



**Kurdish National Congress of North America**  
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President Elect Barack Obama,  
713 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

November 11, 2008

Honorable President Elect Obama,

The Kurdish National Congress would like to extend our best wishes and congratulations to you on becoming the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the U.S.

The true American dream was realized on November 4<sup>th</sup> when America decided to renew its commitment to the world and also to lead the world on another front by overcoming social and racial barriers. In the past America has been leading the world in science and technology. With your election America led the world on another front, and offered a new hope to the globe.

While we know that your campaign promises have included an exit from Iraq, we hope such an exit will not include the cynical abandonment the Kurds experienced twice in the past. In 1975, when Nixon's administration abandoned the Kurds in Iraq after supporting them against the Ba'athist regime, when asked by a reporter about this reversal of support, Kissinger made a callous statement which devastated the hopes of Kurdish society, by saying "one must not confuse the intelligence business with missionary work." In 1991, when first President Bush called upon the people of Iraq to rise against the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, the Kurds embraced his call and ended Saddam's tyrannical establishment in Kurdistan; they found themselves to be abandoned again and were left at the mercy of Saddam's revenge.

Should the US leave Iraq in the next couple of years, we ask you not to let history be repeated and leave the Kurds unprotected. Otherwise Iraq could revert to the tyranny of the majority which might result in the oppression of minority groups. Mr. Maliki's recent statement to change the Iraq's new Constitution to give the central government more power over regional governments is a clear intention to take Iraq back to the dark days of dictatorship. We urge you to remember that the Kurds have been the most loyal friends to the US in Iraq and ask that your administration remain committed to federalism in Iraq where the Kurds and other groups would have their national and democratic rights.

Kurds in other parts of Kurdistan also look up to American democracy and her commitment to protect human rights. In Iran, our people have been suffering unprecedented suppression by the Iranian mono-theocratic regime. Even Kurdish women and minors are persecuted and occasionally publicly executed. The Kurdish democratic movement in Iran also needs American support. Further, in Turkey, 20 million Kurds are

routinely oppressed by the Turkish government. We believe America's "good Kurds, bad Kurds" policy has given the Turkish government a free hand to use this same policy as a pretext to oppress the so-called "bad Kurds." This situation has been allowed to fester through a series of successive US administrations. We hope that your administration will have a more principled approach vis-à-vis Turkey and the Kurds and encourage the Turks to recognize Kurdish democratic rights in Turkey and that Kurds and Turks should be equal before the law. In Syria there are more than two million Kurds. Many of them still do not have Syrian citizenship and they are referred to as 'unwanted guests' despite the fact that they are living on their ancestral lands.

We would like you to remember that the Kurdish people are the world's largest ethnic group without a state of their own. We have been politically divided by colonial and neocolonial policies of the past, even though we are geographically united. As a people we carry four different passports.

We ask that your vision for world peace and prosperity would include the Kurds. Further we ask you to encourage Turkey, Iran and Syria to cease their oppression of the Kurds and recognize their legitimate and democratic rights.

Sincerely,  
Kirmanj Gundi  
President