

# ◆ KURDISTAN REVIEW ◆

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## UNITED FREE KURDISTAN

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## UNITED FREE KURDISTAN

## Letters to Barazani and Talabani from KNC's President

His Excellency,  
Brother Masoud  
Barazani,  
President,  
Kurdish Democratic  
Party-Iraq

Greetings and regards on  
behalf of KNC members  
and friends in North  
America.

We congratulate you on  
the 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of  
your champion party: the  
Kurdish Democratic  
Party of Iraq. We take  
this solemn opportunity  
to congratulate the mem-  
bers and friends of KDP.

Excellency  
Undoubtedly, it is the  
fruition of many years of  
struggle by KDP and the  
Kurdish people that has  
led to the liberation of  
large area of Iraqi Kur-  
distan. We have no doubt  
that your Excellency will  
continue to safeguard the  
.....Continue on Page 2

His Excellency,  
Brother Jalal Talabani,  
Secretary General,  
Patriotic Union of  
Kurdistan-Iraq

Greetings and regards on  
behalf of KNC members  
and friends in North  
America.

We trust you will con-  
tinue your endeavors in  
the service of our nation.

Excellency  
The present delicate and  
critical nature of our na-  
tion's affairs has thrust  
upon you the historic re-  
sponsibility of never-  
again allowing fratricide  
to return to our land. It  
has also burdened you  
with the task of securing  
peace by implementing  
the Washington Accord.  
A likewise burden is  
striving to secure peace  
between KDP and PKK,  
especially in the light of  
.....Continue on Page 2

## Letter From The President

Dear KNC Members and  
Friends,

KNC had another success-  
ful annual meeting thanks  
to the Steering Committee  
chaired by Dr. Asad  
Khailany, assisted by Dr.  
Wafa Khorshed, Dr. As-  
fandiar Shukri, Kak Mo-  
hammad Sinjari and the  
many family and friends  
who helped behind the  
scenes, especially Dr.  
Saman Shali as always.

Gathered to serve the Kur-  
dish community and to raise  
awareness among non-  
Kurds of our just cause,  
KNC has made great strides  
in drawing attention to its  
aim of political resolution  
for Kurdish self-  
determination.

With much gratitude for the  
tireless efforts, guidance  
and wisdom of our past  
Presidents, Dr. Najmaldin  
Karim and Dr. Asad  
Khailany and the rest of you  
dedicated

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## Letters for the President

colleagues. The new Leadership of KNC is committed in several directions.

1. We will strive to unite Kurds and bring peace in Kurdistan.
  2. We emphasize cooperation with Kurdish and non-Kurdish parties and Organizations.
  3. We will work to establish Kurdish information centers for the teaching of our language, history, aspirations, and culture to Kurds and non-Kurds alike.
  4. We will form committees and utilize experts to teach business, computer technology, job opportunities, submit grants and assist our students with scholarships.
  5. We will create teams of doctors, nurses, and health educators to assist the Kurdish community newcomers to this continent as well as in Kurdistan.
  6. We will strive to increase our membership by extending friendship to all who believe in our constitution. We especially encourage women and youth and our brothers and sisters from occupied Kurdistan of Turkey, Iran, and Syria to be integral and active members of our organization.
  7. We will encourage meetings, potlucks, picnics, whatever brings us closer together of local and regional chapters.
  8. We will work to organize international conferences and encourage trips to different parts of Kurdistan.
  9. We will complete the creation of KNC's web site.
  10. We will have letter, telephone, FAX and e-mail campaigns to the White House, senators and representatives in addition to arranging visits with them.
- To paraphrase President Kennedy's words, let us not ask "what's in it for me?" but "what can I do for KNC and the Kurdish

cause?" Our hearts go out to the victims and their families of the terrible earthquake in Turkey, and of course, the continued, unjustified war against the Kurds. Please be generous with your contributions. KNC believes in a free, democratic Kurdistan, living in peace with its neighbors and the rest of the world.

I salute each and every one of you,

Fouad Darweesh, M.D.

KNC's President

### Letter to Barazani .....

*Continue from Page 1*

achievements of our nation. For the same reasons, we are confident that you will continue to strive to implement the Washington Accord as well as reach an end to the fighting between KDP and PKK, especially after the recent call of PKK to end fighting in southern Kurdistan.

Finally, we wish you success in your endeavors to serve the Kurdish people and to achieve its goals.

Long live the Kurdish people; long live the memory of Kurdish martyrs

Your brother,

Fouad Darweesh, M.D.,  
President,  
Kurdish National Congress of  
North America

*Continue from Page 1*

### Letter to Talabani.....

*Continue from Page 1*

PKK's recent call to end infighting in both southern and northern Kurdistan by laying down arms and resolving problems through political and democratic discourse.

As an organization, KNC stands ready to carry out any task, or function, delegated to it in the service of our nation especially in augmenting peace in Kurdistan

Finally, we wish you success in achieving the goals of our nation

Long live the Kurdish people and long live the memory of its martyrs

Your brother,

Fouad Darweesh, M.D.,  
President,  
Kurdish National Congress of  
North America

***KNC believes in  
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neighbors and  
the rest of the  
world.***

## Summary of 12th KNC National Conference 30-31 July, 1999 In Ann Arbor, Michigan USA

Asad Khailany

Founder and the First President of KNC

The following is an edited version from the video tapes of the discussions which took place at the Twelfth National conference of the Kurdish National Congress of North America on July 30-31, 1999 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. If any person's words have been omitted or misrepresented, I sincerely apologize.

Dr. Asad Khailany

Dr. Wafa Khorsheed opened the conference under the banner "A dream that you believe is a reality - United Free Kurdistan is a reality" by welcoming the delegates on behalf of the conference organizing committee. He reminded the audience that

KNC was founded eleven years ago a few miles from here in this city (Ann Arbor), after many thousands of residents of Halabja were gassed to death by the regime of Saddam Hussein. Dr. Khorsheed continued, "KNC was founded so that the Kurds in North America to speak with one voice toward our cause to protect the Kurdish people and the Kurdish interest. By attending this conference we are renewing our faith and commitments to the KNC and the Kurdish national interest." He encouraged all the delegates to participate in the discussions and analyses during the conference and emphasized that the tradition of a

democratic environment and free discussions in this conference and in all KNC meetings will continue. Following him in a short speech, Dr. Asfandiar Shukri welcomed the delegates and announced that the organizing committee would provide transportation and services to all delegates for sight seeing in the Ann Arbor and Detroit area.

