



## Kurdish National Congress

On behalf of the Members of Council  
of the Corporation of the  
City of Brampton

May I extend to you my heartfelt  
congratulations  
on the occasion of your  
**5th Annual Conference**

We hope and trust that you will  
enjoy the years to come with good  
health, prosperity, and the fellowship  
of family and friends

City Hall, Brampton

August 8, 1992

With warm regards

.....  
Mayor



**Opening Speech By Secretary of K.N.C.  
Dr. Ahmed Uthman**

Ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the board of directors of KNC I welcome you all to our fifth annual conference, a special welcome to our non-Kurdish guests and to those Kurds who have come from outside North America. As a secretary general of KNC, I want briefly to discuss the formation of KNC and its goals.

KNC was formed four years ago in the aftermath of Halbija massacre. We north American Kurds realized that the people in the West were not informed or were ill informed about the tremendous sufferings inflicted on the Kurdish nation by the occupiers of Kurdistan.

There was no publicity about the fact that 28 million Kurds did not have even an observer status at the United Nations while countries with populations of less than 200,000 eg Seychelles were full members of that world organization. We now know that almost two thirds of the nations represented at the UNO have much less populations than our Kurdish nation.

The goals of KNC since its establishment have been:

First to establish a working relationship with the legislative and the executive branches of the governments of the USA and Canada. We have succeeded in creating friends among the Congress and the Senate. The Kurdish lobby headed by Congressman Bilbray is of tremendous value in promoting Kurdish interests.

Our second goal was to act as an information source for the media and to emphasize the necessity for our representatives to be on every panel discussing the Middle East. We have emphasized that the Arab Israeli conflict is not the only issue obstructing peace in that region. The denial of Kurdish Rights is another issue and it affects the aims and aspira-

tions of all the 28 million Kurds.

The numerous appearances of our president and others on television channels, televised press conferences, numerous articles in the papers and journals are testament of the fact that we have been somewhat successful.

The third goal was to give an opportunity to Kurds in Northern America to belong to a secular non party organization. An organization which can and does have members from all parts of Kurdistan.

Since its formation KNC has organized various gatherings of Kurds from all parts of North America. We have met as friends discussed in a democratic fashion the tremendous problems of our people. It is the aim of KNC to make our annual Conferences into Kurdish festivals for all our families, to create a congenial atmosphere for all Kurds and their families to get together, to exchange opinions, to suggest ways of helping our people in occupied Kurdistan and also participate in the conference programme and its social activities. Without such a broad based organization the few thousand Kurds living among the 300 million North Americans will be lost to each other and to their Kurdish nations. This will be true, particularly for future generations. That is why KNC pays great attention to the families and particularly to the Kurdish youth.

We are today meeting in a building flying a Kurdish flag, we have occupied about 40 rooms. Its our hope that in our future meetings we will be occupying the entire hotel and create a truly Kurdish atmosphere where Kurdish music, songs, and poetry will resonate through the entire hotel.

Finally an appeal to all Kurds who are United States citizens, this is an election year, the outcome of this election will affect our lives here and will have a dramatic influence on our Kurdish nation's political struggle. You must participate actively in state and federal elections both by donating your time and

your money if possible. If we can help in electing people who are sympathetic to our cause our efforts will be repaid a thousand times over. You should go to pre-election meetings, write to the nominees, contribute both financially and otherwise. Try to educate and inform the volunteers about the necessity for recognition of Kurdish political rights. You must vote because its your duty as a US citizen and because your vote counts.

KNC was ably led by Dr. Khailany for its first 3 years, then last year, KNC selected Dr. Najim Aldin Karim as its president and in retrospect the choice was an excellent one. Dr. Karim has done a wonderful job in the past year and has brought recognition and respect to the organization.

**Presidential Address  
Najmaldin O. Karim,  
M.D.**

Dear distinguished guests, fellow delegates and friends:

It is indeed an honor and privilege to speak to you on the state of the KNC, our successes, disappointments, and our vision for the future.

Before doing so, I would like to thank all of you for attending the fifth annual conference, and all the others who were unable to attend but have shown their support in the past year. It is important for me to thank some individuals and organizations who have been instrumental in helping the Kurdish cause in the international arena. Senator Clairborne Pell, and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator and Democratic Vice Presidential Candidate Al Gore, Senator Kennedy, Peter Galbraith of the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee, also Senator Mitchell and Dole for their support, Congressmen Lantos and Porter have been very outspoken in their support of the Kurdish people for years, Lee Hamilton has not missed an opportunity without showing

his concern for our people and grilling administration officials to ensure continued protection for the Kurds. Congressman James Bilbray has shown his leadership and knowledge on the Kurdish issue and has proposed the most important legislation which gained bipartisan support of the Congress extending protection for the Kurds. There are so many others such as Congressmen Solarz and Gaidjeson.

We take the opportunity to congratulate the people of southern Kurdistan and their leaders for the free, peaceful democratic elections and for their struggle and resistance despite harsh economic conditions. It is our duty to help them in every form we can. I also would like to take the opportunity to salute a great lady know to you all and who deserves our respect and admiration. Madame Danielle Mitterand has continued to show her determination and her zealous support for our people. This time she went to southern Kurdistan with French health and humanitarian affairs minister Mr. Bernard Kuschner to inspect the situation first hand when they became victims of a cowardly assassination attempt by the enemies of the Kurdish people. It is hard to believe that she can work any harder for us, but Madame Mitterand stated after the attempt on her life that she will do just that and indeed following the visit, they submitted a memorandum to the UN asking for exempting Kurdistan from the economic embargo imposed by the UN on Iraq. Let us all stand and salute this great lady.

Many other individuals and organizations outside the government have worked steadfastly to help the Kurdish people not only in southern Kurdistan but in other parts also, especially in the north of Kurdistan. People such as David Phillips, Lionel Rosenblatt, Lawyers Committee on Human Rights, International Human Rights Law Group, Amnesty International and many others.

It was four years ago in August when we gathered in Michigan and formed the KNC. At that time we were discussing

ways to help our refugees, publicize the plight of the Kurdish people and obtain international support for their cause. We have come a long way since those days. Now the emphasis is on a Kurdish homeland recognized by the world. When the KNC was founded many thought that it would meet the fate of other Kurdish organizations and fail because it was not affiliated or sponsored by a major Kurdish political party in Kurdistan, and even some in the conference suggested that a final decision be delayed on forming the KNC until such a time when all or most political parties lend their support to forming such an organization. But through the hard work and perseverance we have not only survived but grown stronger with the passing of each year. The KNC is indeed the only Kurdish organization that has members from all parts of Kurdistan, that is respected by our people and their friends, reputable and credible. The KNC view is not only sought by the Kurdish leadership in Kurdistan, but by the US government, Congress, the media, and the public. I will briefly list some of our major activities of the past year.

1. The KNC lobbied with the US State Department to accept more Kurdish refugees in the USA and this resulted in accepting an additional 1000 refugees.
2. Forming the NGO working group on Kurdistan with the help of the Congressional Human Rights Foundation. This group meets once a month to promote human rights democracy and self determination for Kurdistan.
3. The inter-parliamentary group on Kurdistan is about to be formed, and will strengthen ties between the Kurdish parliament and other democracies.
4. The Congressional Working Group chaired by Congressman Bilbray of Nevada has already produced useful legislation for the Kurds.
5. Coordinate the visit of the Iraqi Kurdistan front to the USA and host a reception for them attended by many in politics and humanitarian affairs in Washington.

6. Coordinate and assist with the visit of Nancy Suderberg and Mike Myers, both from Senator Kennedy's staff to Kurdistan that attracted wide media attention after issuing their reports.
7. Coordinate the visit of Peter Galbraith of the Foreign Relations committee that brought about the transfer from Kurdistan of the documents showing Saddam's genocide against the Kurdish people.
8. forming a delegation consisting of the President and the Past-President of the KNC with David Phillips of CHRF and Bob Whitman of NPR that visited Kurdistan. the delegation attended the PUK conference, met with Kurdish leaders from all parts of Kurdistan, conducted many newspaper, radio, and TV interviews. The delegation was able to know first hand about the sufferings of the Kurdish people, and also was proud to see the good name of KNC in Kurdistan.
9. The KNC President testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on June 19, 1992 and explained the plight of the Kurdish people and called for the formation of an independent Kurdish state.
10. The KNC coordinated and assisted with the visit of Max Van Der Stoel the special UN reporter to Washington. Mr. Van Der Stoel's report after his visit to Kurdistan attracted world wide attention and described Saddam's atrocities as genocide. The KNC hosted a reception for him in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing room.
11. The KNC President visited California and attended meetings of our chapter in San Diego in December of 1991, visited Boston in April 1992 and the KNC NE chapter was formed after that, visited Buffalo in May 1992 to address the annual conflict resolution conference of the University of Buffalo as a key note speaker. The secretary and California coordinator attended the Iraqi opposition meeting in San Francisco with other KNC members and emphasized self determination and independence. the KNC executive committee also visited

Canada. Two separate Iraqi opposition meetings in Washington were also attended by KNC and KNC themes were stressed.

12. The KNC participated in the press conference in the National Press Building in Washington with the Lawyers Committee of Human Rights and actor Gary Burghoff (Radar on M\*A\*S\*H\*) to speak about the Kurdish issues.
13. KNC was instrumental in sending election monitors to Kurdistan to observe the May 19, 1992 elections. This was indeed a big success and very useful for the democratic process.
14. The KNC in collaboration with the Kurdish Institute in Paris placed an ad in the Le Monde and the International Herald Tribune to show our objection to Turkey's assumption of the chairmanship of the European Council for their atrocities in Kurdistan.
15. The KNC participated in the Iraqi National Congress meeting held in Vienna, Austria in June 1992 the delegation was very active in promoting true self determination for Kurdistan and was dear ahead of all the others and gained the respect and support of many delegates especially the Kurdish Contingent. The KNC policy is to participate in all forums including political groups from countries occupying Kurdistan to present our views.

Participating in these events does not make us part of these groups.

16. The KNC has continued to comment on and explain the political situation in Kurdistan to the media. Interviews were given on McNeil Lehrer News Hour, CNN, NPR and others.

We have had our share of disappointment in the past year.

1. KNC has not been able to purchase a Kurdish Center. The main reason is financial.
2. The KNC relief fund is about to be granted tax exempt status. We expect

approval within a month barring any surprises.

3. The KNC has not been able to convene a conference for all the major Kurdish organizations and parties from all parts of Kurdistan for various reasons.
4. Despite the progress made in the past year, the KNC still has most of its members from southern Kurdistan and should continue with the efforts to recruit more Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan.
5. Grass root financial contributions are still below expectations and future efforts should be directed towards attaining this goal.

Ladies and gentlemen:

The political situation in Kurdistan has reached the international arena like never before, but we can see that in major conferences and seminars there is an obvious lack of Kurdish scholars and experts on Kurdish issues and that the Kurdish question has not reached the academic levels in the western countries. We should concentrate our efforts to encourage the Kurdish youth to enter these fields to further advance the cause of their people especially in the field of conflict resolution.

As for the situation in greater Kurdistan we see signs of hope for the future but also lack of vision in some respect.

In western Kurdistan:

The policies of denial and oppression of the Kurdish rights continues, despite the presence of few Kurds in the rubber stamp body called the National Assembly. There are thousands of Kurds, whose citizenship have been revoked, their properties confiscated, they are denied schooling in their own language, and they are not allowed to form free political parties or express themselves freely in any shape of form. they have become forgotten by the Kurdish political leadership of the other parts of Kurdistan due to misguided tactical support they receive from the Syrian regime.

In Eastern Kurdistan:

The Islamic republic has failed miserably to deal with the problem of 8 million Kurds. Our people continue to lack freedom of expression, formation of political parties, they are not allowed to study Kurdish in school, the mere Kurdish program on the Iranian radio deals with government propaganda and ignores the daily problems of the Kurdish population. Kurds are deported outside, detention without charges, execution is an everyday occurrence. The Kurdish resistance continues despite the restraints placed on them by the delicate situation in Iraqi Kurdistan that limits their activities to an extend. It falls upon us all to publicize the plight of the Kurdish people in Iran and to defend their right to self determination. The Iranian regime gives itself the right to silence the Kurds of all other parts, to ignore and turn a blind eye to the atrocities they are committing under the pretext of Islam, and their deceitful and tactical policies that pretend to help the Kurds of Iraq or the Peshmergas of Northern Kurdistan.

In the former Soviet Union Dr. Karlin Chachanian the president of Kurdish Writers Union will address the situation there but I want to add that the Kurds of the former Soviet Union have our full support, we salute them for their courageous decision to establish and independent Kurdish state in Lachinistan.

