



Kurdish National Congress of North America

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Dear Professor Westrheim

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for inviting me to your 7th annual conference. For the past few years I had the pleasure of attending the conference. Unfortunately, this year due to some circumstances beyond my control I cannot be there in person, but in spirit I am with you and other participants. I wish you a much successful conference.

Although Turkey aspires to become a democratic state and join the European Union, yet it has a long and difficult road ahead to reach that milestone. Compared to authoritarian states in the Middle East, Turkey is a semi-democratic country. For the past six years EUTCC has been instrumental in encouraging this semi-democratic state to move towards full democracy. Each year through thorough research and rigorous discussions, EUTCC has rightfully concluded that Turkey's human rights records still needs much improvement in order to be considered part of the European Union. We congratulate you for your valid assessment and fair judgment.

Thanks to the Kurdish movement and the efforts of democratic organizations such as EUTCC, the Turkish state is gradually recognizing the existence of an unresolved Kurdish conflict. This conflict goes back to 1920s when the Sevres treaty was annulled and the Kurds were denied the right to a referendum to determine their own destiny. Since then Anatolia has not been a just and peaceful home for millions of Kurds.

Instead of securing peace and justice via a referendum, the Turkish state has used mass murder, imprisonment, and torture as techniques to placate the Kurdish conflict. In response a part of the Kurdish movement has reacted with violence to defend the people in Kurdistan. Unfortunately both sides have not realized that the life of a soldier is as valuable as the life of freedom fighter and therefore the bloodshed must stop.



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We at the Kurdish National Congress of North America believe in peacefully solving the conflict. While we promote a free and united country for all parts of our divided homeland, we support a referendum for peace where the Kurds in Anatolia are given the option to choose between a centralized Turkey, a federation of Anatolian states, or a united Kurdistan.

Historically rights are not given but obtained. We appeal to our fellow Kurds in Anatolia to avoid any method but civil disobedience and passive resistance to obtain their rights. As part of civil disobedience, we urge them to boycott learning and speaking Turkish until they master Kurdish first.

We appeal to EUTCC to continue its objective evaluation and to pressure the Turkish state to give the Kurds in Anatolia the opportunity to determine their own destiny in a referendum. Only after such a step, Turkey can claim readiness to be part of the free world and a democratic body such as European Union.

And last but not least we at the Kurdish National Congress of North America would like to work closer with EUTCC so that together we approach the Kurdish leaders and encourage them to unilaterally and unconditionally declare peace and focus on civil disobedience and passive resistance for real progress to follow.

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