Dr. Asad Khailany, the conference chairman, opened his speech by announcing the decision of Dr. Najimaldin Karim, the president of KNC, not to run for another term as the president of KNC. The conference gave a standing ovation to Dr. Karim for his leadership and his dedication to the KNC and the Kurdish people. Dr. Khailany emphasized the important of the conference and said, "The fate of KNC and its survival as an organization will be determined by frank and honest discussions, analyses, and decisions of this conference. So please feel free to express your opinion frankly and constructively regarding any issues related to the KNC and the Kurdish issues and to any other issues raised in this conference." He saluted Mr. Abdulla Ocalan, the president of PKK, and asked the conference to condemn his unfair trial and the death sentence handed to him by the special Turkish court. Dr. Khailany asked the Turkish authorities to start negotiations with the Kurdish political parties including PKK, to find a peaceful solution to the Kurdish

problem. He also condemned the Turkish authority's campaign of kidnapping, torturing innocent people, depopulating Kurdistan, and destroying Kurdish heritage, Kurdish culture and language. Dr. Khailany emphasized the importance of the Washington accord and added that both main political parties, PUK and KDP, deserve severe criticisms for not implementing the accord. He asked the conference not to concentrate on the criticism but rather to concentrate on what can be done to truly reconcile the two main political parties and their leaderships so that the golden opportunity offered by Washington accord not to be lost. He highlighted the many significant achievements of the KNC in the last 11 years. He then added "KNC activities diminished significantly in the last few years and its membership has declined. Consequently its role and influence also diminished. Could that have been prevented? What did we do wrong? Can the directions be reversed? Can the organization be revitalized? In my opinion yes." He asked the conference to address and analyze these issues, and to come up with recommendations on how to strengthen KNC.

Following Dr. Khailany, Mr. Mohamad Sinjari, representing the KNC chapter in Canada, emphasized the necessity of KNC to be more involved in the Kurdish activities and affairs in North America. He asked the new leadership that would be

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interest.*

**Summary... from Page 3**

elected in this conference to have more publications not only in English but in the Kurdish language as well. He suggested that KNC should have a better communication with all of the Kurds in North America. In addition, that KNC should organize special meetings and activities for them, to try to help them, specifically the new comers,

to find jobs, to get trained, and to become good productive citizens in their new homeland without losing their Kurdish background and the commitment to the Kurdish cause.

Dr. Hikmat Fikrat represented the KNC chapter in California, and highlighted the importance of teamwork. He noted

more commitment and effort are required not only from KNC leadership but from all KNC members to help the Kurdish people and to promote the Kurdish interest.

Mr. Omar Halmat, the KNC treasurer, presented the financial report and he informed the conference that the KNC budget is in the black and all KNC board members pay their own expenses and nothing is paid by KNC. Mr. Halmat also said "KNC as an organization continues to be the strong voice of the Kurdish people in North America, and asked all the Kurds in North America to join and support KNC to achieve its goals."

Dr. Ibrahim Haji, KDP repre-

sentative thanked the KNC and the conference committee for inviting KDP to attend the conference. In his speech he asked that the non-partisan Kurdish organization stay non-partisan. He said that divided Kurdistan is recognized by the international community, and each part of divided Kurdistan has its own special environment and affairs. The Kurdish people in each divided part should decide their own fate and they should not interfere in the affairs of the Kurds in other parts. He pointed out that KDP believes that the best solution for the Kurdish problem in Iraqi Kurdistan is federation within the Iraqi frame. He declared that KDP is committed to the Washington Accord and asked PUK to implement the accord. He also said "PKK has declared a war on KDP, PKK is kidnapping children, killing women, elderly civilian and destroying villages in southern Kurdistan." Anyone who helps PKK is its partner in crime. He demanded that PKK get out from southern Kurdistan and stop all of its activities there. Serdar Jaaf, representative of Kurdistan Liberation Party (PRK - Party Rizgari Kurdistan) thanked KNC for inviting them to attend the conference. He emphasized the important role played by KNC to promote Kurdish interests and asked all honorable Kurds to recognize KNC's efforts and achievements. Mr. Jaaf asked all the Kurds in North America to join and support KNC. He called on the main two political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan to sit down and start serious negotiation to end their disputes. Mr. Jaaf indicated the Kurdish armed

struggle that was imposed by Kurdish enemies on the Kurds caused tremendous destruction in Kurdistan and suffering for the Kurdish people.

**KNC Affairs - session I:**

The moderator of this session was Asad Khailany and the panelists were the KNC board members. Dr. Najimaldin Karim, KNC president, welcomed the well-known Kurdish politician, Dr. Mahmood Uthman, Dr. Ismat Sharief Vanley, KNK (Kurdistan National Congress) president, Mr. Rafat Ali, representative of KSS (Kurdish Socialist Party - Syria), and the representatives of KDP, PUK and PRK parties. He emphasized that the session is an open session and asked the audience to participate in the discussions.

Some important remarks made by Dr. Karim were:

- It is the pride of all Kurds that KNC has existed for 11 years
- KNC stayed focused, united, and held its conference and elections on time for all these years.
- KNC membership may not be large, but quality is more important than quantity for an organization such as KNC.
- KNC represented Kurdish people in North America and played important roles in the news media, radio and TV programs. KNC continued its strong efforts to discuss Kurdish issues and problems with the United States Congress and the State Department.
- A number of front organizations have been created by the Kurdish political parties such as KDP, PUK, etc... in North America. It is true that

• *Continue on Page 5*

***.It is the  
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Kurds that  
KNC has  
existed for  
11 years***

**Summary... from Page 4**

these organizations participate in promoting Kurdish national interest, but their first priority is to promote the interest of their party. KNC's only priority is the promotion of the Kurdish national interest.