In northern Kurdistan:

The situation is indeed very delicate and needs a new look. Despite the denial by the Turkish government and the western powers the PKK is a popular force in Kurdistan and has widespread following and their role in finding a peaceful solution for the bloodshed that has plagued Kurdistan since 1984 cannot be denied any longer. While the Kurdish issue in Turkey has become the center of attention in Turkish politics, Kurdistan is still under marshall law, village guards are being recruited by force most of the time so the inter-Kurdish fighting continues. The Kurds are still not allowed to form Kurdish political parties under the Turkish Con-

stitution. There are no schools in Kurdish, killing, torture, confiscation, and destruction of properties is practiced without restraint by the Turkish military. So long as these policies continue the bloodshed and armed resistance will continue. The Kurdish problem in Turkey will be solved if Turkey acknowledges the right of self determination for the Kurds, President Ozal and Prime Minister Demeril should change the "New Kurdish Reality" from talk in the media to practical dialogue with the representatives of the Kurdish people and should convince the chauvinists in the government that their past and present policies will only lead to more death and destruction. The Kurdish leadership should also accept the new changes in the world with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe, and take advantage of these changes and not to be pawns in the hands of our enemies that have acknowledged the Kurdish rights through the Anfal Campaign in Iraq, the Arab Belt policy in Syria, and the failed Islamic solutions in Iran. They should be open minded about peaceful opportunities and dialogue as the ultimate method for solving the Kurdish problem and attaining the right of self determination.

In southern Kurdistan:

The world attention on the Kurds started in the aftermath of the Halabja massacre and reached its climax during the 1991 exodus. An opportunity has presented itself that in our opinion has not been fully appreciated or taken advantage of by the Kurdish leadership. A sizable area with about 65% of the population of southern Kurdistan are free today. They are protected by international powers that are unprecedented in history. UN resolutions are in place to continue this protection. Free elections were held under international protection, yet we have not taken adequate steps to ensure and advance our cause.

For 18 months we in KNC have pushed for a unified delegation of the top Kurdish leaders from southern Kurdistan to visit the west and present the Kurdish

cause to the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Kurdish problem is the problem of people whose land has been occupied and will continue to suffer and face genocide unless they are free and have their own independent nation-state.

We are puzzled why the elected Kurdish leaders march to Washington with the so called Iraqi opposition when who are not even called such the Iraqis and could not form a unified Kurdish delegation. While we sympathize with all oppressed people and support their struggle for freedom including the Arabs of Iraq under Saddam, we firmly believe that the Kurdish problem is not of Saddam's creation but it is a conflict that has come about and will continue due to foreign domination. As we have indicated in our publications, this is the time to seize the opportunity and take firm steps toward independence. The elected Kurdish parliament should draft a new constitution and should declare sovereignty and then submit the new constitution to a general referendum. Joining Iraqi delegations to present the Kurdish cause will only weaken our cause and dilute it in such a way that soon after Saddam's downfall the protection will be removed and the Kurdish problem will no longer be of international concern and will become an internal Iraqi problem.

Ladies and gentlemen, the secret to our success is unity. Opportunities have presented themselves in the past and were wasted because our people were not united. We can see how some forces in the region are trying to create inter-Kurdish conflicts and return us to those dark days when Kurds were fighting each other instead of their enemies. Let us band together for the sake of our people and continue the struggle until every Kurd is free and Kurdistan is independent.

## **Did We Again Miss the opportunity? What should we do now** **Asad Khailany**

Mr. President  
Distinguish Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Our Kurdish Nation, like any other nation, should have the right to self determination including the right to create an independent Kurdistan government in the united free Kurdistan.

The struggle of the Kurdish nation for its national rights has been long and difficult. In spite of our tremendous sacrifices and determination for survival being among the highest of all the nations in the world, there is still not an independent Kurdistan. In fact there is not even a recognized free Kurdish entity in any part of Kurdistan. The current situation of the Kurdish people is a clear confirmation that the struggle of the Kurdish people is not on the right track and Kurdish leadership has made a number of wrong decisions and mistakes.

In this presentation I would like to highlight a few opportunities which our Kurdish people did not take advantage of to exercise their right of self determination and to declare an independent Kurdistan government, the true goal of every Kurd.

To my knowledge in addition to the current demand of the Kurdish revolution in northern Kurdistan, the last time Kurds asked for an independent Kurdistan was in the 1920's with the Kurdish revolution under the leadership of Sheikh Mahmood Hafeed Zada in southern Kurdistan declaring an independent Kurdistan; and the demands of the Kurdish people in northern Kurdistan for an independent Kurdistan in 1922. Sheikh Mahmood missed the opportunity then by declaring his opposition to the British Colonialists and not trying to get their support for an independent Kurdistan. The famous saying of Sheikh Mahmood "The crown which will be put on my head by British

I will put under my feet” was a clear indication to the British that the Kurds would not serve British policy and interests in the region.

As far as I know all Kurdish revolutions which were led by the late Kurdish legendary leader Mula Mustafa Barzani did not publicly and openly asked for an independent Kurdistan. Through my association with Barzani in 1958-1964 I firmly believe that Barzani believed that the only true solution for the Kurdish problem was an independent Kurdistan. Yet at the beginning, all the publicly declared demands of Barzani’s revolutions were to improve the situation of the Kurds specifically, the situation in the local areas where the uprising started. This became so confusing that one of the Kurdish civil servants, writer Marouf Jiawook (see his book Barzan Al Muzloma “ the Deprived Barzan”) in a memorandum to the Iraqi ministry of interior recommended that the uprising would be settled if Barzani was appointed as the local governor (Qaimqam) of Rawanduz and the local governor of Zibar to be a Barzani as well. On the other hand, Kurdish intellectual and political parties who were struggling for Kurdish national rights and independence saw Barzani’s uprising as a true Kurdish revolution for independence. For that reason many Kurdish intellectuals, Kurdish officers and political parties joined the revolution under the leadership of Barzani. However the revolution failed and missed the opportunity to assimilate all these intellectual, technical and political cadres to create a strong organization which could lead the revolution. Further the Kurdish revolution did not pay much attention to the international community or to the British, who were in firm control in Iraq. The Iraqi regime with direct help from the British were able to force Barzani and all his forces out of occupied Iraqi Kurdistan in 1944. I believe that the experience of the thirties and early forties convinced Barzani he needed to have a Kurdish political party to support his future revolutions. For that reason he decided to found Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Iraq. In 1946, the only

newly created regimes which could survive were those who clearly sided with either the western powers or with the communist countries. The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad was created in 1945 and even though they declared their independence they were inclined to negotiate to settle for autonomy. The Kurdish Republic in Mahabad was in the middle yet to a certain extent was supported by the Soviet Union, yet the regime did not declare the communism as its base nor did it try to establish a better relationship with the western powers or adopt their system. Thus the newly created republic was an entity neither east or west felt truly belonged or would represent their interest in the area. Thus both the allies and Soviet Union felt that it was not in their best interest to keep it alive.

One of the opportunities which we missed was in 1958 when the Iraqi regime was overthrown by General Kasim on July 14, 1958. Because KDP was not strong enough, and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) was better organized, ICP immediately raised the banner that separatists are traitors and Iraqi integrity should be preserved. Soon KDP leadership caved to the pressure of the ICP and declared that KDP was truly against disintegration of the Iraqi unity, and all separatists are the agents of imperialism. This policy was adopted by KDP before Barzani returned to Iraq from Russia in the fall of 1958 after spending 12 years in exile.

In September 1961 a Kurdish revolution under the leadership of General Barzani began against the regime of General Kasim. This revolution made the regime of General Kasim so weak that a few Baathist officers were able to overthrow it on February 8, 1963. It was here that we missed the best opportunity we had as of yet. From 1958 until 1963 the ICP was a strong supporter of General Kasim. Most of this time ICP was against a Kurdish revolution. Before the Baathist came to power in 1963, the KDP decided to open a dialogloue with the Baath Party. The first cooperation between the KDP and the Baath Party was the Strike of The Iraqi Taxi Drivers. In January 1963 the

Baath Party asked for a serious negotiation with the KDP. A delegation of KDP made up of myself, Salih Yousifi and Abdul Hussein Faily had the first meeting with a Baath Party delegation headed by Ali Salih Al Saadi (secretary general of Iraqi Baath Party, who later became deputy Prime minister and minister of interior) in February 1963. At that meeting, both parties agreed on the removal of General Kasim from power and they agreed that the national rights of the Kurds should be recognized by any future Iraqi government. The detail of how these rights would be recognized and what would be the next Iraqi government was postponed for the next meeting to be held on the following Tuesday. On Friday the Baath Party took over the radio and TV stations and declared the end of the regime of Kasim. The Baath Party was very weak and they badly needed our support. We, the KDP leadership in Baghdad assembled in one of our underground centers in Kazimain. Soon the Baath Party contacted us and wanted us to meet with them. A member of the political Bureau of KDP, who was also responsible for the KDP organization in Baghdad and the southern part of Iraq, went to the radio station along with two other KDP members not from the leadership. They were reminded not to sign anything with the Baathists, or give them any support, or recognition until it was cleared with the KDP leadership in Baghdad and with the KDP political Bureau. After they left we were busy making plans on how to take advantage of the current situation, specifically in those days the KDP had a good support base in Baghdad, when suddenly a cable signed by the member of our political Bureau who was heading our delegation declaring Kurdish support to the new regime was read on the radio station in Baghdad. We were all very surprised and shocked. When they came back, the member of the political Bureau said that he was ready to take responsibility for his actions and he believed that Baathists would recognize all Kurdish rights. Before that cable was read there was a stiff resistance to the Baath uprising, specifically in the Kurdish area in Baghdad. However when people heard

that announcement everyone thought everything was agreed on. Even then there still was an opportunity because the Iraqi army was completely demoralized, with most of the officers against the Baath regime. They thought we had an agreement with the Baath regime and they were ready to surrender to our Peshmerga. However, the political leadership did not take advantage of disarming all the army units who had been fighting them and were now depending on us to protect them. We should have disarmed all these units in the name of the new regime. Instead we extended greetings and friendly invitations to each other. We missed this big opportunity because of the simplicity of our leaders and because our leaders were not used to a democratic environment and consultation with other party members and experts in the area. In 1970 the Baath regime recognized many rights of the Kurdish people, including the right to have a very limited self rule in a form of autonomy within the Iraqi frame. In the eyes of the Turks and Iranians such a Kurdish entity was a threat to their regimes. Therefore they immediately planned to work hard to make sure that any such agreement would not last. The Iranian regime had a territorial disagreement with the Iraqi regime. The Iranians sought Kurdish support and loyalty to them. However, General Barzani who was the supreme undisputed Kurdish leader at that time did not trust the Iranians. Therefore the Iranian enlisted the US to try to get the support of the Kurdish leader. At the same time the Baath regime strengthened its power and decided to back out of the agreement with the KDP. Barzani trusted the US and did not ask for open support including support from the UN in order to solve the Kurdish problem and at the same time did not play the political game with the Baath regime. When the Baath regime became very weak it decided to make concessions to the Iranian regime rather than to the Kurds. The Iranian and the US betrayed the Kurds after they achieved what they wanted. One thing that we should remember is that in the future, in any agreement or deal we make with any government, we should make sure that

both parties are committed to the agreement publicly.

In the 1980s we failed to take the advantage of the Iraq - Iran war. To date, our biggest lost opportunity was in April 1991 when the entire world opinion was behind and for the Kurdish people. After the exodus Kurds should have declared an independent Kurdistan because that is the only way Kurds can live in peace and tranquility. The Kurdish leadership in southern Kurdistan failed to do that, instead they trusted the regime of Baath again and negotiations started between them and the Baath regime. The event proved to be a costly mistake because the negotiations failed. Our latest opportunity which was lost was in October 1991, when the Iraqi regime withdrew from Kurdistan, quit paying the salary of the government employees, and established an economic embargo on Kurdistan. Kurds should have immediately declared an independent Kurdistan, because the action of the Iraqi government was a clear declaration that Kurdistan is a separate entity and does not belong to Iraq.

### **ADDRESS TO KURDISH NATIONAL CONGRESS BY: NURI MEDYALI KURDISTAN FORUM**

Before I begin, I would like to thank the KNC for giving me this opportunity to speak. I congratulate the KNC for setting up this conference and bringing together so many Kurds from so many parts of North America, and from so many backgrounds.

We Kurds are now facing a rare and precious opportunity to take major steps toward freedom and independence. The Gulf War and its aftermath, the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and changes in Eastern Europe have come together to create this opportunity, which we may never see again in our lifetimes.

Unfortunately, our enemies are well-practiced in paralyzing us, even when

circumstances seem to be in our favor. In the past, our oppressors have been very skillful at deterring our unity and they have done so time after time during the past century. Again and again, our oppressors-the British, Turks, Persians and Arabs -have successfully used the strategy of divide and conquer against us. And even though we are very large in number, are known to be great warriors, still we have been defeated over and over by this strategy. Unfortunately, today we are again pawns in the hands of our enemies, and our leaders, instead of unifying us, are actually helping our enemies along. Yesterday, it was Iran, Iraq and Syria; today, Turkey is openly using Kurds against Kurds. At the outset of this initiative, the Turkish president Turgut Ozal said "After all, everybody is using Kurds. Why not Turks".

