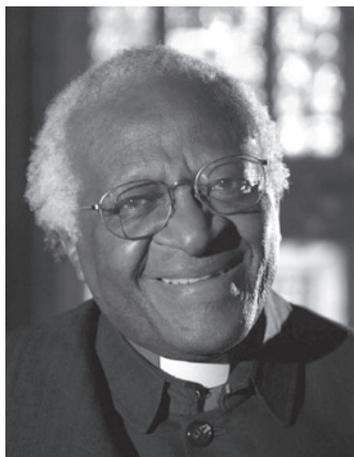




KURDISH HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT NEWSLINE

NEWSLINE 3 2005, ISSUE 31

European Parliament hosts second international conference - Turkey, the Kurds and the EU



ABOVE: Nobel Peace Prize winners Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and Shirin Ehbadi, together with renowned human rights advocate Bianca Jagger are patrons of the conference

Ahead of the October start of Turkey's membership talks with the European Union, the European Parliament is to host the largest conference yet on the controversial issues raised by Turkey's potential accession.

The two-day conference, being held at the European Parliament in Brussels from 19 to 20 September, has

been organised by EU-Turkey Civic Commission (EUTCC) with the support of Kurdish Human Rights Project, Medico International, the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales and Rafto Foundation.

Participants at the conference will focus discussions not only on Turkey's compliance with EU acces-

sion standards, but also the European Commission's effectiveness at monitoring that compliance.

It is hoped the event will prove as successful as the last held in November 2004, which led directly to the establishment of a body exclusively mandated to monitoring Turkey's

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Human rights crisis in Iranian Kurdistan

Large-scale protests – the likes of which have not been seen since the Islamic revolution – have erupted in Iran's north-west Kurdish regions. The situation escalated in July and August 2005, leaving at least seventeen Kurdish civilians dead, and numerous wounded and imprisoned.

Protests and civil unrest in the cities of Saqqez, Sine, Mahabad, Serdesht,

Piranshar, Meriwan, Shino, Baneh, Divan and Dareh have been met by an increasing amount of force by state security forces, plainclothes agents and paramilitary Islamic vigilantes. The government's response was to implement de facto martial law in many areas, reportedly deploying over 100,000 troops and helicopter gunships to the region. Simul-

taneously the government publicly downplayed the crisis.

Reported human rights violations from the region included the gunning down of civilians by military helicopter; the harassment and imprisonment of journalists and human rights defenders; the arbitrary arrest and

continued on page 2

Director's Letter



Dear Friends,

Since the last issue, the situation in the Kurdish regions has developed in different ways.

In Iraq, insurgency and violence – particularly against civilians – has escalated. But the new Constitution has made achievements in some areas that were undreamed of only a few years ago.

Iraqi Kurdistan continues to advance the democratic development of the region; yet inexplicably is still perceived as a threat by neighbouring Syria, Iran and Turkey. We are concerned about the recent human rights violations taking place in those countries, and must reflect on the international community's failure to intervene once more. The recent renewal of violent conflict in the

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continued from page 1: Director's Letter

Kurdish region of Turkey is also cause for concern, lest it undermines the government's pro-EU reforms, and particularly the implementation of those reforms.

The October 3 decision about

Turkey's prospects of EU accession is, of course, a leading issue. It is imperative that Turkey respects the Copenhagen Criteria, and truly implements reform packages, addressing seriously the Kurdish issue. We hope, too, the European Union will take this long

overdue opportunity to address these issues publicly.

Together with our partners and supporters, we are continuing our work to ensure that the voices of the most disadvantaged groups in the regions are not forgotten in such political and decision-

making processes. We are grateful for your continued support.

Kerim Yildiz
Executive Director
September 2005

continued from page 1: Human rights crisis in Iranian Kurdistan

interrogation of civilians, including children; systematic torture or ill-treatment of detained protestors; the closure of newspapers; and the disappearance and suspected extra-judicial killing of human rights defenders.

The Democratic Party of Kurdistan-Iran (PDK-I) has released the names of seventeen of the dead, all of whom were Kurds.