Dr. Fouad Darweesh, executive vice president welcomed the delegates and some of his remarks were:

- KNC can and should be stronger and better organized.

KNC should establish its center and should continue its efforts to educate the people of North America about the Kurdish problem.

Dr. Saman Shali, KNC secretary, made the following remarks:

- KNC from its inception adopted the democratic principles and maintained such democratic environment in all of its meeting and conferences. That is the strength of KNC that makes different views and opinion to be heard and discussed. These principles should and will continue in all KNC activities.
- Our goal is a United Free Kurdistan and all of our efforts should be directed toward that goal.

Mr. Omar Halmat, KNC treasurer, made the following remarks:

- I have been a part of KNC from the day it was founded and worked closely with Dr. Najimaldin Karim.

KNC was able to attract Kurdish intellectuals, businessmen, workers and students and directed their efforts for

the benefits of Kurds and Kurdistan.

Saif Badrakhan, KNC board member, made the following remarks:

- KNC leadership remained in the hand of the Kurds from southern Kurdistan. KNC failed to attract Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan. KNC leadership failed to bring Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan to become members of the board and specifically to be members of the executive committee.
- I was the only KNC board member who obtained a grant to help new Kurdish immigrants to adopt to their new homeland. Other than that KNC did not do much to help the new Kurdish immigrants who stayed temporarily in Guam.

KNC publications and its participation in local Kurdish community affairs were not adequate. Then the moderator asked other board members to come forward if they want to make any comments or add any remarks. No other board members made any remarks or comments at this point. The moderator reminded the audience that the board of directors has accepted the new proposed KNC constitution. He added that the constitution has been distributed to the delegates and asked the delegates to study it and to form opinions for tomorrow's voting during the second session on the KNC affairs.

After that, Dr. Karim made the following comments with regards to Mr. Badrakhan's remarks:

- The KNC door was and is open for all Kurds. From the

first conference until now Kurds from all parts of Kurdistan have been elected as the board members. Mr. Badrakhan himself is an example of the board member who is not from southern Kurdistan. I like to remind Mr. Badrakhan that ex board members Dr. Partooman, Dr. Jallili, Jalal Mela haji, Jeff Azboy, Mahmood Yuksol, Thuria Mofti, Dr. Awat Ali Yar and others were not from southern Kurdistan. We have the democratic environment and KNC leader-

ship does not and should not have any control on the result of the election and on who will be elected.

Mr.

Badrakhan has been a member of the board of directors continuously for several terms. We did not receive any proposal from him on how to attract more Kurds from other parts of Kurdistan to KNC. Certainly, the KNC executive committee was and is eager to receive and study any such proposal not only from Mr. Badarkhan, but from anyone else.

- I agree with Mr. Badrakhan we could have done a better job on the publications but our resources were and are limited.
- At this point the moderator asked Dr. Mohamad Ahmad to come forward to make any remarks or comments he has regarding the new proposed constitution. Incidentally, the

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United Free  
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and all of our  
efforts should  
be directed  
toward that  
goal.***

**Summary... from Page 5**

committee which prepared the new constitution was made up of Dr. Mohamad Ahmad, Dr. Fouad Jalal and Dr. Najimaldin Karim.

Dr. Ahmad made the following remarks:

- Kurdish people need to be united. There should be cooperation between all Kurdish organizations. I see the KNC as the gathering place for all

Kurds. We worked hard to prepare the new constitution and we recommend that you vote for it.

I am available to answer any question now or during the conference related to the propose constitution

Then the floor was opened to take questions from the audience.

The KDP delegate, from Canada Mr.

Tawfiq Slivani, objected to the remarks of Dr. Karim regarding the Kurdish political parties not having the Kurdish National interest as their first priority and said that KDP was always committed to the Kurdish national interest. Dr Karim replied and said we know that Kurdish political parties are committed to the Kurdish national interest but their focus is different from KNC.

The well-known Kurdish political figure, Dr. Mahmood Uthman, made the following remarks:

- I thank KNC for inviting me and would like to express my admiration for the KNC and its achievements. I have been a strong sup-

porter of KNC from the day it was founded. However, KNC needs to boost its efforts and find means to bring more Kurds to attend KNC conferences. When I was representing Kurdistan Front in 1989 I received a letter from KNC stating that KNC is supporting the front and willing to extend all the help it can to the front in north America without any fee or pay.

- After the first conference in 1989 I mediated between the Kurdistan front, KDP and KNC to solve some objections of KDP toward KNC, particularly KDP's displeasure regarding declaration by KNC that not only the Kurdish enemy but the Kurdish political leaders as well are responsible for the plight of the Kurdish people and that Kurdish political parties should explore means other than armed struggle to solve Kurdish problem.
- I call on all political and non-political Kurdish parties and organizations to strongly support KNC.

KNC must go back to its early days when it had more publications.

Dr. Ahmad Uthman, a KNC board member who served as KNC secretary for several terms, explained how the contact between KNC and the State Department was established.

**Kurdish Affairs in Northern America Session.**

Mr. Kawa Najim moderated the session on the Kurdish affairs in North America. After introducing the panelists (Dr. Wafa Khorsheed, Dr. Jalal Salihi, Mr. Dara

Khailany, and Mr. Omar Halmat), he made the following remarks:

- KNC activities as a Kurdish lobby were excellent. However KNC's activities in other areas were not adequate.
- KNC should spend serious efforts to make Kurdish people in North America become better citizens, better educated and more prosperous.

KNC should be involved more in non-political activities among the Kurdish people in North America.

Dr. Khorsheed's remarks were:

- Creating a working relationship between KNC and the Kurdish community in North America leads to a strong bond among all Kurds.
- There are many professionals among the new Kurdish immigrants. We should start a campaign to reach out and bring them to be participants in the KNC's activities.

I am for a newsletter to publish information about Kurdish affairs in North America to include not only political news and remarks but to address social, economical and business issues as well. Our goal should be a prosperous Kurdish community in North America. We have technical knowledge to establish more effective media to communicate with all Kurds and we should do it.