Recently one of our leaders, during a visit to Turkey, made the following comment: "Any Kurd born in democratic Turkey should consider himself/herself fortunate". The Kurdish reality in Turkey tells us that this statement is false. But even worse, it shows a dangerous disunity among our people.

The Kurdish reality in Turkey is, in fact, one of denial, forced assimilation, torture and murder. In Turkey today, use of the Kurdish language is still forbidden in schools and broadcasting, and Kurdish parties and organizations are prohibited. Even the use of the colors of the Kurdish flag is not permitted. Turkish-occupied Kurdistan is controlled by the Turkish army, which practices state terror against the Kurds. In the past six months more than 63 intellectuals, including six journalists who were reporting on the Kurdish situation, have been assassinated by death squads sponsored by the Turkish government. And most of us have heard about the bloody events of this year's Newroz, when Turkish soldiers shot and killed scores of unarmed Kurdish men, women and children.

This supposedly "democratic" Turkish government is now in the process of trying to close down the People's Labor Party

(the HEP), which sent twenty-two Kurdish deputies to the Turkish parliament in the last elections. This same so-called "democracy" regularly practices torture in its jails-as documented by Helsinki Watch in numerous reports, including one published in June of this year-particularly against Kurds and others arrested for political crimes.

As the Turkish president himself stated, Turkey's main purpose is to use Kurds-not to help or protect them. To gain the full benefits of changes in the region and Central Asia Turkey needs to quiet down Kurdish aspirations. Since they have not been able to achieve this objective alone, now they are calling upon the leaders of southern Kurdistan. They have provided them with offices in Turkey, handed them Turkish passports and armed them with their own false rhetoric of anti-PKK slogans.

In spite of the suffering of 15 million Kurds in northern Kurdistan, our leaders from southern Kurdistan have played into the hands of the Turks. They have saved their criticism for the very group that those 15 million now see as their only hope for freedom-the Kurdish Workers Party, or "PKK".

The PKK does deserve to be criticized. However, it is absolutely necessary for us to recognize that the PKK has dug down to the roots of our oppression. They have succeeded in identifying the primordial loyalties that hinder us, and in breaking down the tribal mentality that allowed our enemies to divide us. By "primordial loyalties" I am referring to tribal, family and other ties that have prevented Kurds from seeing ourselves as a nation, and from acting together in our own interest. The PKK has now united millions of Kurds behind one banner. In the last elections, 22 Kurdish deputies known to be aligned with the PKK were popularly elected to the Turkish parliament. PKK fighters-who for the first time in history include women as well as men-have devoted themselves to the cause with unlimited self-sacrifice and loyalty, and the Kurdish people have embraced them as

their liberators.

We would like to congratulate our people in the south for their achievement in carrying out the first-ever free election in Kurdistan. What a tragedy it would be if the people of southern Kurdistan, now starting to administer their own territory with a democratically elected parliament, and the Kurdish movement in the north, with its passion, dedication and popular support, were to turn against each other. And how glad our enemies will be to see the Kurds fighting against each other once again. How relieved they will be - in Baghdad, Ankara, Teheran, and elsewhere- to see these two threatening developments cancel each other out.

We recognize the realities faced by southern Kurdistan. It is necessary to have an opening at the border with Turkey for supplies, and to gain Turkey's cooperation with the allied forces in protecting the Kurds in the south. We share their desire for a self-governing Kurdish entity free from outside domination. But these aims should never lead to the betrayal of the PKK, meaning the Kurds in the north. We appeal to our leaders to recognize and reconsider this misjudgment before our opportunity for progress is lost.

We also appeal to the KNC through this historic gathering keeping in mind Kurdistan's rich diversity- to help us find the way to unity. We must remember that to succeed we must have tolerance, communication, respect, democracy and unity. We would like to express our strong desire to work together. We need deeds and not words to move in the same direction together.

### **Current Situation In Southern Kurdistan Mohamad Sinjari**

Ladies and Gentlemen  
Dear guests

Two days ago I returned from Southern

Kurdistan. Through my contacts with Kurdish authorities I came to the conclusion that the economic difficulties they are facing are their main problem. Many of the humanitarian organizations which visited Kurdistan encouraged people to return to their villages and to rebuild their homes, however for whatever reason, did not provide sufficient help to them to rebuild their homes. Many tens of thousands of these families are still living in tents waiting for materials to rebuild their homes. Food and medical supplies have decreased tremendously, specifically since the end of June 1992. These humanitarian organizations depended completely on themselves and did not ask or permit the help and cooperation of the Kurdish authorities to distribute these supplies. For this reason the distribution was not well organized and in a few cases were unfairly distributed.

The lack of fuel caused tremendous problems specifically in hospitals, schools and other public places. In addition to that people started cutting trees for cooking and if the situation continues like this there will be no trees left including fruit trees. I have heard that the UN is buying fuel and other products from Iraq in hard currency and the government of Dictator Saddam Hussien is forcing the UN to pay \$3.7 US Dollars for each Iraqi Dinnar. As all of us know that right now one Iraqi Dinnar is only 4 US cents. This implies that Iraq makes 90 folds profit from forcing the UN to pay them in the US Dollars.

This means that if the 20 million Dollars allocated for humanitarian help to Kurds, Saddam Hussein will get \$19.6 million and Kurds share will be only 0.4 Million. Therefore we have to work hard to ask the international organization to deal directly with Kurdish authorities and send all the humanitarian help through countries other than Iraq and directly to the Kurdistan Red Crescent Organization.

## **Address to the 5th Annual conference of the Kurdish National Congress of North America**

**Hiwa Nazhadian**

Good Afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome to the fifth national conference of the Kurdish National Congress of North America. I would like to thank KNC members for arranging this conference for this year's national congress for the first time in Canada. It provides the opportunity for Canadians to hear and see the Kurds and their plight directly from the subjected people.

Every year we have speakers from different parts of Kurdistan which takes a good part of the day. Hopefully and not in the distant future, we will all have one voice talking about a united and democratic free Kurdistan. But the time being I will try to focus your attention of the Iranian part and I will express my opinion on the situation.

There are eight million Kurds in Iran which comprise 16% of the population. The Kurds also occupy about 20% of the total land in Iran. The area is rich in mineral deposits and water, a scarce commodity in the Middle East. In spite of that almost no industry exists and the majority of Kurds are pushed to hold on to their ancient trade of agriculture, while a few work for local government offices.

Poverty, unemployment, poor sanitation and health, pressure from the security forces and government officials, are all beyond the limits of tolerance and for the reason struggle for freedom has a long history. It has been off and on up to the establishment of the Islamic regime and it has continued ever since.

The ignorance and shortsightedness of the new rulers in Tehran left no room for hope for the minorities, especially for the Kurds. Although from the surface, the anti-monarchy uprising in Iran led by the clergies in regions other than Kurdistan

seemed to be religious with all religious banners and slogans and of course leadership, in essence it was a nationalist struggle for power.

The uprising which led to the fall of monarchy, called by many as the Iranian revolution, did not revolutionize anything, at least not for the better. Iran, besides the Persians is a country of five other minorities, The Kurds, Azeris, Baluchis, Turkmens and Arabs with no power in the government affair and no linguistic, cultural or political rights during the monarchy, basically remained the same. The new regime had no plan in mind to improve the life of the citizens in any form or shape.

The new regime did change some aspects of life however. Since it was claimed to be a regime based on the Islamic theology, and just like we see in Afghanistan, the women were the first victims. They were forced to practically perish from the face of the society, veiled from head to toe, back to homemakers life, with no social power and they became practically prisoners of their sex.

The second victims were the minorities. The Kurds with their long history of struggle for freedom were becoming a sore in the eyes of the new rulers. Since autonomy for the Kurds would possibly encourage other minorities to follow suit, and it was not on the regimes agenda to make any reform, they thought of the newly revived Kurdish movement as a pretext for decentralization of power in Tehran. The regime mobilized the army and civilian volunteers under the pretext of war against the communists, atheists and agents of foreign powers.

The struggle reached its peak in the early 80's with a toll of more than 50,000 lives on the Kurdish side alone. Today, the level of operations is substantially decreased, mainly due to split between Kurdish organizations, the weak state of the economy and most importantly, the lack of international support.

Kurds in Iran are now suffering from

skyrocketing inflation and unemployment, fear of army units and secret police who are present in all cities, towns, and villages. Persecution, imprisonment and torture of those suspected of collaboration with the opposition parties are commonplace. But most of all the Kurds suffer from lack of a strong and influential leadership. A leadership that can unite the majority of the people under one flag, and who can confront the outdated tribal mentality which nowadays transforms into political factionalism.

The fact is that tribal mentality and feudalism thinking is not a problem only for the Kurds. The Persians who have been ruling Iran for the past 2500 years, and did not suffer national and cultural discriminations as the Kurds do, are infected with the same disease.

It is the feudalism thinking and tribal mentality that makes the central authorities feel insecure and paranoid about the smallest national and human rights the minorities are asking for. Otherwise, Iran, a mosaic of nations, could have been much stronger and prosperous if and only if all minorities were treated equally and felt they are a part of the national structure. It is like a corrupt company in which the executives are drawn in nepotism and cronyism, consequently the employees feel no sympathy for the well being of the operation. The firm will ultimately go bankrupt.

The Kurds proposed autonomy plan in an eleven point document to the regime in 1979. The main focus was that Kurdish be the official language in Kurdistan and local people controlling administration and police forces and the justice system. Another point indicated that the region be awarded their fair share of the revenue from taxes and oil, to be spent on education, health and technology. On the other hand, monetary issues, foreign policy and international borders be in the control of the central government.

What the Kurds had in mind for autonomy was nothing more than basic rights of every ethnic group. After all the Kurds

are the original people in the area long before any ethnic group that rule them. they are not strangers to be treated like refugees.

In the early days of the Iran-Iraq war, the Kurds in Iran proposed to the regime that if their autonomy is respected, they would fight side by side with the army and against the Iraqi aggression. The proposal and of course the autonomy plan were rejected. Apparently any quest from minorities seem to threaten the "whole existence of the government" anywhere in the Middle East and right from the beginning it has been dealt with harshly and without regard to international agreements.

Unfortunately, the international laws regarding ethnic minority rights are often vague and incomplete and in practice have not gone beyond the edges of a sheet of paper.

But the Kurdish question in Iran should be looked upon more than just a local problem. Kurds are the single largest nation in the world who not only lack a statehood, but they are divided among five countries with millions in diaspora. Particularly in a region like the Middle East where at the end of WWI boundaries were drawn apparently in the darkness, only to suit the interest of the dividers.

When national interest is concerned, humanitarian issues, ethics and human rights are all ignored. In 1988 when the Iraqi regime bombed Hajabja with chemical weapons and murdered more than 6,000 people, it was in the "interests of the international communities" to keep silent. Ridiculous isn't it? Throughout the 80's Iran and Iraq used chemical bombs of different kinds against the Kurds in a few occasions which the international media ignored. This silence was viewed as a sort of acceptance by the international community, so the crimes continued against the Kurds at a larger and larger scale. Indeed the worst enemy of our cause has been the international silence.

One of the major events of the past few

years that directly and heavily involved the Kurds was the war against Iraq by the coalition of 29 countries under the United Nations umbrella. The reason was the invasion of Kuwait and the human sufferings of the Kuwaiti people under occupation, as they say.

The Kurds were encouraged in this game, to rise up against Iraqi authorities. So far we have witnessed a number of occasions when we have been used by one country or another for their purposes, this time by the United Nations and the US. The Kurds were savagely attacked by the regime at the end of the Desert Storm, and yet the coalition decided to let Saddam to continue his reign of terror, on the advice from Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

Turkey, does not want to see an independent Kurdistan on their southern borders because they have created a problem of their own with the Kurds. Until about a year ago they would not even admit our existence, then they suddenly allowed us to sing in Kurdish!

Saudis, although they might be against Iraq tactically, do not want the break up of an Arab state. For one reason, the break down of a dictator could affect his counterparts, but more important is the prevalence of Arab nationalism.

Throughout the 70s, 80s, and 90's where the Kurds suffered most from the Iraqi oppression, there was not a word of sympathy from an Arab state while the Kurds are Muslims like the Arabs. They have been more sympathetic to the oppressor than to the victims.

Recent fighting in the Muslim state of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Yugoslavia has prompted the Saudi cargo jets to fly nonstop to take food and medicine for their "Muslim brothers and sisters". Their struggle is of course, not against an Arab state, more correctly not against Arab nationalism.