Journalists and human rights defenders confirmed to have been arrested include: Madih Ehamedi (human rights defender and journalist), Jalal Qavami (journalist and member of the editorial board of the journal Payam-e Mardom), Eclali Qewami (human rights campaigner and journalist), Roya Toloui (editor of Rassan - a periodical that highlights the situation of Kurdish women in Iran), Mahmoud Salehi (spokesperson for the Organisational Committee to Establish Trade Unions), Dr Ruyai Telyi (activist and writer) and Azad Zamani (activist in the Association in Defence of Children's Rights).

The situation began with clashes between state forces and Kurdish civilians in the Kurdish city of Mahabad on 11 July

following the killing of a young Kurdish nationalist and activist, Shivan Qaderi. Although the exact reasons for the police forces to pursue Qaderi remain unclear, it is believed his involvement in the Kurdish national movement led state security forces to seek his arrest.

The unrest was ignited by the killing of Shivan Qaderi [1], a key figure in Mahabad's Kurdish national movement. According to eyewitnesses, Qaderi was shot at point blank range. Then still alive, he was reportedly tied to a Toyota Jeep and dragged through the streets. Local Iranian authorities assert that Qaderi was killed by security forces while attempting to evade arrest.

The unrest, ranging from peaceful sit-ins to violent clashes, soon escalated, spreading to many other cities in the region, as many in the Kurdish population expressed dissatisfaction with the cycle of violence, arrests and oppressive

behaviour of Iranian forces. Concurrently, violent clashes between Iranian security forces and Kurdish rebels occurred along the border regions, leading to fatalities.

Despite Tehran's consistent downplaying of the situation, it appears that the government is concerned. Key ministers including interior, intelligence and security, and defence were reportedly called to the

legislature to describe their part in the reestablishment of order in the Kurdish regions, and both legislative and executive branches have conducted inquiries. However the findings of these inquiries have not been made public at the present time. For the most part the government

blames the unrest on a host of foreign elements, ranging from Al-Qaeda to the United States, for contributing to the unrest. Currently, reports coming out of Iranian Kurdistan tell of an increase in arrests of those who took part in

the demonstrations. Many may have been held in the numerous secret illegal prisons and interrogation centres that are integral to the vast network of "parallel institutions" that hold much of the unofficial power in Iran.

There are nearly 9-million Kurds in Iran, constituting between 11 and 16 per cent of the population. The recent presidential election, which was heavily boycotted by Kurds, brought to power hard-liner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who is suspected of involvement in the assassination of PDK-I leader Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou in 1989. Many Kurds feared his ascension would usher in a worrying roll-back of the little reform that had occurred under Mohammed Khatami.

KHRP urges the Iranian government to provide access to an independent team of observers to ascertain the true nature of the crisis. Proper investigation is also required into the killings, arbitrary arrests and use of torture or ill-treatment. It is imperative that security and military forces act according to recognised international standards of conduct and international human rights treaties.



ABOVE: The events in Iranian Kurdistan sparked solidarity event throughout Europe. Pictured: Protestors at a solidarity event outside the Iranian Embassy in London hold pictures of assassinated PDK-I leader Ghassemlou, July 2005

UN condemns Syria's human rights record

The UN Human Rights Committee urged the Arab Republic of Syria to stop torturing prisoners and free imprisoned human rights activists in its latest report, released on 29 July.

The Committee stated that it was deeply disturbed about Syria's use of the death penalty, a practice inconsistent with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) among other international treaties. Syria was urged to free political prisoners and human rights activists immediately and to stop using the state of emergency as an alleged reason to undermine human rights. The report highlighted that Syria continues to fail to protect not only freedom of expression and assembly, but also its Kurdish population.

KHRP also called for the amendment of legislation on nationality and for resolution of the statelessness of Syrian-born Kurds, and for authorities to end all accompanying discrimination against stateless Kurds in all fields of life. In particular, it urges the end of prohibitions on the use of Kurdish language, including the lifting of restrictions on children's names and business names. Legislation under



ABOVE: Syrian children peacefully protesting outside the UNICEF public building in Damascus against violations of the rights of Syrian Kurdish children in 2003. The protest was broken up by security forces, injuring around 20 people and resulting in at least seven arrests. Several of those arrested subsequently alleged they had been ill-treated or tortured in custody.

which prisoners of conscience have been imprisoned is not currently in line with Articles 18 to 22 of the ICCPR. The rights to freedom of conscience and association and the right to exercise these freedoms without undue interference also require guarantees from the government.

