

**United Nations Economics and Social
Development**

**Council of Human Rights
Sub-Commission on the Promotion and
Protection of Human Rights
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Working Group on Minorities
Twelfth session
Switzerland – Geneva**


**Iraqi Turkmen Human
Rights Research
Foundation**

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Item 3 (b) i: Effective mechanisms for solutions to problems involving minorities, including conflict prevention and resolution

Mr. Chairperson,
Honorable delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Since the establishment of the new Iraqi state in 1921, the Turkmen role, and their representation in Iraqi administration have been deliberately diminished, and caused considerable prejudices against them, even as the third largest ethnicity in Iraq.

Before occupation

Impediments the development of economical, social, cultural and political status of the Turkmen community was a major part of assimilation policies of Ba'ath regime.¹

Turkmen businessmen were arrested and their possessions expropriated, which stifled the Turkmen economy. The specific government authorization for imports and exports effectively imposed barriers for Turkmen trade, virtually preventing them from trading. Permission to open a private business in Turkmen region was systematically given to the Arabs.

Furthermore, the Turkmen were obstructed from purchasing land or buildings in Turkmen regions. Thousands of square kilometers of Turkmen agricultural lands and building sites were expropriated: in the Altun Kopri sub-district, Beshir, Tirklan and in the village of Mullah Abdullah. Both fixed and portable property of thousands of Turkmen who left the country and of those executed or sentenced to life imprisonment has been confiscated.

In 1980s house owners in the Turkmen regions were asked to pay extremely high property taxes.

Helpless and in solitude

The Turkmen of Iraq could not find allies, due to the opportunist international policy, while regional governments and international powers supported other sections (Kurds and Shiites) of the Iraqi community. They were provided moral, political and financial assistance.

Moreover, the Kurds obtained great sums of cash and wealth from transportation fees through the Khabur border line with Turkey after the establishment of the Safe Haven area.

Consignment of a considerable share from the oil revenues for the Kurds at 1991 (after the second Gulf War) on one hand, and deprivation of the Turkmen on the other hand was another blow to the already destabilized Turkmen economical, social and political integration.

SOITM

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Economical and cultural repression of the Turkmen of Iraq for numerous decades has weakened almost all the centers of powers in their community, predominantly the cultural and organizational abilities. Their publications have slowly disappeared, their organizations become unproductive and their political unity disturbed.³

Unfortunately, in spite of the 2003 regime change in Iraq, after the war and the occupation by the coalition forces, the Turkmen misfortune continues.^{4,5}

Appeal

In view of the above stated facts and the problems faced by us as a Turkmen in Iraq, SOITM address this assembly requesting your support and asking the UN to intervene in the favor of Turkmen and the other minorities in Iraq to ensure the item 1, from article 1 of Declaration on the Right to Development Adopted by General Assembly resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986.⁵

In specific, we appeal to the Working Group on Minorities to:

- Urge the Iraqi government to assign a share from the state budget for the Turkmen organizations and the organizations of Iraqi Minorities as consigned for the Kurds.
- Ensure that a share from the international financial assistances allotted for the Turkmen, Assyrians and Iraqi minorities, too.

Reference:

1. General Report of SOITM "Summary of violation of the Human Rights of the Iraqi Turkmen and attempts to assimilate them during the Dictatorial Ba'ath Period", <http://members.lycos.nl/soitum/GR.pdf>
2. 3. Durban Declaration, Issue 18:
"We emphasize that poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion and economic disparities are closely associated with racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and contribute to the persistence of racist attitudes and practices which in turn generate more poverty" <http://www.un.org/WCAR/durban.pdf>
3. Statement presented to the 11th Session, Working Group on Minorities (30 May - 3 June, 2005), United Nations – Geneva, by SOITM: <http://www.turkmen.nl/StatementP.pdf>
4. Statement presented to the 23rd Session, Working Group on Indigenous People (16 - 22 July, 2005), United Nations – Geneva, By SOITM: <http://www.turkmen.nl/StatementPw.pdf>
5. Declaration on the Right to Development Adopted by General Assembly resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986. <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/74.htm>

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