The idea of an Arab Shia state in Southern Iraq becoming an Iranian puppet, as is viewed by the West is nonsense. It is

proven over and over that indeed nationalism is a stronger bond than religion in the Middle East. Keeping the above mentioned facts in mind, during the eight years war between Iran and Iraq, in numerous occasions Iran tried to assist the Shiias of Iraq to fight against their regime. In the bloodiest war in the history of both countries when both countries were at their lowest financial and moral level, the Iraqi shiias never rose up against their regime.

It was easy for the US, the European and the UN in general to see the fragmentation of the Soviet Union And Eastern Europe. New nations are recognized and admitted to the UN at a rate no one could imagine three years ago.

So in my opinion, a secular Arab state in central and southern Iraq is practical and that would not threaten other states based on having a democratically elected body of representatives. The Kurds in the North can establish a state of their own which is not Turkey's or Iran's best alternatives, but our interest cannot be designed around the desires of other states, especially those hostile to the Kurds.

Middle East is impregnate with many more problems to come which mostly stem from national sovereignty. Hostility among these states is over land, water, and energy resources that don't belong to neither Arabs, Turks nor Persians. They belong to the Kurds.

As a defense and to counter the hostile attitude of the other ethnic groups controlling power in the Middle East and to preserve the integrity of our nation, we have one alternative. This alternative is to struggle under the umbrella of a democratic and progressive ideology that respects the national and social aspirations of the people.

A strive to establish a system that is designed to enhance the life of a people under attack for the past century. A system that respects the rights of other minorities within Kurdistan, as well as the sovereignty of the neighboring states

based on mutual understanding.

The creation of a united democratic Kurdistan not only enhances the well being of the life of 28 million people, but also decreases the problems which the Middle East are now facing and will face in the future.

A united independent Kurdistan provides the countries that now share our land with a more homogeneous social structure, hence less problem and more controllability. The newly established state should be governed by the direct representatives of the people who work for the people. It is in the best interest of the international community to support the Kurds in their struggle for freedom. It is an investment in a future friend in a volatile part of the world.

### **THE KURDISH QUESTION IN OCCUPIED KURDISTAN OF IRAQ**

**Saman Shali**

The Kurds have been crying loudly about the crimes committed against them, against humanity, but no one has listened to the plight of the Kurds.

After the invasion of Kuwait, the world began to notice the outcry of the Kurdish people. Suddenly Saddam become "another Hitler" suddenly the world become human over the fate of Kuwait. The world finally began to understand the tragedy of the Kurds, their brave but betrayed uprising and their deadly mass exodus.

Suddenly, the Kurdish question took a different dimension on the center stage of international politics.

The joy of liberating Iraqi occupied Kurdistan only lasted for two weeks, and it was followed by a mass exodus. The Kurdish leaders attribute the collapse of the uprising to:

1. Mismanagement.

2. The instability of the peoples emotion.
3. Lack of leadership in the beginning of the uprising.
4. Disorganization among the Kurdish parties and the excuses go on and on!!

These are some of their justifications, but the main reason, is misguidance and miscalculation of our leaders.

On February 27, 1991, all the Kurdish leaders and their representatives were in Washington, they put forward all their arguments as to why the American government should help the Kurds, but they failed to gain any support at the time, and they left Washington empty handed.

When they returned to occupied Kurdistan some of the cities were freed, they followed the mass uprising with emotional speeches, encouraging them and promising them rosy days ahead, hiding the facts that the Kurds were alone in their fight without any support. Leaders should lead, not follow.

When our great fighters, the Peshmerga, advanced toward the cities to help the uprising our leaders had no plan whatsoever as to how they would protect the liberated area if the government retaliated. Instead, they grouped the best Peshmergas and proceeded toward the city of Kirkuk.

When the Iraqi army staged a counterattack, we returned from the city after a bloody fight, leaving behind 1600 of our best Peshmerga dead, and we lost the rest of the liberated areas in less than a week. I wonder, after ten months of a free Kurdistan, if we have a plan to defend our liberated area.

But the Kurdish people answered the aggression by leaving everything behind and were toward our old friends, the mountains. The exodus started and thousands and thousands of our children, women, and elderly died. The Kurdish people prefer to live under these unbearable conditions, than living with autonomy under Saddam's regime.

At the time when all the international

community was rallying behind the plight of the Kurds for self-determination, a stunning picture appeared on the Iraqi TV: our leaders were embracing the butcher of Kurdish children. The support of the international community immediately dropped.

The imposed negotiations on the Kurdistan Front have two sides:

1. On one side the Kurds lost a historical chance for an independent Kurdistan.
2. On the other side, over 2.5 million Kurds returned to their homes, 80% of the Iraqi occupied Kurdistan was liberated and the first democratic election was held in Free Kurdistan.

Since October 1991, Saddam has waged an economic war against the Kurdish people, hoping that the Kurds would turn against their leaders and force them to the negotiating table on his terms.

Again the Kurdish people answered the blockade by holding a free election to choose for the first time in our history our true representatives. They chose freedom and democracy over food. The Kurdish election shows the true color of the Kurdish people, they cast their voice for a free Kurdistan and reject the occupation at any price.

The political future and the survival of the Kurdistan Front and the Kurdish leaders in free Kurdistan depends entirely on how effective the parliament will be in their representation of the real interests of the Kurdish people as whole.

The parliament should take control and leadership in its hands with real legislative power. After all, they are the only power elected by the people. the parliament should emphasize three major areas: political, economic, and military.

1. On the political front, the parliament should eliminate the differences between the leadership on the future of Kurdistan, by drafting a constitution to be submitted to a referendum by the people. The parliament should coordinate with the Kurdish leaders and organizations out-

side occupied Kurdistan to promote international support for recognition by the United Nations.

2. Economically the parliament should focus on short and long term plans for economic development by making available the raw material, tools and the technical guidance to rebuild Kurdistan.

3. Unification of the Peshmerga forces under one central command as a unified army, to defend the integrity of the Kurdish people and its territory from the occupier.

Relations with the Iraqi opposition have failed in the past. In December 1990, the Kurdistan Front joined the Joint Action Committee of the manifold Iraqi opposition. After lengthy argument from our leaders, the Iraqi opposition agreed to endorse the March agreement of 1970, as a solution for the Kurdish problem. This coalition quickly broke up after the imposed negotiations between the Kurdistan Front and the Iraqi government. Immediately they labeled the Kurds as traitors.

I wonder, where was the opposition when they gassed the city of Halabja and the Bahdelan area? Where was the opposition when 200,000 Kurds were massacred in the Anfal operations?

In June of this year, the Iraqi opposition met again in Vienna, Austria to debate the future of Iraq. A large number of Kurdish delegations were present, also delegations from the KNC headed by Dr. Karim attended. The KNC agreed to attend the conference after reviewing the initial draft of the invitation indicating the right of the Kurds for separation if they chose it. But at the time of the conference this was turned around and they agreed on the right of the Kurdish people for self-determination within Iraq.

The KNC delegates made it clear to the conference that the right of the Kurds should not be conditioned. the conference voted against this referendum.

It was a big mistake for our delegates to put our national rights up for a vote. Nobody has a right to vote on our national right for a Free Kurdistan, but the Kurds.

Do the Arabs agree that the Jews should vote on the right of the Palestinian for autonomy? On autonomy I quote Hanan Ashrawe, the Palestinian spokeswoman, "We are not a minority in somebody else's country, we are a people with legitimate national rights. Self-government is acceptable only as a first step leading to complete independence."

In Washington the Iraqi opposition within the so-called Iraqi National Congress, succeeded to lobby for the Shiites and gain the support of the American administration more than we did. the Kurdish question lost its momentum when it was discussed within the frame work of a greater Iraq.

In conclusion:

1. The Kurdistan Front must give more legislative power to the Kurdish parliament and introduce this elected body to the international community as the sole representative of the Kurdish people.
2. In any agreement with the Iraqi government or the Iraqi opposition, they must agree up front that Kurdistan includes Aqra, Sinjair, Kifri, Kalar, Khanaqin, Mandale, and of course, the city of Kirkuk. I remember on April 1, 1975 when I met Mr. Mullah Mustafa Barzani (god bless his soul) in Nakhada in Iran, he said the biggest mistake we made was to leave several points in the March 1971 agreement for negotiation at a later date, and he said: "Kurdistan without Kirkuk is like a river without fish". Let us make no mistake: no leader has the right to give up and inch of occupied Kurdistan at any price to our occupier. Are we going to repeat the mistakes of the past, or are we going to learn from our history?

3. If the Kurdistan Front wants to stay within the framework of the Iraqi state, let them insist on changing the name of the Republic of Iraq to the United Republic of Iraq, reflecting the unity between the two nations.

4. We should not ask the Iraqi opposition to come to Kurdistan and establish a base of operations so that they can bring down Saddam's regime. Because when Saddam's tanks move, they will move toward Kurdistan and the bombs will kill our children and destroy our homes.

5. The Kurdish leaders seldom speak with one voice. Now, more than ever, a coordinated policy is desperately needed.

the freedom of free Kurdistan depends on the strength of the Kurds and their leaders. There is only one way for the Kurds to go toward a FREE UNITED KURDISTAN.

#### AN APPEAL:

In the name of the Kurdish children of Halabja, Bahdelan, the infamous Anfal operations and the deadly mass exodus, and in the name of all Kurdish martyrs "I appeal to Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani to put their differences aside, to put their hunger for power aside. You are tearing our nation apart. We need unity, we need your leadership to carry our flag toward a Free Kurdistan."

### Planning for Development & Reconstruction of Kurdistan Jamal Fuad

Mr. Chairman, Dear Friends from Kurdistan, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First I would like to thank the Chairman and the organizers of this conference for inviting me to speak on the reconstruction and development of Iraqi Kurdistan. This conference could not have come at a better time: We have just had a free and

democratic election, unusual in our part of the world. All parties have joined hands in the formation of a government to take the responsibilities of running the day-to-day affairs of the Kurdish region. We are all proud of these steps. Now the time has come to free the hands of this infant government to do what it can for the people who have suffered over many years at the hands of the Dictator Saddam Hussein. This infant Government needs not only the full support of the Kurdish people, but also it needs the support of the international community to help it grow and mature in a natural way. It needs the care, guidance and protection from all concerned.

Ladies and gentlemen:

I believe that we have talked enough of the devastation caused by the Saddam regime in Iraqi Kurdistan. We are grateful to the international community who came to the aid of the Kurds after the end of the Gulf War. During the catastrophic flight of over two millions Kurds to the borders of Turkey and Iran, the international community helped a great deal to decrease the sufferings of the men, women and children, through provision of food and shelter. However in spite of this mammoth effort, the Kurds suffered about a thousand casualties every single day. Indeed those days made one fact clear, and that is without a country of our own, such tragedies are bound to recur. The neighboring countries only reluctantly opened up their borders, and only after much pressure from governments and humanitarian organizations supporting the Kurds.

The declaration of the security corridor at the 36 parallel paved the way towards the return of large numbers of the Kurdish masses to the area covered by the Security Zone. However, because this zone only covered 75% of the Iraqi Kurdistan, many internal refugees still remain within our boundary, without being considered refugees as such, since they remain within Kurdistan borders. This is true especially of the inhabitants of Kirkuk and Khanaqin and the vicinity which have remained under the grip of the central

government.

Stages of Rehabilitation:

We have already passed through two stages of rehabilitation. I shall call them Phases I and II. Phase one was marked by immediate need of assistance to lower the mortality rate due to lack of food and shelter. In phase II many refugees returned to settle among the rubbles of their houses that were destroyed and bulldozed by Saddam. They raised their tents where their houses once stood, and made the best of the minimum comfort it provided.

We should remember also that in addition to the internal refugees, there are still over 15,000 refugees in camps located inside Iran and Turkey, under conditions that can hardly be called adequate. So this is the current situation under which we intend to plan a development program for the reconstruction of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Now we are entering a new phase, Phase III. In this phase it is imperative to work towards provision of a sustainable minimum living condition for the inhabitants of the Kurdish region, especially in the rural areas where immediate needs exist for provision of infrastructure and basic tools of production. Unfortunately as mentioned earlier, internal refugees remain a problem. The only solution is to insure their return to their original home through use of the international pressure, to either evict Saddam from those Kurdish cities and villages, or insure their safety under Saddam. However I feel that as long as Saddam reigns in Baghdad, there is little hope that these refugees would attempt to return to their original homes. On the other hand the few who wanted to return, have been barred by Saddam's forces to do so. therefore the economic development of these internal refugees will remain a problem. The problem itself would require a special seminar.

A Development Plan for effective Rehabilitation

I will concentrate now on the topic of the present conference, and that is formation

of a development plan towards reconstruction of the Kurdish region.

