Congress of North America congratulates the new pro-Kurdish parliamentarians of independents, named "The Thousand Hopes". We anticipate that their presence in the Turkish parliament will bring new hope and changes; where the voice of our nation will be heard clearly to bring changes to the Turkish constitution democratically and bring the Kurds their right of self-determination.

For more information please email: knc@kurdishnationalcongress.org

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