



Kurdish National Congress of North America

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Mr. Barack Obama, President
United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

July 13, 2010

Honorable President Obama:

Change for the better was the motto of your campaign and you proved that it is possible with perseverance and dedication.

Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the WWI, and the re-division of Kurdistan among Iran, Turkey and two newly established states, Iraq and Syria, the people of Kurdistan have been struggling for their national identity and dreaming for a change in the Middle East, where they could have the same linguistic, cultural, and national rights as other ethnic groups. They have persevered and dedicated their lives to fulfill this dream. However, the controlling states have been using all the means available to them to prevent the people of Kurdistan from achieving their dream.

In response to state terror, and as a result of the imposed internal wars, displacements, bombings, assassinations, imprisonments, and tortures, the Kurdish resistance was born. The Kurdish people have defended their land and sought a peaceful political dialogue with the central governments to arrive at a peaceful solution. In return, the governments in Ankara, Tehran, Damascus, and Baghdad have labeled them as bandits, terrorists and foreign agents. They even convinced Washington at times to use such labels against them unjustly. These governments have used the same tactics that the British Empire used against the American Colonies or against the members of Indian National Congress. The Apartheid government of South Africa used the same methods against the members of the African National Congress. Fortunately those labels did not stop the Americans, nor the Indians, or the South Africans from fighting for their just goal, and finally the world accepted the fact that they deserve freedom.

Unfortunately, due to the division of Kurdistan, the Kurds have not been able to unite in a Kurdish National Congress in their homeland and together fight for their rights.

Fortunately, the Kurdish citizens in the North America have taken some steps in that direction. In 1988 in the aftermath of the genocide in Iraqi Kurdistan, a group of intellectuals created the Kurdish National Congress of North America (KNCNA). For the past 22 years KNCNA has done everything in its capacity to promote a peaceful and just solution to the Kurdish conflict in the Middle East. However, it still has not been able to fulfill its dream because of the lack of genuine support by the free world.

We appeal to you, as a powerful leader of the free world, to side with the Kurds and help them to achieve their national rights. We understand that it is a difficult task to solve the Kurdish issue in all parts of Kurdistan, but it has to start somewhere, as they say, the journey of thousand miles starts with a single step. At present the Kurds of Iraq enjoy a stronger, more equal position with the Arabs than ever before. As a man of peace, we hope that you support the Kurds in their peaceful struggle for freedom and democracy.

The Iranian and the Syrian governments are unreliable, still in denial about the most basic Kurdish human rights, and have not shown any sign of resolving the Kurdish issue. However, some Turkish authorities have shown such signs, and we ask you to encourage them to resolve the Kurdish issue and make peace between the two peoples and return harmony to Anatolia.

Further, we ask you to make the recognition of the Kurdish cultural rights/identity in Anatolia and the amendment of the Turkish Constitution a moratorium to the Turkish membership in the European Union. We at KNCNA are committed to work for promoting justice, democracy, and equality for all. We are willing to approach the Kurdish people and leaders in Anatolia to continue using the same method that the American Founding Fathers, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Martin Luther King used for justice. Like Cesar Chavez, you said, "yes, we can". We too are assuring you that "yes, we can".

Finally, we hope that you continue to encourage the Turkish authorities to accept the reality in which they live, which is, that Anatolia is a multi-ethnic society. Thus, they cannot talk about democracy while denying the national rights of those who carry a different national badge. We hope you encourage the Turkish authorities to use peaceful methods and come to a negotiating conference in Washington, DC, to solve the Kurdish conflict in Anatolia. Such an undertaking is consistent with American moral principles, with promoting human rights, and with change that was your motto.

Sincerely,

Kamal Artin, President
Kurdish National Congress of North America