As you well know, Saddam aimed at destroying the core of the Kurdish economy and self-reliance. The Baghdad Regime targeted first and foremost the agricultural sector. It destroyed the irrigation canals, cut down the orchards, plugged up the water supply, including drinking wells and springs; it mined the fields, thus forcing the population to abandon their farming enterprises and move to the fringes of towns and cities, becoming de facto immigrants in their own country. I want to mention here that the Baghdad Regime has for a long time working at minimizing the Kurdish economic base. It accomplished this through building of dams, inundating thus wide areas of the most fertile land of Kurdistan, such as the plains of Rania and Shahrazoor, and by various other means: through forced migration of the rural population in the Kirkuk Province; through the settlement of Arab Nomads in Kurdish areas; and through interpreting of the land reform and resettlement laws in a way so as to discriminate against the lawful owners of the lands. Therefore our development plan should aim at strengthening the rural infrastructure, to revive the Kurdish rural life, and to encourage the farmers to go back to their land and secure a decent living for themselves and to the remainder of the Kurdish community.

Steps in the Development Plan:

To insure implementation of an orderly and sound development and rehabilitation program, there are certain planning stages that have to be followed to facilitate securing needed financial support, most of which would probably have to be provided through international assistance.

First we need information. Of course we do have preliminary information on the gross destruction of the Kurdish villages and their infrastructure. We do not have, however, specific information on the number of new villages to be rebuilt, their locations, and the number of inhabitants

of each village, on the basis of which the capacities of schools, clinics, and the energy and water supply systems would be designed. We know that the number of villages destroyed approximates 4,500 villages. Should we plan to rebuild all these villages, or perhaps strategically relocate villages, thus insuring the supply of adequate infrastructure at minimum cost? Personally I think perhaps we can combine each 4-5 villages, and build in their place one village with the provision of adequate services.

Second, based on the initial information and priorities, we have to prepare specific projects for each of the rehabilitation needs: for example one project would identify drinking water needs, another project will identify the number of schools and their types, (elementary, intermediate, and secondary) for each village. Still a third project would identify public areas of mosques, playgrounds, community centers, etc. In each of these projects the number, the capacity, and the costs involved would be identified and presented to interested international agencies in a convincing manner, indicating details of project objectives, its cost estimate, the implementation schedule, the number of beneficiaries, and benefits to be gained from implementing such projects. These projects would be prepared by teams of specialists, such as engineers, economists, agriculturists, recruited locally and internationally, who would lay down the details of each project.

Third, each project should also identify the implementation agency, indicating the organizational structure for the management of the project. There is the need for an over all independent Reconstruction Authority that would supervise all planning and development activities in Kurdistan. Additionally, for each project the sources of other external and internal financing would be identified, including locally available labor, land and materials.

The international agencies ( or Governments), if interested, would like to offer financial assistance for specific projects.

Perhaps some may only be interested in supplying village drinking water systems, another would like to build clinics, and a third might be interested in supplying farming needs such as tools, seeds, fertilizer or pesticides. They would like to see the details of the project. Taking the first example we must specify how many drinking water supplies are needed, their capacities, locations, number of beneficiaries, its cost estimates and its management plan once completed.

Fourth, it is important that the private sector is heavily involved in the development effort for both agricultural and industrial sectors. The Government would mainly be involved in a regulatory capacity. This will insure efficiency and minimize the costs.

Ladies and gentlemen:

Agriculture remains the backbone of our development. We have first to rehabilitate the Kurdish agriculture. We need to restore the confidence of the Kurdish farmer and help him through introduction of modern technologies that would enhance his current low level of productivity per unit of area. We need to support the Kurdish farmer who is our source of economic strength. Our enemies know this and that is why our countryside is devastated and our farmers are in disarray.

We should not neglect our environment. This is an area that requires particular attention. We must protect our natural resources. Our agricultural productivity depends on the protection of our soil and our water resources. Our meager forestry resources are being constantly depleted, leaving the slopes prone to erosion.

In spite of our vast oil resources, the Kurdish rural population has continually depended on trees and shrubs as sources of energy for household needs. There has never been an attempt to facilitate the supply of petroleum energy for use in the rural areas. Instead, successive Regimes in Baghdad have used our oil to buy guns, tanks, planes, and chemical weapons to

destroy and poison our people and our fields. We have to preserve our environment and we should do everything possible to minimize abuse of the countryside. We are in dire need of a project for the preservation of our natural resources. I request that our political leaders pay particular attention to the preservation of the environment that is directly related to the protection of our natural resources of land and water, so important in crop and livestock production.

Rehabilitation of the Agro-industrial and Construction Sectors:

To generate employment and to raise the economic base of the country, we have to rehabilitate the agro-industrial capacity of the region. An example is the rehabilitation of the sugar beet factory, the milling, the tobacco, and the weaving factories located in Kurdistan. Additionally the construction sector, such as brick and cement factories should likewise be rehabilitated. Detailed rehabilitation requirements would have to be prepared, including the identification of the damaged components, sources of spare parts, and a cost estimate of the local and foreign exchange needs, including the economic evaluation of costs involved and benefits gained. In this sector also we are in dire need of a team of technical staff to identify the damages incurred, cost estimates involved, and to recommend repair methodology and source of the spare parts to be procured for its rehabilitation.

Training Needs:

To insure adequate project implementation, a training component would be prepared relative to the project to be implemented, and its management once completed.

Financial Institution

We should also realize that no development can take place without a financial institution to support it. Until such time that we establish a Kurdish National Bank, we must identify a certain European or American bank where an account would

be opened in the name of the Kurdish Regional Government, where all financial assistance funds, project by project, would be deposited. For each project authorized persons would be identified who are allowed to withdraw the funds from such accounts. Donors would be informed periodically for each item for which the funds are withdrawn. The financiers also would receive periodical monitoring reports on the progress of the project. this procedure will increase confidence of the financiers, and would encourage other donors to invest in the rehabilitation of Kurdistan. The involvement of UN agencies will not be overlooked in support for the projects implemented.

**Insuring the Right of Way:**

Last but not the least, Kurdistan is landlocked. Our economic lifeline is constantly threatened by restrictions imposed on the technical and material flow to Iraqi Kurdistan. We are much concerned that this could be exploited by our enemies. Every effort should be exerted to insure free passage of goods and material and technical staff through our international borders. The international community is requested to guarantee this right. The political leadership should emphasize this important requirement of development. Our neighbors have much to gain economically from our development. We should be alert that the development of Southern Kurdistan is not exploited to the disadvantage of other parts of Kurdistan in the region.

**To Summarize:**

- a. We need to carry out a survey and identify projects; details of each project should be prepared, by competent staff, separately, indicating the cost benefit relationship, which would be presented to interested financiers.
- b. Projects would be executed by a competent management, some of whom would be trained for its implementation, and its management when completed.

- c. The rural population would be the focus of development since they are the backbone of the Kurdish economy.
- d. The industrial capacity of the region should be revived to increase employment opportunities and expand the economic base of the Region; private sector would be involved in the rehabilitation and management of these enterprises.
- e. Our natural resources of soil and water are our wealth; we should act to preserve them.
- f. No development can take place without a strong financial support; steps would be taken for the establishment of the National Bank of Kurdistan.
- g. Passage of technical personnel and equipment would be insured through the existing borders, by finding a permanent solution for this problem.

Ladies and gentlemen:

We have a mammoth job ahead of us. We must all unite to accomplish our goals in rebuilding our devastating economy. We have a responsibility towards future generations and must not let another opportunity pass us by.

**LONG LIVE FREE AND UNITED KURDISTAN**

**Refugees and Relief Aids to Kurdistan  
Azad Ali**

I would like to thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me this opportunity to talk about an issue which is very dear to my heart and that is the issue of Kurdish refugees. The issue of the refugees and in particular the children touched me deeply, because I consider children as the most precious gift that God gives us.

As Mr. Fikrat told you that I have been active in talking about the plight of the Kurds in front of churches, universities, schools and anyone who invites me to speak about the Kurds. I simply pick up my slides and go and talk. The response

has been very good. I always find people who are interested in the Kurds and they like to help. I also found that those people like to help through their own churches. For example a person who is Catholic would like his donation to go through the Catholic church or otherwise he/she will not donate if it does not go through his church.

Last year and during the Kurdish exodus after Desert Storm and after watching on TV thousands of Kurds dying everyday, the United Jewish Federation in Pittsburgh along with myself organized a news conference urging the people to help the Kurds. We invited all major religious and political groups in Pittsburgh and they started a relief effort. We also informed the public about the locations of the centers for these relief efforts.

The response from the public was outstanding. Many people called me and asked of how they could help the Kurds. Then the United Jewish Federation contacted the Joint Distribution Committee and informed them of our efforts in order to start a program to help the Kurds. The Joint Distribution Committee in turn contacted the United Jewish Federations in other cities around the US informing them of our efforts and urging them to start similar relief efforts and send the donations to the Joint Distribution Committee. The total money collected from all these efforts exceeded a half of a million dollars. The Joint Distribution Committee started a temporary school in one of the refugee camps in Kurdistan. Since then the Joint Distribution Committee sent toys to the school, wheat seeds and winter clothing through Turkey to the refugee camps.

The winter clothing has not arrived yet because Turkey asked to pay taxes in order to let these clothings to pass through its territory. That is because Turkey is a textile producing country and they impose taxes on any textile products that passes its land. The Joint Distribution Committee is in contact with the United Nations High Commission for Relief in order to solve this problem. They also have some

money left for the Kurds (although not much) and they want a formal detailed written request on how to deliver this money.

It is my intention to continue doing what I have done in the past and Inshaa Allah (God Willing) our efforts will be successful.

I would like to conclude my speech by a statement that I wanted to say for a long time. I take alot of pride in being a member of the KNC. Before joining the KNC I had very few reasons to fell the refugee problem will ever be solved. However, after joining the KNC and after watching how hard everyone is working, now I have many reasons to feel optimistic that not only the refugee problem will be solved but also there will be some time a "United and Free Kurdistan".

Thank you very much.

**AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN KURDISTAN**  
**BY: Dr. Akram Al-Jaff**

We acknowledge that Kurdistan is endowed with rich natural resources, such as rich soil in its valleys, sufficient rain-falls in most of its territories, several permanently flowing rivers, a temperate climate, and of course good Kurdish farmers and herdsman. All these should support an intensive system of agriculture production, if only a sound agriculture policy was followed. Because Kurdistan is divided among four hostile states, naturally the central planning machinery in these countries have neglected the development priority needs in the Kurdish areas. A few industries which have been established by central government are only to benefit areas outside of Kurdistan. That's why the Kurdish population is generally dependent for their daily livelihood on items both imported and locally produced coming from either Ankara, Baghdad, Tehran, or Damascus. the economic embargo against liberated

Kurdish areas in Iraq is a vivid example of the vulnerability of the population who depends on outside resources for its daily needs.

I do not intend to dwell on these points, nor on the assistance that is required, but here I would like to highlight a few points which could make up a broad base for agricultural development and contribute to an integrated approach for economic development of Kurdistan. The ideal situation would be to draw a development plan that covers the greater Kurdistan to make economic development as effective as possible. this is because economic development for regions that are heavily dependent on agriculture should be planned in a way to avoid duplication, have access to easy transportation, and have marketing and storage facilities.

We cannot talk about water resources in any part of Kurdistan without studying the water resources throughout greater Kurdistan. The tributaries of the Tigris and the Euphrates, which make up the bulk of water resources in the Near East, are all in Kurdish territories. In Turkey alone, there are plans to build 13 dams on the tributaries of the Euphrates, and as many on the Tigris. When work on these dams is completed, Turkey is planning to pipe the water and sell it to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. Recall that Kurdistan was divided after the First World War because Petroleum was found in its territories, and as a consequence the Kurdish population faced misery, hunger, war, and genocide. Now my fear is that in the twenty-first century, water resources will play the same role, if not greater, as petroleum did in this century.

Now, having said this, and since we cannot plan for greater Kurdistan, we should be realistic and follow regional planning for its various parts. While it is possible to push forward agricultural development with modest investment and effective marketing and price policies, it is rather difficult to build and expand an industrial base without heavy investment. That is why the central governments had shied away from such types of investment. As

a consequence Kurdistan remained backward and underdeveloped. The lack of adequate education and health services have aggravated the situation further, let alone the repeated aggressions from the Western-backed armies of the occupiers of Kurdistan.

While we welcome the high rate of Kurdish population increase at present, let me warn you that unless there is a good balance between population increase and economic growth, there always will be a great exodus of population out of Kurdistan. Millions of Kurds now live outside Kurdistan because they are seeking better job opportunities and hence better living conditions. Unless a vigorous and sustainable economic development plan is followed, the situation will get out of control. There are great opportunities for the private sector to play an active role in this endeavor. Of course in order to attract private investments, political stability and a clearly defined economic development policy are among the major prerequisites.

Kurdistan in Iraq has been destroyed as a result of continued war and destruction. What is needed is a new Marshall Plan. We know that after the second world war, Europe was rebuilt through the US-backed Marshall Plan. For example, reconstruction of the major highways, railroads, and other infrastructures in Italy created millions of job opportunities for the Italian rural population. A similar approach to rebuild Kurdistan is needed now.