Turkey: detentions of journalists and human rights defenders continue

KHRP is concerned for the welfare of two individuals, believed to have been arbitrarily imprisoned by Turkish authorities on 10 August 2005. Birol Duru, a Kurdish journalist for news agency DIHA, was detained for allegedly possessing video footage of members of an illegal group. He and

Daimi Açıĝ, a member of the Human Rights Association of Turkey (IHD), were arrested and accused of cooperating with an illegal political group when they appeared before a Court in Karlıova on 12 August 2005.

Several prominent human rights defenders, journalists, politicians

and Kurdish artists were also detained en masse on 4 August 2005 but later released. KHRP had highlighted its concern for the welfare of the group, which included Ferit Aslan (Journalist), Selahattin Demirtaş (Head of the Human Rights Association Diyarbakir Branch), Alaaddin Erdoğan (Vice-President

of the DEHAP political party) and Ferhat Tunç (Kurdish Singer).

The incidents highlight continuing concern about the use of arbitrary arrest as an intimidatory tactic against human rights defenders, media, artists and others.

continued from page 1: European Parliament hosts second international conference

compliance with EU accession criteria, the EUTCC.

The conference will bring together leading politicians, human rights defenders, academics, lawyers and experts on the Kurdish issue, including BHRC Vice-President Mark Muller and Kurdish author Mehmet Uzun.

Nobel Peace Prizewinners Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and Shirin Ehbadi as well as renowned human rights advocate Bianca Jagger are Patrons of the event.

Discussion will focus on the future for the Kurds in Turkey and of the EU-Turkey negotiating framework, and develop strategies for ensuring peaceful conflict resolution between the government and the Kurds.

Women's rights in Iraqi Kurdistan



ABOVE LEFT: Lesley Abdela (Shevolution), Meryam Al Ryes Iraqi MP), Rachel Bernu (KHRP), Dilek Elveren (UNESCO) and others participate in discussions in Amman on the new Iraq constitution. ABOVE RIGHT: KHRP Women and Children's Rights Expert, Margaret Owen

KHRP met with several civil society organisations from Iraqi Kurdistan in July, in meetings held in Amman.

Although the closure of Baghdad airport rendered the planned travel to Iraqi Kurdistan impossible, KHRP Women and Children's Rights Expert, Margaret Owen and Deputy Director, Rachel Bernu met with 15 representatives of seven civil society organisations (CSOs) from Iraqi Kurdistan to discuss the importance of engaging with international bodies, and the difficulties women and CSOs there face when trying to utilise the mechanisms available.

In addition, Ms. Owen and Ms. Bernu were the only non-Iraqi, non-panelist observers invited to attend a historic meeting on the role of women in drafting the Iraqi Constitution which brought together mem-

bers of the Iraqi National Assembly, including members of the Constitutional Committee, Iraqi civil society leaders and women's rights advocates. From these meetings, KHRP was able to identify some of the pressing needs of CSOs in Iraqi Kurdistan; the vast disparities in the development of civil society between the North and the rest of the country; as well as the vast disparities in how the role of women is seen in North versus the South. Finally, the uphill battle women face in accessing or utilising their rights under international law was discussed, both in the current framework of Iraq and under any foreseeable new structure.

KHRP became gravely concerned about the lack of recognition, both within the Iraqi government and amongst influential members of

CSOs, of the importance of the role of women in creating a viable democracy in Iraq. It is further concerned about the current ongoing violations women face on a daily basis.

Echoing these concerns, KHRP urged the UN to secure their human rights during the final stages of the drafting of the Iraqi Constitution. In a letter to the UN and Mr. Tom Woodroffe, UK Representative to Commission on the Status of Women, and the UK Foreign Commonwealth Office sent on 29 July, KHRP condemned the reduced rights afforded to women in the Draft Constitution. Of particular concern is Article 14 which is expected to cancel legislation that prevents legislation of polygamy, divorce by 'talaq', honour killings, stoning and public beatings of women for alleged adultery. Mini-

mal rights which Iraqi women had under the "Personal Status Law" will also be eliminated. Moreover, Islam and Islamic Shari'a law, is expected to be the principal source of legislation while no law will be permitted to contradict Islamic beliefs.