Mr. Dara Khailany's remarks were:

- I re-emphasize the importance of establishing effective means to have a better communication with the Kurdish community. KNC

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***Kurdish political parties are committed to the Kurdish national interest but their focus is different from KNC.***

**Summary... from Page 6**

should restart publications in the Kurdish language

- Seeing each other, talking to each other and meeting each other is very important to enforce the bond among us and to keep Kurdish heritage, culture, and feelings. To that end KNC should organize meetings, parties, exhibitions, camping and other activities.

KNC should try to find means to teach Kurdish language, history and literature.

Mr. Omar Halmat remarks were:

- My expertise is in TV and Radio productions. I recommend that KNC create a library by collecting video and audio tapes, painting and other artistic items, publications and books, stories that are brought to the North America by new immigrants.

KNC should try to establish at least a half-hour national TV and/or Radio program.

**KNK Session.**

The session on Kurdistan National Congress (KNK) was opened by the moderator, Dr. Mohammed Ahmad. He introduced the panelists Dr. Ismat Sherief Vanley, Dr. Najimaldin Karim, Mr. Mohamad Sinjari and Mr. Saif Badrakhhan. The moderator explained the efforts that were spent in the last four years to establish KNK, founded in its first conference on May 24, 1999 in Amsterdam, Holland. Then Dr. Vanley, the president of KNK made the follow-

ing remarks:

- KNK is not a military organization but it is a political organization. It has representatives from all parts of Kurdistan, Assyro-Chaldean, Kurds from Europe, Australia and North America.
- KNK adopted the peaceful struggle for self-determination and the recognition of the human and national rights of the people of Kurdistan.
- I am an independent and do not belong to any political party.
- As the president of KNK, I will keep an appropriate balance between the interest of different parts of Kurdistan and the interest of different political and non-political organizations and parties.
- I shall address many more issues related to KNK when I address the conference tomorrow.

Both Mr. Badrakhhan and Mr. Sinjari emphasized the important of KNK and asked the audience for their support for it.

**Saturday August 31, 1999:**

The conference was opened at 9:00 AM. The first speaker was KNC executive vice president Dr. Fouad Darweesh. First he thanked the conference committee and asked all the Kurds to be involved in the Kurdish issue and to work hard toward Kurdish unity. He concluded his short speech by saying, " I hope soon to have the KNC Conference be held in United Free Kurdistan. " KNC secretary, Dr. Saman Shali, followed Dr. Darweesh and his remarks were:

- The determination and

hard work of many of you made this organization the most respected Kurdish organization in North America. This is the only organization that has Kurds from all parts of Kurdistan gathered under one umbrella - the most Kurdish intellectuals in North America.

- KNC is the first Kurdish organization that started lobbying on behalf of the Kurds in North America.
- KNC did every thing it

could to stop the fighting among the Kurds. During the past eleven years KNC supported Kurdish schools

***• KNK adopted the peaceful struggle for self-determination and the recognition of the human and national rights of the people of Kurdistan.***

because it believes and recognizes the importance of teaching our children the Kurdish language and Kurdish history. The need to address education for our youth must take priority in our work. KNC has the historical responsibility toward the Kurdish youth to help them understand the Kurdish issue and the ways in which they can help their nation. KNC helped refugees to settle in Canada and the US, but must create programs to help these refugees to overcome the problems ahead of them.

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**Summary... from Page 7**

- KNC must take advantage of free advertising on the Internet and establish a web-site to reach a larger audience.
- As for the relation with the Kurdish parties KNC must strengthen these relationships without compromising its independence.
- KNC is a child of Halabja. Halabja will remain in our minds and hearts forever.

Dr. Kirmanch Gundi first thanked KNC for its endless efforts to promote the Kurdish issue and Kurdish interests. Then, he criticized KNC for not being more active in the Kurdish communities in North America. He suggested that

KNC become Kurdistan National Congress instead of Kurdish National Congress and KNC to establish its organization in Kurdistan. Finally he said, "Brother killing brother should be considered treason."

Dr. Mahmood Uthman, the well-known Kurdish politician, thanked KNC for inviting him to address the conference and praised KNC for its good job and work for the Kurdish interest. Then he made the following remarks:

- There are bitter realities and situations in Kurdistan that we need to face and challenge. Our enemies created some of these bitter situations, but for some, we the Kurds, must be blamed.

• In southern Kurdistan, we hoped the signing of the Washington Accord by PUK and KDP would end the dispute between these two parties and would create an environment where peace and prosperity flourished and the Kurdish interest would be secured. However, the Washington Accord has not been implemented for the following two reasons:

1. The language of the accord was vague.

1. The time that was given for its implementation was short. KDP believes the first step should be to build confidence between PUK and them. But PUK believes the implementation of accord should start immediately by solving the big issues such as creating a joint government, starting the election, etc...

I believe the first step should be creating a coalition government, and after that the other issues should be addressed

• UN Resolution 986 helped the people in southern Kurdistan to avoid famine, and increased the contacts and the chances of the unity between to main two political parties. For the first time, the people of Kurdistan have been able to have a part of the revenue of their own oil. However the resolution should be implemented better and food and other materials should be bought from Kurdistan rather than importing from outside at a much higher cost.

• Kidnapping of Mr. Ocalan reminded us of the two recent tragic events in our history. One such event was the hanging of the late Qazi Mohamad, the president of the Kurdish Republic in Mahabad, and a number of other Kurdish leaders by the regime of the late

Shah in Iran. The other was the Algiers agreement of 1975, which forced the revolution under the leadership of late Mustafa Barzani to collapse in southern Kurdistan. These events proved one more time that Kurds could easily be conspired against and that they do not have any strategic friends. With other members of the preparation committee for KNK, I visited Mr. Ocalan in Italy 40 days before his kidnapping. I recommended that he should not leave Italy. I expressed my feeling regarding KNK and emphasized that KNK should be a body representing all of the people of Kurdistan and should not be under the influence of any political or non-political party or organization. I found him to be committed to a peaceful solution for the Kurdish problem. He expressed his willingness and the PKK's readiness to engage in a serious negotiation with the Turkish authorities in order to find a fair solution for the Kurdish problem in northern Kurdistan. He also emphasized the necessity to end fighting with KDP and to have peace with them. He agreed with me that KNK should be an organization independent from all political parties. When I returned, I informed Mr. Massoud Barzani about our meeting and the willingness of Mr. Ocalan to end the fighting between PKK and KDP. Mr. Barzani asked me to write him a detail letter regarding these points. Unfortunately Mr. Ocalan was delivered to Turkey before I could write a detailed letter to Mr. Barzani.