We need to open job opportunities for millions of Kurds who are jobless or partly engaged in traditional agropastoral practices. One of the major problems facing Kurdish communities throughout greater Kurdistan is unemployment. A visitor to Kurdish towns and villages cannot help observing this phenomenon. Tea houses, and roads are full of young men (of course young women are at home because of cultural and religious reasons). We must create employment opportunities; this can be accomplished through privatization of major economic activities which at present are carried out by

government. The government should only be involved with heavy industries, infrastructures and public services. Transitional business and processing of some specific products such as cotton tobacco, sugar, etc. should be encouraged. It is imperative that marketing activities have an impact on poor and underdeveloped areas, roads, transport vehicles, storage and distribution facilities, processing technologies and materials, information access, and communications.

Now let us turn to the major elements in agricultural production for Iraqi Kurdistan:

### 1. The Land Tenure:

The Agrarian reform which started in 1958 in Iraqi Kurdistan did not make the farmers more productive, nor did it improve their living conditions. This was because the reform was implemented without proper support services and a clearly defined price policy. Our critic says that the Agrarian reform achievement was given back to Aghas and Landlords by the leaders of the Political Parties during the 60's and 70's. Of course this subject needs a much more detailed discussion, which I hope the democratic legislative body in Kurdistan would undertake.

There must be a new approach in land ownership in order to bring practical solutions to production since the suitable lands in many parts of Kurdistan are insufficient for a political distribution which was anticipated during the last 35 years.

We should encourage cooperative movement along the line practiced in several Western European countries. Political slogans should be discouraged, while incentives for foreign investments should be encouraged, which is essential in making agriculture development successful. The valleys of Kurdistan could attract substantial foreign investments if political stability and understanding of central government prevails. The vast areas in Dashti-Hawler, Rania, Sharazoor,

and Bazian, are all suitable for large schemes of agricultural projects.

### II. The Role of Women in Agricultural Production:

It is well known that Kurdish women are performing the lead role in agriculture production. In addition to raising a family of several children, doing the housework, baking the daily bread, hand-washing clothing and household effects, and sometimes hauling water for the family for several kilometers. In addition to all this strenuous labor, they carry out certain agricultural operations, such as milking sheep, goats and cows, seeding crops and vegetables, weeding field and thrashing harvested crops. They also participate actively in Tobacco harvesting, threading and curing of its leaves. In factories, the bulk of work is usually carried out by women.

Unfortunately, throughout the Middle East, the role of women in agricultural production is taken for granted. Male chauvinism has forced certain farm work to be specialized only for women. This also stems partly from certain social and tribal traditions. The education of women is lagging behind the meager education opportunities available for males. Nevertheless, all these constraints have not stopped Kurdish women in participating actively in the struggle for liberation not only by sheltering and feeding the Peshmergas, but also through political activities and demonstrations.

In order to improve agricultural production, we must redefine the role of women. The first step is to give every female child the opportunity to go to school up to the university level. At the same time, we should establish vocational training centers in various villages to train women on family planning to enable them to raise healthy children and reduce child mortality. A survey was carried out by FAO in a Kurdish region in Turkey that showed the average weight of a child at birth to be 3.5 to 4.0 kilograms; the child mortality rate in the same region was very high during the first year of the child's life.

This indicates that thanks to a diet based on animal protein, and the strength of a Kurdish woman, a healthy child was born into this cruel world only to die a few months later because of the poor living conditions, and the lack of health care, and the poor sanitary conditions.

All this serves to reinforce the point that women are a neglected segment in Kurdish societies, like many other Middle Eastern and Third World societies. Therefore, unless women are educated and fully integrated in economic and family life, no real progress should be expected in advancing our development strategies.

### III. Research, Development and Agriculture Education:

In order to have any progress in agriculture development, a strong agricultural research policy is needed. Well-staffed and well-equipped agriculture colleges are also essential to bring up a generation of scientists to carry out the continuous research requirements in various agriculture fields. In addition to these scientific and academic institutions, good vocational agricultural training schools are needed in various parts of Kurdistan in order to prepare a new generation of Kurdish farmers who can participate actively in the new era of agricultural development.

Unfortunately, present university education is highly academic and theoretical, and it has therefore produced college graduates with no practical experience. As a result they all seek government employment rather than going back and serving their communities. At the same time manpower planning is required in order to correctly set the educational priorities. In the past, Kurdish students have been discriminated against in entering universities and colleges in fields such as medicine, military, and engineering. The University of Sulaymania was closed, and a weak, understaffed, and a poorly financed university was set up in Arbil to become another organ for the regime's propaganda purposes. Re-

search and university institutions contribute positively in closing the gap between living standards in rural and urban communities. It is disappointing to see a college graduate who can not go back to his village because his community can not offer him or her the basic living standards which are enjoyed by city dwellers.

There should also be youth clubs for both men and women to participate actively in various aspects of agriculture production such as poultry raising, bee keeping, vegetable growing, milk production, wool, and carpet weaving. All these activities must not have any political strings attached from Baghdad.

#### IV. Marketing and Price Policy:

The determination point for poverty in the World Bank's development report for 1990 was an annual income of 370 US Dollars. Defining poverty in money terms raises many questions: the value to be set on a house and subsistence production; the cost of the essentials that must be purchased in the country, the exchange rate applicable, etc. In some countries the poverty measured by calorie intake below 2100 calories per day with associated low access to health services, housing and water supply. Since Kurdistan is a disaster-prone area, not only politically, but also naturally (earthquakes and floods), these situations have caused migrations outside of Kurdish territories. In Turkey, quite a large segment of the Kurdish population has been resettled in Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, and Adana. 25% of Baghdad's population are Kurdish. The reason for this migration is poor living conditions. We need to make Kurdistan economically strong and viable so it can sustain an economic growth.

Of course this can not be accomplished easily unless Kurdistan is free, stable and unified. However until that time, we must work closely with freedom loving nations to help us through regional planning. In general terms the integrated approach to rural development should include:

1. Improved access to land and irrigation to make agriculture more productive. Kurdistan is full of small streams and water springs in addition to major rivers. These water resources must be tapped to the maximum in order to increase the irrigated area under cultivation.
2. Better access to inputs, market and related services. This requires state investment and credit and banking facilities for the private sector, in order to become more involved in economic development. Many of the existing laws need to be changed in order to encourage private enterprise both locally and internationally.
3. Provision of advice and training on improved agricultural production methods.
4. Development of non-farm rural activities.

Kurdish farmers usually encounter many difficulties in selling their agricultural and animal products. Now that the landlords have disappeared it is usually the middle man who reaps the hard work of the farmer. There are no appropriate marketing facilities in Kurdistan. The government responsibility is to adopt a price policy which guarantees the farmer a fair and comfortable income. We can cite two examples where farmers successfully produced cash crops because they knew in advance the price they were getting for their crops. One is the introduction of sugar beet cultivation and second is the production of tobacco. Unfortunately both of these crops have now been completely abandoned.

An efficient marketing sector plays a dynamic role in stimulating outputs and consumptions. It guides farmers towards new production opportunities and encourages investment and improvement in response to demand and prices. Its dynamic function are of primary importance in promoting economic activities and creating employment. Marketing is the most important multiplier of economic development.

To support good marketing activities, adequate storage facilities are required.

The main purpose of storage, in addition to conserving supplies for family use later in the year, is to avoid having to sell at the low prices usually prevailing just after the harvest. Processing is also essential since new technologies can greatly extend the market floor for farm, fish and meat products. It can reduce waste, improve palatability, prevent spoilage, and simplify handling and transport. Processing can adopt products to the needs and preferences of consumers in distant places.

One of the difficulties facing good marketing activities is institutional and policy constraint. Marketing initiatives can be inhibited by specific government directives. Unfortunately for the last 35 years politicians and dictators scorned private enterprises and tried to force development into a socialist mold. State marketing boards and government backed cooperatives had full support while private marketing was restricted, impeded, and starved. The responsibility of the government should concentrate on:

1. Assemble and analyze information and forecast as a guide to policy on development of private cooperatives, and state marketing enterprising and facilities. As an integrated, internally competitive system, including insuring the availability of credit, transport and essential supplies.
2. Coordinate continuing support services, covering marketing information, marketing extensions, stabilization of weight, measures and quality specification, export quality, etc.,
3. Maintain a continuing focus on the use of labor intensive procedure in marketing and processing and implement measures to assist the smaller production and marketing enterprises.

#### V. Investment:

We are grateful to the International Community, in its various forms, for protecting our beloved people from genocide, starvation and diseases. But unless we start at a grass roots level in solving these problems, I do not think the International community could accept

forever feeding and caring for our population. Now that a democratic process has started, with a parliament and a legislative body that has been elected by the people of Kurdistan, it is appropriate to alert all those in charge of policy making and submit to them the great need for economic development. I have tried to highlight only a few points, which, in my opinion, could contribute to the development. Economic planning needs further studies by a team of specialists in their subjects in order to draw up a development plan. Only then can our leaders seek financing both from internal and external resources.

A manpower survey is essential in identifying the guidelines for the human resources which are needed to fulfill the development plan. Of course, for foreign investment we need strong support from the donor countries, such as EED, USA, and JAPAN. That's why it is imperative that a certain percentage of oil revenue be allocated toward fulfilling this plan. A development board must be established composed of Kurdish and International members to supervise the implementation of the plan. Contacts with United Nations Organizations, and with International Banking institutions should be established directly by the autonomous Kurdistan.

Private sector must be strengthened not only to carry out these schemes but also to invest in development in general. The development plan should give priority to the following areas:

1. A network of railroads and highways that would connect all major villages in Kurdistan.
2. Construction of small hydraulic scheme on all the tributaries and branches of running streams in Kurdistan.
3. Build airports in major cities of Kurdistan and making at least one of them international.
4. Build oil refineries and other petrochemical industries in various parts of Kurdistan.
5. Build a series of industries through private sector which directly benefit the production of crops and animals.

-Feed-mills for livestock and

poultry production.

-Fruit and vegetable preservation and canning.

-Cotton and wool industries.

-Other food industries.

-Hides and skin industries.

6. A program of construction should be launched with priority given to public buildings such as universities and college campuses, housing schemes, civic and public service buildings as well as communication network.

The above selected points should serve as a starting point for our policy maker to put forward this economic plan. In my opinion, without such a plan Kurdistan will remain backward and cannot support and sustain viable economic conditions. Once these guidelines are adopted in the form of a development plan, Kurdish organizations outside Kurdistan, such as KNC in America, and Kurdish organizations in Europe and Australia, could contribute positively towards implementing such a plan.

Let us look forward towards an economic policy which pulls Kurdistan out of its backwardness and prepare for its greater aspiration for every Kurd in Kurdistan. Only then can we gain the respect of the international communities, the United Nation Organizations, and our brothers and sisters all over the world.

### **Refugee Development/ Reconstruction Visit to Southern Kurdistan 6-12 July, 1992 Mohammed Ahmed**

The main objective of my visit was to visit family members whom I had been unable to see since June of 1969. In addition to visiting relatives, I had the opportunity of visiting a number of institutions, residential quarters sheltering dislocated families, and the marketplace of Arbil.

Some Observations:

**Inflation:** Though food items, cloth, and other necessities are available, prices are extremely high in comparison to the average salary received by a family of four, which is about 250 dinars. This will not even buy a 50 kilogram bag of rice. A kilo of plums or apricots is sold for about 5 dinars. Information from many sources indicate that many families have to settle for one meal daily. Government employees receive a monthly salary on an irregular basis. Most families relying on a single source of income are in an extremely difficult situation. The Iraqi government has discontinued payment of former government employees in Kurdistan. Though the new Kurdish administration faces several financial constraints, it is endeavoring to regularize the payment of monthly salaries.

**Unemployment:** Unemployment appears to be rampant, requiring urgent attention in order to be able to direct many idle hands in the reconstruction of Kurdistan.

**Displaced People:** I was able to visit the living quarters of a number of displaced Kurdish families, some of whom lived in homemade tents and others in vacated houses of former government officials who had left the city of Arbil. Most of the quarters lacked water, electricity, and proper sanitary conditions. In one case, I spoke to a young family of six who had relocated twice, once during the Anfal operation in 1988 and again in the April 1991 attacks by the Iraqi government on the people of Kurdistan. They were facing severe hardships, suffering from the psychological shock inflicted on them during these upheavals. They had been well-off prior to these events, but were now facing social and economic catastrophe. The head of the family, after many months of searching for work, was selling gas along the Arbil-Kirkuk road.

Another family, also uprooted during the Anfal operation, was fatherless. Iraqi soldiers had run over him in front of his house, leaving his wife and two children, a boy and a girl, alone. the boy had gone

crazy as a result of the gunship attacks by the Iraqi army. the girl had been hit three times by bullets, and her entire left leg from top to bottom had required surgery. the mother, who was in her fifties, has searched for a job but been unsuccessful in this time of rampant unemployment.