The UK - FCO responded that based on the advice of the steering committee of women's rights organisations in Iraq, who are currently lobbying Iraq's Constitutional Commission, it would be counterproductive for the UK to apply overt pressure to the constitutional drafters. Indeed, although only 17 per cent of the Constitution Drafting Committee is women, the drafters have decided to maintain and guarantee 25 per cent political representation to women in the new National Assembly.

International conference on dam building, Diyarbakir

Residents from the dam-affected regions of Ilisu, Munzur, Hakkari and Birecik are to have an unprecedented opportunity directly to address policy makers on 29 and 30 October, at a two-day water conference being held in Diyarbakir.

The conference, being organised jointly by local groups, KHRP, Corner House Research, Berne Declaration, World Economy Ecology and Development (WEED), ECA-Watch and Fern, will examine the international experience with large dams and its relevance to Turkey's dam building programme in general, and the GAP project in particular.

Human rights defender on trial

Turkish courts are expected to give their verdict in a series of cases concerning prominent human rights defender Ferhat Kaya in September 2005. The charges include those of alleged resistance to arrest, insulting police officers and failure to comply with a request for identification. The cases have been seen as an attempt to intimidate Kaya through the legal process. He is well-known for his help in bringing numerous ECtHR cases on behalf of landowners

With finance being sought for a number of new dams – notably Ilisu and Munzur – GAP is increasingly the focus of international attention. Other dams are also being planned for elsewhere in Turkey. To date, though, the projects have received little public discussion within the country. The aim of the seminar is to bring together international and local experts, together with those directly affected by the past and proposed dams, to assess the environmental and social impacts and to draw 'best practice' lessons from the experience of dams elsewhere.

affected by the controversial BTC pipeline, and alleges that he was tortured and ill-treated during his arrest. He has since lodged complaints against eleven police officers involved.

For background information, see 'The Trials of Ferhat Kaya – Trial Observation Report' (September 2005), published by KHRP, Corner House, Friends of the Earth and Environmental Defense (see www.khrp.org)

Dispatches

KHRP SUPPORTERS' FUNDRAISING EVENT A SUCCESS

Legal Officer Lucy Claridge and Development Officer Pranj Acharya represented KHRP at the Keep UP!-organised and KHRP supported 'SPLASH!' Pool Party on 13 August. The charity event attracted around a hundred supporters in spite of adverse weather conditions. The event, which took place at the Brockwell Lido, raised £320.00 towards KHRP projects. KHRP extends its sincere thanks to all those seized this opportunity to demonstrate their support.

KHRP ATTENDS UK FCO EVENTS

KHRP Deputy Director Rachel Bernu and Legal Officer Lucy Claridge were attended by the UK FCO to attend their pre-OSCE Human Dimensions conference, inviting input from UK-based NGOs on a wide range of topics concerning human rights, civil-society/ OSCE relations and the value of this conference. The 2-hour meeting allowed frank dialogue between the FCO, EU and UK NGOs, where topics for next year's meeting were discussed. All NGOs in attendance agreed that the OSCE's commitment to human rights would be further shown if it were to concentrate more specifically on monitoring member countries' implementation of their OSCE obligations in regards to human rights.

On 21 July 2005, the UK FCO also launched its Annual Report at an event attended by numerous representatives of human rights NGOs, human rights defenders and lawyers, including KHRP Legal Officer Lucy Claridge. Although the report identified the most problematic human rights issues in Kurdish regions, KHRP is concerned about important omissions. The report also noted that Turkey, "has made increased efforts since 2002 to comply with the decisions of the ECtHR" citing two KHRP cases, *Zana v. Turkey* and *Öcalan v. Turkey*.

KHRP MID-YEAR STRATEGY MEETING 2005 - PRAGUE



KHRP colleagues Pranj Acharya, Kerim Yildiz, Anna Irvin and Mustafa Gündoğdū in Prague for a mid-year strategy meeting

KHRP staff visited Prague from 29 July to 1 August to hold the mid-year strategy meeting. This out-of-office opportunity allowed staff and Board Chair Mark Muller to discuss a range of topics and develop key tactics for carrying out existing and new work. The weekend was a great opportunity for the staff to put forward their views; learn more about the progress of KHRP's objectives as an organisation; more deeply familiarize themselves with their colleagues' work; and simply, to enjoy getting to know each other.