• I believe that the people of each part of Kurdistan should determine their own destiny and the Kurds of other parts ...

.....Continue on Page 9

***I believe that the people of each part of Kurdistan should determine their own destiny***

**Summary... from Page 8**

- should not interfere in their internal affairs.
- Everybody speaks about the US policy to change the regime in Baghdad. I do not believe the US is serious about removing Saddam. If they are, they should dig up the mass graves of the victims of Saddam's Anfal campaign against the people of Kurdistan and indict

him and other war criminals of his regime for their crimes.

I congratulate Dr. Ismat Vanley for being elected as the president of KNK and I believe he is a much qualified than the other candidate who was nominated for the presidency of KNK. Dr. Vanley can serve KNK well.

The next speaker was president of KNK Dr. Ismat

Vanley. Most of his speech was devoted to KNK. Some of his remarks were:

- I want to make it clear what we want for our nation is statehood. We continue our peaceful struggle for self-determination including the creation of United Free Kurdistan.
- KNK has sent invitations to the Kurdish parties and organizations that have not yet taken their places within the KNK to join KNK.

KNK has sent numerous letters to world leaders and organizations including President Clinton and Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General.

In his presidential address, Dr. Karim made the following remarks:

- From the first day when KNC was founded in August of 1988 and through many years, some tried to divide and destroy KNC but their efforts failed and KNC remained an effective organization and has succeeded despite tremendous odds.
- We made our first contact with the State Department immediately after the first KNC conference in August 1988. Through our efforts in 1988, the State Department granted refugee status to 3000 Kurds from the Bahdinan region that escaped the Iraqi chemical attacks and were refugees in camps in Turkey. I was the first Kurd to testify before a congressional committee on June 15, 1990 with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I was also the first Kurd to ever meet with the U.S. State Department openly and on a political level in the aftermath of the Kurdish uprising in 1991.
- KNC worked faithfully and tirelessly to convey the suffering of our people to the rest of the world. Ladies and gentlemen, while we were hard at work to have the U.S. government recognize and negotiate with Kurdish representatives from Kurdistan, representatives of some organizations were hard at work to undermine the KNC by trying to diminish its role.
- KNC was instrumental in enacting the law to estab-

lish Kurdish service of the VOA.

- Over the years, the KNC has remained faithful to the principle of Kurdish nationalism and our motto, "UNITED FREE KURDISTAN."
- KNC has been unfairly accused of partisanship when we exercised our right to speak on issues dealing with Kurdish national interest as we saw it and as the people of Kurdistan saw it.
- As soon as we were critical of the KDP for collaborating with Saddam's regime and occupying the city of Erbil with the help of Saddam's republican guards and tanks, we were accused of being biased against the KDP and they decided to boycott the organization.
- In 1997 when the KDP and PUK fought against the PKK we issued a press statement critical of both parties, this did not lead to any negative reaction from the KDP or PUK. However, when the KDP collaborated with the Turkish army, the KNC condemned their corroboration. We were again accused of being biased and partisan.
- KNC was not formed to replace Kurdish political parties or compete with them.
- In 1988 the strength and activities of Kurdish political parties in the USA and Canada was rather feeble. KNC was the only organization at its inception to represent Kurdish interest.....
- The Kurds of Turkey .....Continue on Page 10

***We continue our peaceful struggle for self-determination including the creation of United Free Kurdistan.***

***Dr. Vanley***

**Summary... from Page 9**

have organized themselves in their own respected organizations. Their activities are concentrated on advancing their party's ideology, which at times run against the Kurdish national interest.

- KNC has to realize and accept the fact that the number of members is not relevant anymore to the strength of our organization and we should concentrate on advancing Kurdish interest and advance the cause of the Kurds as a nation divided, worthy of independence and forming its own nation state. It is clear that this cause has been completely abandoned and not on the agenda or even

***Mr. Ocalan's call for a peaceful solution before leaving Syria at the height of PKK strength in 1992-1994 was genuine.***

the dream of the existing Kurdish political parties.

- Bringing together individuals who have a clear vision, a commitment to United Free Kurdistan, and are willing to commit their time and resources to serve this cause is the only way to advance Kurdish nationalism.
- While attending the first conference of Kurdistan National Congress and the preparation meetings for the conference, I could not help but remember the days when we were working on forming our own KNC. Even though everyone was asked to attend, participate, and compete for leadership positions, some who didn't believe

in such an organization or in Kurdish nationalism or who feared losing control or being exposed before the masses have used different excuses for not attending and have even antagonized the organization.

- It is our duty to support the KNK and to encourage those who are out to come in - especially the KDP, KDP-I, Comola, K.S.P.T. and others.
- The KNC peace reconciliation committee should continue its efforts to bring about a peaceful solution for the KDP-PKK armed conflict.
- The present day situation in Turkey is a continuation of the policies of denial of Kurdish national existence for the past 75 years. It was only through the struggle of our brothers and sisters in the north under the leadership of the Kurdistan Workers Party, founded by our dear brother Apo, that the Turkish government was forced to allow the word "KURD" to be used in public. Yet, just four months ago, the Turkish regime directed the media to remove the word "KURD" in their writings and to refer to Iraqi Kurdish leaders as northern Iraq clan leaders.
- The stupidity and sense of grandiose of the Turkish government reached its climax following the kidnapping of Mr. Abdullah Ocalan "APO" on February 15, 1999. From the day that Apo arrived in Rome he became a symbol of Kurdish national

resistance. By abducting Apo, the Turkish regime is abducting the Kurdish nation.