A third family was visited in a make-shift tent, where three young children between the ages of 3 to 5 years old were playing in the dirt. One of them was observed drinking water from a dirty pan, using only her hands. They had been left unattended because their parents were working and had no one to care for them.

Each displaced family visited had their own special story to tell. They are struggling to survive and rebuild their shattered lives with no guarantees for the future.

Relatives coming from the Kirkuk area are holding on by sheer willpower, saying that they do not intend to give their land to the enemy. They are continually harassed and intimidated by the Iraqi government officials. They face frequent questioning about any contact with the Peshmergas and missing relatives. Some were kicked out of their home for the "crime" of feeding bread to the Peshmergas during the uprising. Enroute from Kirkuk to Arbil, they are harassed at Iraqi checkpoints by derogatory remarks and searches, confiscation of possessions, and even the spilling of the cars benzine on the ground. This raises urgent questions about the parts of Kurdistan beneath the 36th parallel.

**RECONSTRUCTION:**

I was informed that with the help of non-governmental organizations the reconstruction of rural houses has commenced in about 25% of the villages. I saw many signs of the organization CARITAS along the Duhok-Zakho route along with obvious signs of rebuilding. Both tents and newly-built cement block homes were apparent.

Some sections of the Zakho-Aqra road

are all-weather roads but the bridge is washed out and the road is very rough and difficult to travel. The all-weather sections have been reconstructed after the uprising. It takes some 7-8 hours to travel the Arbil to Zakho section, compared to the 3 hours drive if you go the Zakho-Mosul-Arbil way. However, the more direct route is partially controlled by the Iraqi army, leading to safety problems for most people. Since this road is a major outlet to Turkey, endeavors should be made to upgrade the new road to the maximum extent possible.

Reconstruction of communication systems is proceeding slowly. Telex and telephone communications between major towns are either lacking and/or unreliable. Furthermore, no mail services exist between towns. This has both economic and military implications for Kurdistan.

**SITUATION IN KIRKUK:**

The Kurdish people in Kirkuk are under considerable pressure by the Iraqi authorities. They are harassed and intimidated by security officials, who visit their homes with questions about any possible connections to the peshmergas or others who may be politically active. In this connection, families are often forced to fill out questionnaires pertaining to their political orientation. Families are often threatened with expulsion from publicly provided housing. However, it appears that some Arab families have already left Kirkuk and others are expected to leave if the present situation continues. I was informed that the government dismantled the oil refinery in Kirkuk and transported it to Beji, stating that nothing of vital importance should be left for the Kurds in Kirkuk.

**EDUCATION:**

Educational institutions are facing problems resulting from the lack of recognition by the government in Baghdad. Efforts are required to gain the recognition of external institutions. Training with European institutions is one option that

might be worthwhile to pursue.

**HEALTH:**

Considerable help is needed to improve the health of the Kurdish people. Medicine and medical equipment are priority needs of the newly-established Ministry of Health in Arbil. Medical doctors expressed a need for help and assistance from their colleagues to provide copies of second-hand/used medical journals. They feel isolated from the medical world and wish to follow up on recent medical developments.

**THE MARKET PLACE:**

During the initial days of my visit to Arbil, the exchange market was very crowded and disorderly, with vegetable vendors getting in the way of those engaged in exchanging currencies. On July 9, 1992, the Kurdish government officials had already put order into the exchange market, by moving vegetable vendors out of this area. the Iraqi dinar was floating in the market, going up and down in value within minutes, responding to news received by fax from international markets.

**THE KURDISH GOVERNMENT:**

The executives and legislatives branches of the newly elected government were very busy issuing new rules and regulations in order to establish a more solid basis for the daily life of the average citizen in Kurdistan. Despite the economic hardships, people in the street seem relaxed and respectful of the rights of others and have a high regard for law and order, even to the vexing problems of traffic and parking rules. With the exception of a limited number of incidents, the security situation is very good in towns and on highways. There is an atmosphere of freedom and pride that I, for one, have never seen before. However, this is still a dangerous place, many children and farmers, for instance, have been injured as a result of land mines left by the Iraqi Army.

The government is facing shortages of resources needed to deal with major so-

cioeconomic issues. There is an urgent need to pay the salaries of public employees and government officials, for instance. The payment of these salaries is being used by the Baghdad regime as a political tool to divide the people of Kurdistan. However, a shortage of funds has made it impossible for the Kurdish administration to pay salaries on a regular basis. In order to introduce greater stability into the social structure, sufficient resources need to be secured for solving this critical social problem. However, the sources of revenue for the Government of Kurdistan are few and small in size, i.e. taxes, tariffs on imports, and other dues. Due to the absence of an internationally recognized entity in Kurdistan, foreign companies are reluctant to assist in the reconstruction and development that is so greatly needed. Kurdistan has a great potential for development in many fields, e.e. agricultural and mineral resources such as oil and gas. There is rich agricultural land and an abundance of water resources. Although the rangeland seems to be very rich, much of the livestock appears to have been destroyed during the recent upheavals. Many resources are needed to revive and upgrade the drastically damaged agricultural sector, including livestock production.

#### POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS:

There are signs that Kurdish leaders and politicians greatly value the importance of political stability and respect for the democratic process. Though all of the parties exercise self-restraint, they often have legitimate differences with each other. There is a keen awareness of the present political reality surrounding the Kurdish issue. Western countries have extended their hands to the Kurdish people in a humanitarian context. Unless the Kurdish issue gains greater political support, the situation in Kurdistan will continue to be critical and subject to external manipulation. The Kurdish leaders seem to be modest and realistic about the extent of the support they expect from external quarters. They do not wish to be too optimistic about future developments,

but call on every Kurd to learn self-reliance and to fully participate in the development of Kurdistan. The modesty, self-discipline, and respect for democratic values shown by the respect of the European governments, as reflected in the various congratulatory letters received by the new Parliament. A number of governments also sent observers to witness the election process. Though Kurdish politicians are keenly aware of the numerous external factors, they believe that recent developments will have a positive impact on the evolution of the political process in Kurdistan. Much effort will be required to maintain and build on the political gains of the past 18 months. This will require continuing organized contacts with the outside world and intensified efforts to gain greater political recognition. The Iraqi government detention centers, torture chambers, and mass grave sites should be retained in order to remind the Kurdish people and the world about the price of freedom. Those sites and the related stories should become part of Kurdish history. Again, it requires many resources to organize these sites as museums; but Kurds and the outside world should see and know what price the Kurds have paid to retain their culture as a people. Considerable efforts have been made by the Kurdistan Human Rights Organization and others to uncover and document the atrocities committed against the Kurds by the Baghdad government. However, there is a lack of the resources and expertise required for undertaking organized research with a view to more effectively using the information collected for achieving the higher political goals of the Kurdish people. To this end, the Kurdistan Human Rights Organization should more closely follow up on the impact of information provided to external organizations.

### **Towards A Declaration For The Right of Kurds in Self Determination By: Dr. Akram Al-Jaff**

Introduction:

Scientists often theorize that the origin of the universe is related to a "big bang" that began the fragmentation of matter into the stars, solar systems, and planets that we know of today. Indeed, the fragmentation, misery, and contemporary history of the Kurds can also be related back to a "big bang"—namely, World War One. It was this war that so profoundly affected the life and future of the people of Kurdistan.

Kurdistan had attracted the attention of most of the big powers. Each of them tried to establish themselves firmly on Kurdish soil. Russia, Great Britain, Germany and France all actively strove to attain their goal, each following a strategy of its own that was coherent with its circumstances, ambitions and plans.

Before the October Revolution of 1917, Russia as an ally with France and Great Britain, was more interested in Armenia and Kurdistan than other parts of Ottoman possessions. The Czars considered those two areas strategically important as they were on their vast borders. So, early in the war, Russia wanted to annex the regions of Trabzon, Erzerum, Van and Bitlis.

France on the other hand, was interested in the Ottoman Kurdish areas where Russian interest ended at Jazzerat-Ben-Omar as well as the Kurdish territories inside Iran, up to the area around Sardesht.

Britain did not object to their claims because they wanted France to have this zone, which separated British from Russia. On the other hand, Great Britain had well know claims to the Mosul Willayatt and intended to establish a foothold on the valuable oil fields. These designs were subject to various secret meetings and agreements, the most famous of which was Sybes-Picot.

Thus the great powers of that time began to toy with the destiny of the Kurdish people as they did with the Arabs and Armenians through the Sykes-Picot treaty

and other agreements. Before the war ended and with the victory of the October Revolution in Russia, the new states withdrew from the war games and gave up all the public and secret treaties and agreements concluded by the previous regime and consequently left the arena entirely to Britain and France to enjoy the victory. From that moment, the British interest changed and wanted to take over all areas which were supposed to be given to Russia. It also managed to keep France off from the Mosul Willayat and other areas. The verbal diplomacy between Lloyd George and Clemenceau are well known on the British claims on Mosul Willayat and other parts of Kurdistan.

The historical fact on the split of the Ottoman Empire's possession into what is Turkey today and two newly established states, namely Iraq and Syria, must always be remembered whenever and wherever the Kurdish question comes up. The period before, during, and after the first World War is of unique importance, since during that time a decisive stage in the evolution of the Kurdish question took place. The Kurds were essentially deceived during that time frame.

Kurds attached great importance to the implementation of the principles declared by then US President, Woodrow Wilson in the "Right of all Nations in self determination" as well as believing the promises made to them by the British, French, Germans and Russians.

Despite of their determination, the Kurds failed to achieve an independence similar to that conceded to Arabs and other Nations in the Region. The struggle of the Kurdish leaders at the local, regional and international level to create an independent Kurdistan, began during the 19th century along with other national movement within the Ottoman Empire.

Until the First World War, Kurdistan was part of the Persian and Ottoman Empires with autonomous dynasties, self-sufficient economics, free peasant-pastoral communities, and a rich cultural heritage. After the War, the two victorious

allies, Britain and France divided the possessions of the Ottoman Empire creating new states to suit their long-term interests and strategies. Kurdistan was denied the Political entity it had been promised by the allied powers in the Sevres Treaty of 1920, and by Britain in 1922, the densely populated areas of Kurdistan came under foreign rule with the Kurdish nation divided by artificial frontiers which are neither ethical nor historical.

From 1919 to 1946, Britain and France participated directly and effectively in destroying Kurdish self-rule, forcibly annexing southern Kurdistan to the newly-created Iraqi and Syrian Arab States, and suppressing all Kurdish uprisings against the Arab majority rule. Another two parts of Kurdistan remained occupied by Turkey and Iran. Thus, the Kurds became a divided nation controlled by four hostile states in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the historical and cultural strength and the military prowess of the Kurds are not sufficient against modern destructive weapons and the combined strength of four states, ie. Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria which in turn are allied through diplomatic channels and vested interests with world powers both in the East and the West. Thus the Kurds have been transformed from a strong, industrious and independent nation, well-known for its national identity and heritage, into a divided and oppressed people.

I do not intend to go into detail on the political maneuvering engaged in by the allied powers, especially Great Britain, before and after the First World War, in order to secure easy access to the oil fields and insure a firm, effective grip on all oil producing areas of the Near East. They ignored the right of the Kurds to exist as an independent nation, maybe because they did not have among them a Lawrence of Kurdistan!

Now the time has come for the US, Britain, France, and Germany to sponsor a declaration from the United Nations, giving the Kurds the right of self-determination.

It is the responsibility of every freedom-loving person to remind the British, French, Americans and other allied politician throughout the world of two important issues: firstly, how the Kurdish nation became a victim of the expansionist policy of the colonial powers, Britain, France, Russia, Germany and others at the beginning of the century. At that time, the Kurdish people were not less capable of self-rule than their Arab neighbors, but the policy of divide and rule was aimed mainly at controlling all natural resources-particularly oil-of the region.

Between the two World Wars, the situation of the Kurds became even more complicated, and soon afterwards the formation of an "iron curtain" around the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe changed all previously set targets, agreements and regional understandings. Secondly, after more than 70 years of Kurdish subjugation and denial of national rights, and in view of collapse of the Soviet Union, whose October revolution of 1917 had a negative impact on the fate of the Kurdish people, this issue deserves the special attention of today's leaders of the USA, Britain, France, Germany and the newly created Commonwealth of Independent States (the former Soviet Union); it is time they recognized the misery and destruction suffered by the Kurds as a direct result of their policies in the region and consequently rectify past errors and injustice wrought on this people by urging the UN and Allied powers to issue a declaration giving the right of self determination to the Kurds regardless of the present artificial boundaries. The establishment of the safe haven in parts of Iraqi Kurdistan is a good example of what the allied powers can do.

Unfortunately this was done in a glimpse of time which left about half of the Kurds and their territories still under the terror of the regime from Baghdad.

A limited International conference could be convened to pave the way for such an action. Recently, such conference on the problem of various republics of Yugosla-

via and the conflict on Nagorno-Karabach between Armenia and Azerbaijan, are examples of what the International community could do for the Kurds.

We must approach and try to reach all freedom loving people throughout the world to support our cause, and we should encourage them to express their views through their own democratic institutions as well as international bodies to find a peaceful and just solution to the Kurdish question by making possible for 30 million Kurds to express their right in self-determination.

The reactions of the countries involved, those of the United Nations Organizations and the international community in general should recognize the Kurdish nation's terrible geo-political disadvantage created by the allied powers as a result of the partition of Kurdistan between Iran and the newly-created States of Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Had it not been for the formidable topography of Kurdistan and of course the "kurdayati", it would have been impossible for the Kurds to have survived the shattering effects of this dismemberment, both physically and culturally. The disadvantages which Kurdish people suffered after 1923 as a result of this act are still having effect and are responsible for the increasingly aggressive struggle of the Kurds for independence and for the continuing saga of tragedy and suffering of the people.

Unfortunately, the regimes, cultures and institutions colonizing Kurdistan are themselves among the most backward and repressive in the world. the four countries dividing Kurdistan continue to be the historical residue of oriental despotism. Centuries of repression, corruption and cultural retardation under the Ottoman and Persian Empires did not subsequently give way to a new historical era, a new society. Instead of witnessing long national liberation movements bringing about radical social, cultural and ideological transformation in the structure of society, the Middle East witnessed the creation of artificial frontiers and so called pro-western states.

The Kurdish people have been left with no option but to defend their right to freedom and humanity through armed struggle despite all the risks and disasters involved in this option. What makes the matter even worse, is the constant direct and indirect support the dictatorial regimes of the Middle East receive from the "Big Powers" and other industrialized nations, whose only concern is profit and gain, through the supply of armaments and consumer goods. The Gulf War and Iran/Iraq War are only two vivid examples.

Let me conclude by hoping and praying that there will be no more genocide and bloodshed for the Kurds and through the supports from the freedom loving nations, the UN issues a declaration clearly giving the Kurds the right of self-determination. This will serve as a good base for dialogue, negotiations and democratic transformation to the Kurdish problem. I would like to finish by reminding you that the end of the cold war is as significant as the aftermath of the two previous World Wars. Many boundaries have crumbled and several European countries are in the process of transformation not only in the political system but also changing their boundaries. Therefore, the Kurdish people who suffered similarly as a consequence of the wars must be accorded the same opportunity starting with a declaration of their rights in self-determination.

"ITER HAR BEJI KURD 'U'  
KURDUSTAN"

### **Kurdish Nationalism and Self Determination Hama Rasheed Herres**

Mr. Hama Rasheed Herres has presented a speech of several pages in the Kurdish language expressing his opinion regarding Kurdish nationalism and self determination. Following is a summary of his speech.

Self determination is and was the main goal of the Kurdish nationalism. Kurdish leaders such as Qazi Mohamad, Sheik Mahmood, Said Reza...etc., were struggling for the creation of a Kurdish government in an independent Kurdistan. The concept of autonomy for the Kurdish nation rather than an independence for the Kurdish people was promoted by communist parties and small burgoise. This concept was encouraged by the occupiers of Kurdistan to make the Kurdish people forget about their natural rights for self determination and to be satisfied with the demand of autonomy within the framework of these governments who have occupied Kurdistan.

Many of the Kurdish nationalist parties fell in this trap and they adopted the slogan "Autonomy for the Kurdish People within the framework of these governments". However, the plan of the occupiers of Kurdistan was no rights for the Kurds in any form-autonomy or not, thus all occupiers of Kurdistan never intended any type of autonomy for the Kurds and used this plan only as a means to divert the Kurds from their true goal-which was an independent Kurdistan. After the collapse of the Kurdish revolution in 1975 in Southern Kurdistan, Kurdish people and their political parties recognized that autonomy for the Kurds is not a solution for the Kurdish problem. Therefore, the Kurdish people once more adopted the goal of self determination for the Kurdish people, including the creation of a united independent Kurdistan.

### **KURDISH LANGUAGE By: Talibi Barzanji**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen:

I am honored to participate once again in the Kurdish language panel discussion. At the third annual conference of KNC in Anaheim CA, in a brief discussion, I discussed the historical background of Kurdsih language and the family group of languages related to it. Today, I would like to talk about Kurdish dialects and

their historical background.

In 559b.c. after ruling 136 years as a big empire, Medes were defeated by Cyrus who established the Hachamenid dynasty. The result of which was the migration of the Medes tribes towards the West and Northwest part of the country away from Hachmenid troupes. Naturally the official language before this invasion used to be Mede's language which was a unification of the following Kurdish tribes' languages, they are: Urartu, Lullu, Gutium, Kassite, and Hurri-Mittani. Meanwhile Hachamenid used to be Ashkani, Pehlavi and Persian.

In a way the Mede's language was unified and even "Avista" was written in it, but after the invasion the tribes moved elsewhere far away from each other and the official language was also changed. So, there is a period between the Cyrus invasion and Islam's appearance, considered as the period of division of Kurdish language into so many dialects, and that particular period between these two events could be named "The middle period of Kurdish language". Thus, Hachamenid language, which became the official language, more or less had affected the neighboring languages including Kurdish. The Kurdish tribes which were close to the capital city of Akbatan (today call Hamadan) in the south, mostly their dialect turned into Farsi, but other tribes that moved far to the west and northwest were safer from this assimilation. But still they were not safe enough from Azeris, Turks, and Armenians. On the other hand, because of Kurdistan's strategic location, many invasions occurred from elsewhere like the Mongols, Bezants and many more which affected the Kurdish language too. Above all the Islamic invasion had a very big influence on this language, just because of Quraan which should not be read mistakenly.

According to the above mentioned information, we realize that those who went to the East of Southeast of Mede's region had a great influence on their language and mostly changed into Farsi, but in the North and Northwest areas the situation

was completely different because of:

1. Northwest of Medes territory was far enough from Persian influence therefore Mukri dialect remained the same with some progress in recognizing the vowel letters better than before.
2. Because of the strategic situation of Kurdistan, it became a battlefield of many invaders, east or west, which had some additional influence on this language.
3. The Southern dialect grabbed most of the old Persian and Modern Persian as well.

After appearance and acceptance of Islamic faith, the Kurds started using the Arabic alphabet letters with which they could also revive their language and literature, even though it was not sufficient to fulfill the requirements of the Kurdish language, however, it was better than nothing and still followed.

Kurds have been oppressed for so many years and their land has been controlled by different countries with different rough policies that differ from each other. Despite all these hostilities, Kurdish language is the purest language in comparison with neighboring Farsi and Turkey. The praise of this purification goes back mostly to the Kurdish intellectuals of Iraqi Kurdistan who worked very hard in this regard to keep the language safe and clear of the foreign vocabulary and elements as far as they could, that is because they had a better chance and more freedom in this field of study.

#### THE MAIN DIALECT:

The main dialects based on regional division are divided into two:

1. With an imaginary line starting from the west bank of Lake Urmieh goes behind Shino the north of Rawanduz and towards the west until it reaches Akri, Duhok, Zakho, and Zhangar, going down to Qamishly, Hasake all the way to Derbesiyah, Raasul-Ain, Afrin Kurmange Mount.
2. With an imaginary line starting from west of Hamadan going to the north of Kirmanshah all the way to the bank of the Tigris.

The dialects accordingly will be divided into 3 regions:

1. The north dialect which consists of Hakkari, Jalali, Dombly, Badinani these are located on the north of the first imaginary line that was mentioned before.
2. Central dialect located on the south of the first line and north of the second imaginary line, and as an old error being called "sorani" while sorani is one of the following dialects: Mukriyani, Sorani, Sulajmany, Shawni, Jaffi, Sinnaei and Garrosi.
3. Southern dialects are located on the southern part of the second imaginary line, and they are: Kirmanshahi, Kelhurri, Pirwendi, Lecki and Lurry.

There is a great discussion among the Kurdish scholars about Lurry dialect whether it is a part of the Kurdish dialect or not; some deny that lurry is a part of the Kurdish language, some claim that Lurry is Farsi. Dr. Kamal Fouad says that Lurry with its grammatical similarity is related to Farsi but it is not Farsi at all, it is an independent language by itself. But some others state that both Lurry and Bekhtiari are Kurdish without any doubt.

Finally, there are also two other dialects called "Gorani and Zaza, in spite of a long distance in between, both are similar to each other with very little differences. In general Gorani has been used in Hewrama region, that is why it is called Hewrami also, and it has been used in some other areas like : Rezhaw, Kendole, Bajelan, Zengeneh and Shebek. Zaza has been used in palo, Kor and Chebachelor.

#### STANDARD LANGUAGE:

As mentioned before, the Kurdish scholars in Iraqi Kurdistan have made a great effort to keep their language safe and pure as far as they could. This kind of effort is appreciated by Kurdish people full heartedly, but the most important is that purification should be followed a unification and standardization of Kurdish language to be used officially and literally the same as Arabic or English regardless of different dialects.

There is enough opportunity for establishing a research committee from expert linguists from each part of Kurdistan to study and enrich the standard Kurdish language based on all the Kurdish dialects throughout Kurdistan. Kurds from all parts of divided Kurdistan should take advantage of the relatively favorable conditions nowadays and take major steps for this important service.

### **The conference received the following cables**

**From Mr. Jalal Talabani  
To: Fifth KNC National Congress**

Dear brothers and sisters, delegates of the Fifth KNC National Conference I extend warm brotherly greetings to all of you and congratulate you on holding your fifth conference and wish you all the success. You are holding your conference in a historical time of the Kurdish history, where an important part of Kurdistan is currently liberated and a council of ministers for Kurdistan has been established. This is the year where the self determination rights for our people are about to be recognized after being denied to us, this nation's right for so many years. There is no doubt that we have to work harder to protect our gains. I am confident that your organization will always struggle in the front lines along with all other Kurdish organizations abroad in supporting the struggle of your people in Kurdistan for liberation and establishing a democratic system for our people.

Signed Jalal Talabani August 5, 1992

**From Massoud Barzani, President of Kurdistan Democratic Party  
To: Fifth KNC National Congress - Toronto, Canada**

Brothers and Sisters, Delegates of the Conference,

We extend our warmest greetings to you and your guests. We wish from our hearts your success in your work for serving our

Kurdish nation and accept our thanks.

Signed Massoud Barzani August 8, 1992

**From Sami Abdul Alrahman, General Secretary of Kurdistan People's Democratic Party**

**To: Kurdish National Congress of North America**

We would like to take advantage of you having the conference to extend to you and all the members of KNC our warmest greetings. Having you holding your conference in this critical time of our people who have been denied all their human rights has an important role to make the international community and news media to know about the misery of the Kurdish people and their divided land, Kurdistan so that our people can be liberated. Dear respected delegates, with unity, cooperation, and sincere work we can achieve the goal of our nation of self determination as other nations in the world have already achieved. At the end we wish success for your conference and we are confident that your conference will come up with recommendations and resolutions to serve the just cause of our people.

Signed Sami Abdul Alrahman

**From: Dr. Kendall Nezan, President of the Kurdish Institute in Paris and Bakhtiar Amin, General Secretary of the Kurdish Institute in Paris**

**To: Kurdish National Congress of North America**

Dr. Najmaldin Karim, President of Kurdish National Congress of North America, Board of Directors, Kurdish National Congress, and Delegates of the conference,

Kurdish greetings. We are very sorry we could not attend your conference in spite of our efforts to make it possible to be with you. We congratulate you for holding the conference and we hope that you in a brotherly, democratic environment study the current situation of our people and that you come up with recommendations and resolutions for the unity of the Kurd-

ish people and continuing our struggle until human and national rights of the Kurdish people are recognized. Your efforts in the US and Canada will have great impact on our cause in the entire area of Kurdistan. We hope that the relations between our institute and the KNC will continue to be strong and a relationship of cooperation and coordination will continue to grow. Again we wish your conference success.

**From Hatel McCallion, Canadian Region of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaksutioun**

**To: Kurdish National Congress of North America**

On behalf of the Candian Region of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaksutioun, I extend our warmest greetings to the participants of the Fifth Annual Conference of the Kurdish National Congress of North America and wish you success in your delierations.

With great pleasure and interest we are witnessing that the Kurdish communities outside Kurdistan are getting organized, and if you feel the need, I assure you of our support in that regard, for we Armenians, have had to organize our communities outside Armenia, following the Genocide perpatrated against our people by the successive Turkish goverments, between 1915 and 1923.

The Armenian and Kurdish peoples have had a long history together and we believe that their future will be together as well.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashhanktsutiun, as one of the most influential political parties in the Republic of Armenia and in the Armenian Diaspora, supports the right of the Kurdish people for self-determination and we are convinced that we should join our efforts in our struggle against our common enemy, the Turkish oppressive government.