- Mr. Ocalan's call for a peaceful solution before leaving Syria at the height of PKK strength in 1992-1994 was genuine. It was the same message he was conveying in Rome and same message he used to defend Kurdish national rights from Imrali prison.
- The regime in Iran to this date, like its predecessors, showers glory on the Kurds and how they are the purest and original Iranians or how their language is the most pure of all Iranian languages. Yet the same regime prohibits teaching the Kurdish language and Kurdish history in schools. Free political participation is forbidden in Kurdistan.
- We call on Mr. Khatemi and the Islamic Republic to grant local autonomy, freedom of expression and political association to the Kurdish people.
- In Syria, total denial of the recognition of Kurdish national rights continues. Our brothers and sisters in Kurdistan of Syria continue to struggle under very difficult situations. Many of them are in prisons or in exile. They are unable to serve in the military or engage in teaching at schools.
- In Iraqi Kurdistan the situation unfortunately remains very tense. Indeed upon the return of Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani after signing the Washington Accord and despite numerous meetings between *Continue on Page 11*

**Summary... from Page 10**

the two sides, no progress has been achieved. Only trivial and unimportant issues have been agreed upon. Even those (issues such as prisoner release and repatriation) have not been implemented. The all-important issues of normalization in Erbil, elections, interim government, revenues remain unsolved.

- In Iraqi Kurdistan, if it was not for the oil-for-food program, we believe that there would have been massive deaths from starvation especially this year with the severe drought that has plagued the region. An Iraqi opposition that does not recognize Kurdish national rights including the limited federation adopted by the regional parliament;

an opposition that has not raised any objectives to ethnic cleansing in Kurdistan and that is more adamant about not including Kirkuk in the Kurdistan region. We believe that any attempt to bring the opposition back will prove disastrous to our people.

Dr. Asfandiar Shukri opened KNC-Affairs Session II and announced that the floor is open to nominations for the KNC board of directors. Further, the delegates were reminded that only those who have been members for at least one year and paid their dues two months before the conference as required by the

KNC constitution are eligible to vote and to be elected for the board of directors. Any KNC member delegate can nominate herself/himself or any other KNC member but at least another member must second the nomination. The delegates were reminded that the new constitution that was approved by the conference yesterday decreased the number of KNC board of directors from 15 to 9. The total of 13 members was nominated and voting ballots were distributed and collected by the election Committee. The chair of the election committee was Dr. Wafa Khorsheed and its members were Shwan Karim and Brucek Khailany.

Mr. Rafat Ali, the general secretary of Kurdish Socialist Party in Syria, addressed the conference. He thanked KNC for inviting him and giving him the chance to address the conference, then made the following comments:

- KNC has performed valuable services to the Kurdish people. It is the duty of all the Kurds to support your important organization and I wish you a very successful conference. I am confident that your conference will come up with solutions and recommendations to alleviate the suffering of the Kurdish people. Your decisions are important and your analyses are valuable.

- There are 2.5 million Kurds in Syria who are deprived from their basic national and human rights. The Kurdish people struggled side by side with the Arab people to liberate Syria from foreign power. Yet since 1962 when

the Arab belt strategy was adopted by the Syrian regime, 200,000 Kurds were deported from their villages. Their villages were arabized and Syrian citizenship was withdrawn from them. These people are not permitted to own real estate properties or businesses and they are not accepted in schools and can not travel because they are stripped of their identity. Officially, no Kurdish newspapers are permitted in Syria. No Kurdish schools, radio or TV programs or stations are allowed. Even naming our children Kurdish names is not permitted. However, in 1990, the government of President Assad held a democratic election and 15 Kurds were elected as members of the parliament. We are struggling for a democratic environment where the rights of both Arabs and Kurds are recognized. The regime of Saddam Hussein committed crimes against humanity by using chemical weapons against the Kurdish in Halabja, Bahdinan and other parts of the Iraqi Kurdistan. Saddam Hussein and other war criminals in Iraq should be brought to justice.

- The Kurds in Iran have suffered tremendously under the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

- Turkish generals continue their vicious attacks on our Kurdish people. They destroyed 4000 Kurdish villages and made four million Kurds homeless. We should raise our voices high to protect the Kurdish leader, president of PKK, Mr. Abdullah Ocalan who was kidnapped and tried unfairly by the Turkish regime.

- The establishment of KNK is a historical event.....

.....Continue on Page 12

***There are 2.5 million Kurds in Syria who are deprived from their basic national and human rights.***

***Mr. Rafat Ali***

**Summary... from Page 11**

- KNK should become the voice of all Kurds and all the political Kurdish parties should participate in KNK.

- **Kurdish Affairs in Northern Kurdistan**

- Dr. Najimaldin Karim moderated the Kurdish affairs session in Northern Kurdistan. The panelists were Dr. Robert Olson, Dr. Ismat Sharief Vanley, Mr. Rafat Ali and Mr. Jeff

Azboy. The first speaker of the session Dr. Olson concentrated on the importance of the geopolitical situation in the Middle East and its effects on the Kurdish people and Kurdish nationalism. He pointed out that both Turkey and Israel are very important to the US and the US wants to have a strong alliance between them so that water can be provided to Israel and the oil stays flowing to the western countries, including the US. He emphasized that the US news media is purposely suppressing the news about the Kurdish plight and Kurdish nationalism.

liance between them so that water can be provided to Israel and the oil stays flowing to the western countries, including the US. He emphasized that the US news media is purposely suppressing the news about the Kurdish plight and Kurdish nationalism.

- Dr. Vanley explained the historical facts that Kurdistan had its own autonomy and recognition during the Ottoman Empire era.

- Mr. Ali emphasized that the PKK started the Kurdish revolution in Northern Kurdistan and that Mr. Abdullah Ocalan must be defended and protected by all the Kurds. Then he explained the impact of the Kurdish revolution in Northern Kurdistan on the

Kurdish people in Syria and said, "Before the Kurdish revolution in Turkey, the demands of the Kurdish people in Syria were human and cultural rights. After the PKK raised the banner of Kurdistan, many Kurdish youth in Syria joined them and national Kurdish rights became the demand of the Kurdish people in Syria".

- Mr. Azboy denounced the unfair trial of the Kurdish leader Ocalan and the vicious military attacks on Kurdish villages, land and people. He added that it is time for the world and Turkey to find a peaceful solution for the Kurdish problem.

- **Kurdish Affairs in Other Parts of Kurdistan - Open session**

- The two sessions, Kurdish Affairs in other parts of Kurdistan and the Washington Accord and the open session, were combined and moderated by Asad Khailany. The panelists were Dr. Mahmood Osman, Dr. Najimaldin Karim, Dr. Saman Shali, and Dr. Hikmat Fikrat.

- **Dr. Karim** remarks: The Washington Accord is a historical event in the history of the Kurdish people. For the first time the US invited Kurdish political parties alone without being a part of an Iraqi opposition. All Kurds should work hard so that the golden opportunity presented by this accord not to be lost. We should remember that we lost a very good opportunity when the Paris Accord was not implemented.

- One of the big mistakes of the leadership of both parties was not to go back directly to Kurdistan after signing the agreement. Instead it took them three months to get back

to Kurdistan. They spent too much time in the wrong places. The governments of Turkey and Iran worked hard to create obstacles so that the agreement would be derailed and would never be implemented.

- KDP wants the control of both parliament and the government because they claim they had slightly more votes than PUK.

- PUK feels that both sides do not have 50%; therefore other parties should be brought into the parliament and the government.

- **Dr. Shali**

- We thank all friendly governments who are helping Kurds and who are trying to help the main Kurdish political parties to solve their differences. Some are proclaiming that Kurds do not deserve their government because they can not manage their own affairs.

- With regard to the Washington Accord the devils is in the detail. There is a big price that has to be paid for the implementation of the Washington Accord and that is to kick PKK out of southern Kurdistan and fight against them.

- Kurds should not cooperate or participate with the Iraqi opposition until the Iraqi opposition recognizes Kurdistan, including Kirkuk, Khaneqin, Sinjar, etc...

- **Dr. Mahmood Osman:**

- The Washington Accord was a historic event in the history of Kurdish people. For the first time ever the US administration spoke directly with Kurds alone. Both PUK and KDP were invited to Washington where the agreement was reached. All Kurds all over the world supported the agreement.

.....Continue on Page 13

***Kurds should not cooperate or participate with the Iraqi opposition until the Iraqi opposition recognizes Kurdistan, including Kirkuk, Khaneqin, Sinjar, etc***

**Summary... from Page 12**

- For the following reasons the agreement yet has not been implemented;
- The language of the agreement is vague. Some terms can have different meanings to different sides. For example, the term normalization (that is normalizing the environment) is interpreted differently by both KDP and PUK.
- KDP has control on more

economically sensitive geographical areas that bring much more revenue than the area controlled by PUK. Once the agreement is implemented, these resources must be shared. That means that KDP will lose a share of its revenue.

- This agreement is between the main two political parties.

In my opinion the agreement had a better chance for success if other Kurds were involved in the negotiation and the agreement itself.

- Both Barzani and Talabani should have frequent meetings between themselves to implement the agreement.
- Other Kurdish parties besides the PUK and KDP should have participated in the Washington Accord processes. Maybe this is also a reason why the accord is not implemented.
- Turkey insists that both political parties fight PKK. There is a fight between PKK and KDP. PUK claims that there are no PKK establishments in their controlled area and they refuse to fight PKK

in other areas. In my opinion PKK should not interfere in the affairs of southern Kurdistan and KDP should not engage in fighting with PKK

- In Iranian Kurdistan currently there is not any serious Kurdish armed struggle. After the election of Khatami, many thought that there might be a good opportunity for a peaceful solution for the Kurdish problem in Iran. Khatami received the highest percentage of votes in Kurdistan. However instead of finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem and recognizing Kurdish rights he concentrated his efforts to strengthen Iran's relationship with the Turkish and Iraqi regimes at the expense of Kurdish people.

At this point Dr. Karim commented on Dr Mahmood's remarks and said "Dr. Kendall Nezan, Dr. Fouad Hussein and I participated in the processes of Paris agreement, but the agreement was never implemented."

Dr. Khailany commented that Kurdistan belongs to all Kurds. Therefore the Kurds from any part of Kurdistan have rights to go to any other parts of Kurdistan. The late Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani fought in Mahabad (in the part of Kurdistan occupied by Iran) against the Kurdish enemies. Mahabad is the birthplace of the KDP president Massoud Barzani. Therefore Kurds from northern Kurdistan have rights to be in any parts of Kurdistan.

After that the floor was opened to take questions from the audience.

Mr. Tawfiq Silivani commented on the remark of Dr. Khailany and said, "I agree Kurds have right to go to any

part of Kurdistan, but they do not have the right to fight them. Barzani did not fight the Iranian Kurds in 1945".

The conference resolution and recommendation session was comprised of Dr. Fouad Darweesh, Dr. Ibrahim Salih, Sheirko Abbas and Azada Ali. The moderator Dr. Darweesh, announced that the resolutions that have been recommended and distributed to the delegates by the conference committee will be considered first. After that other resolutions will be considered. After in-depth discussions the following resolution were adopted by the conference:

**Recommended resolutions by the KNC 12th Annual Conference committee:**

**1. RESOLUTION - 1.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference reaffirm that the only solution to the Kurdish problem is a United Free Kurdistan.

**2. RESOLUTION - 2.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference condemn the kidnapping, killing of journalists and Kurdish political figures, and other terrorist acts that are committed by the Turkish government against the Kurdish people.

**3. RESOLUTION - 3.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference condemn the unfair trial and the death sentence that has been handed to the Kurdish leader Abdulla Ocalan and demand that he be retried by an international court.

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**Summary... from Page 13****4. RESOLUTION - 4**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference ask the US and European governments to exert their influence on the Turkish government to recognize the human and national rights of the Kurdish people who are under the control of the Turkish government.

**5. RESOLUTION - 5.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference condemn fighting between any Kurdish parties or organizations within or outside Kurdistan.

**6. RESOLUTION - 6.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference demand that Kurdistan Democratic Party and the PKK solve their current disputes and differences peacefully.

**7. RESOLUTION - 7.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference demand that the two main political parties in southern Kurdistan immediately implement all items of the Washington Accord so that the current golden opportunity for the Kurdish people is not lost. The delegates recognize the historical roles and responsibilities that were trusted in them by the people

in southern Kurdistan in the election of 1994. The delegates affirm their belief that the only solution is the true reconciliation between these two main political parties.

**8. RESOLUTION - 8.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference condemn the inhuman treatment of the Kurdish people by the Syrian government. The delegates demand that the Syrian government restore citizenship to the Kurdish people who have been stripped of their Syrian citizenship, stop the arabization of Kurdistan, and return deported Kurdish villagers back to their homeland. The delegates demand that the Syrian government recognize Kurdish national and human rights in Syria.

**9. RESOLUTION - 9.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference demand that the Islamic Republic of Iran recognize Kurdish national and human rights for the Kurdish people under its control.

**10. RESOLUTION - 10.**

The delegates of the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference congratulate the Kurdish people for the foundation of the Kurdistan National Congress (KNK) and affirm continued support and cooperation with KNK.

The chairman of the election committee announced the result of the election and the following were elected as members in the board of directors:

1. Dr. Fouad Darwees
2. Dr. Himat Fikrat.
3. Dr. Saman Shali.
4. Mr. Kawa Najim.
5. Dr. Mohamad Ahmad.
6. Mr. Mohamad Sinjari
7. Mr. Jeff Azboy.
8. Mr. Dara Khailany.
9. Mr. Shwan Karim

At 6:40 PM Dr. Wafa Khorshed asked the delegates to rise and the conference was closed with singing Kurdish National Anthem "Ay Raqeeb".

## KNC'S ACTIVITIES

8/10/99 KNC President addressed the University Club at Claremont University at Pomona re: Kurdish history, uprising, aspiration and encouraged audience to support the Kurdish desire for freedom and self-determination.

8/13/99 KNC and KNK held a joint meeting in San Diego. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce Kurdistan National Congress (KNK) president Dr. Ismat Vally Sherif, Mr. Rafat Ali and the new president Dr. Fouad Darweesh and the Secretary of KNC, Dr. Saman Shali, to the Kurdish community in San Diego.

8/21/99 KNC President addressed the congregation at the celebration of the 53rd Anniversary of KDP in San Diego, emphasizing our commitment to work together toward our common goal.

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***the Kurdish National Congress of North America 12th Annual Conference demand that the Islamic Republic of Iran recognize Kurdish national and human rights for the Kurdish people***

**Letter To President Clinton**

September 27, 1999

President William Jefferson Clinton  
1400 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D. C. \*\*\*\*\*

Dear President Clinton,

***The Kurdish National Congress of North America condemns any form of terrorism and asks all the Kurds and their supporters to increase their peaceful efforts***

I appeal to you to influence Turkish Prime Minister Mr. Ecevit to stop the military atrocities against the Kurdish people in Turkey: the destruction and burning of Kurdish farms and villages, the kidnapping, torturing and killing of Kurds. American taxpayers have supplied millions of dollars in aid to Turkey which has resulted in acts of genocide against the 15 to 20 million Kurds in Turkey.

Please address the Kurdish issue on your agenda today.

The Kurdish Nationalist Congress of North America condemns any form of terrorism and asks all Kurds and their supporters to increase their peaceful efforts to urge a peaceful and just resolution for Kurds. The Kurds ask that Prime Minister Ecevit recognize Kurdish political and cultural rights. KNC also urges the release of all political prisoners including Mr. Abdallah Ocalan, former members of Parliament Leyla

Zana, Ahmed Turk, Dicle Hatip and others.

KNC requests that the Turkish government cease all military activities in southeast Turkey and instead work for the development of the Kurdish areas there, constructing schools and universities, roads and factories, rebuilding the farms and providing employment for people who live there.

The Kurds are ready at any time to have peaceful negotiations with the Turkish government.

Sincerely,

Fouad Darweesh, M. D.  
President, KNC of North America

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Kurdish National Congress of North America  
September 28, 1999**

On September 1, 1999, celebrated as World Peace Day in much of the world, the PKK Presidential Council announced that the Kurds of Turkey were laying down their arms in favor of non-violent political agitation for the rights of the Kurds. We are gathering in the front of the Turkish consulate in Los Angeles, California urging the assembled leaders at the White House to catch up with the times and recognize the Kurds.

Currently, there are approximately 20 million Kurds living within the borders of Turkey. They constitute the largest unrecognized minority in the world and the largest ethnic group without a homeland. Recent calls for a laying down of arms made by the PKK Presidential Council have gone unacknowledged by the Turkish government.

On the eve of the meeting between the Prime Minister Ecevit of Turkey and President Clinton, we urge President Clinton to discuss the Kurdish problem and work to find a permanent peaceful settlement with Mr. Ecevit.

The Kurdish National Congress of North America condemns any form of terrorism and asks all the Kurds and their supporters to increase their peaceful efforts to raise the awareness of the their plight to the world. Only peace and full recognition of the Kurdish people's political and cultural rights can bring peace in the Middle East.

Kurdish National Congress of North America  
September 28, 1999

***KNC is working  
in a resolution  
in supporting  
the representa-  
tion of Kurds in  
the United Na-  
tions with at  
least Observer  
status.***

9/11/99 KNC President addressed United Nations Association of Southern California at their meeting in Pomona. Emphasis of presentation was on working toward a peaceful solution for the Kurdish cause and supporting the representation of Kurds in the United Nations with at least Observer status.

9/12/99 KNC Executive Board met to plan for the coming year with emphasis on improvement of our services to the Kurdish community and raising the awareness among non-Kurds in North America.

9/18/99 KNC President hosted an Amnesty International meeting and sought their continued support.

9/28/99 KNC sponsored a Peace Rally in Washington D.C. and Los Angeles California.

10/12/99 KNC President will address the UN Association Young Professional at California State University at Long Beach re: update on Kurdish issues.