Turkey held to account for 'disappearance' of DEHAP representatives

On 2 August 2005, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) found Turkey in violation of the right to life (Article 2) regarding the detention and disappearance of two opposition politicians in 2001.

On 25 January 2001, Serdar Tanış, President of the People's Democratic Party (DEHAP) and Ebubekir Deniz, Secretary of DEHAP, received telephone calls requesting their attendance at the Silopi police station. Both men,

who are of Kurdish origin, subsequently disappeared.

KHRP assisted the relatives of the disappeared in bringing legal proceedings against Turkish authorities. In its judgment, the Court ruled that Turkey's failure to provide a credible explanation for the disappearances was in violation of the right to life. The lack of credible explanations and inadequate investigations had further constituted violations of the right to liberty

and security (Article 5).

In relation to the families' distress following the Turkish authorities' reaction and lack of care in investigating the circumstances of the disappearance, the Court found a violation of the prohibition of torture or ill-treatment (Article 3). In the light of the authorities' failure to protect the lives of the applicants' relatives, the Court held that the applicants had a right to an effective remedy under

Article 13 of the Convention. The Court also found that Turkey had failed to provide all necessary facilities to the Court in their task of establishing the facts, and had therefore breached Article 38 of the ECHR.

KHRP will continue to monitor the harassment and ill-treatment of opposition political parties, their representatives and their members, and the implementation of this case.

KHRP was privileged to welcome prominent human rights defenders and politicians from Turkey to its London office in August. The delegation gave its current assessment of the human rights situation in Turkey to assembled staff and interns, and held discussion meetings concerning KHRP's work at the European Court of Human Rights and elsewhere. Pictured (l-r): Nazmi Gür, Mustafa Gündoğdu, Rachel Bernu, Tuncer Bakırhan, Kerim Yıldız and Evrim Yılmaz



European Court judgment slams violation of right to life

On 25 May 2005, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) condemned Turkey for violating the right to life and prohibition of torture or ill-treatment in the case of a Turkish citizen of Kurdish origin, Necati Aydin.

KHRP brought a case before the Court on behalf of the deceased's wife, Süheyla Aydın, who complained of violations

under Articles 2, 3, 11, 13 & 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR).

Aydin complained that she and her husband had been taken into police custody where she had been subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment and her husband to torture. Her husband, last seen in police custody, was subsequently found

dead in a shallow grave outside Diyarbakir with his hands tied behind his back and a single bullet through the head.

The Court ruled that Turkey had failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the deceased was not in custody at the time of death. Moreover the Court found the Turkish authorities to have obstructed the process

of obtaining evidence by non-disclosure of crucial documents, as well as in their failure to summon other crucial witnesses, constituting a further violation of Article 38. Turkey had also failed to offer an effective domestic remedy to the applicant, required under Article 13 of the ECHR.

European Court upholds KHRP 'fair trial' case

On 15 July 2005, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) found Turkey in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) for failing to provide a fair trial for Hatip Çaplik, under Article 6.

The judgment was the latest in a series of KHRP cases to determine that the presence of a military judge in court lacked the independence and impartiality required by Article 6(1). The applicant had been

convicted by the Adana State Security Court in 1997 for allegedly sending a letter on behalf of the outlawed PKK.

Mr Çaplik also alleged that he had been denied a fair hearing before the domestic courts and had

been convicted solely on the basis of expert reports, which were not supported by any oral or other documentary evidence under Article 6, and that the length of proceedings had been unreasonable.

Detention cases communicated to government

After a preliminary examination of admissibility, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has communicated two KHRP cases concerning the arbitrary 'administrative' detention of political activists to the Armenian Government. Both cases (*Amiryan v. Armenia* & *Sapeyan v. Armenia*) occurred during the presidential elections in 2003 and involved alleged violations of the rights to an independent and impartial trial, to be adequately informed of accusations, to have

access to a lawyer, to freedom of expression and association and to an effective domestic remedy (Articles 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13 & 14).

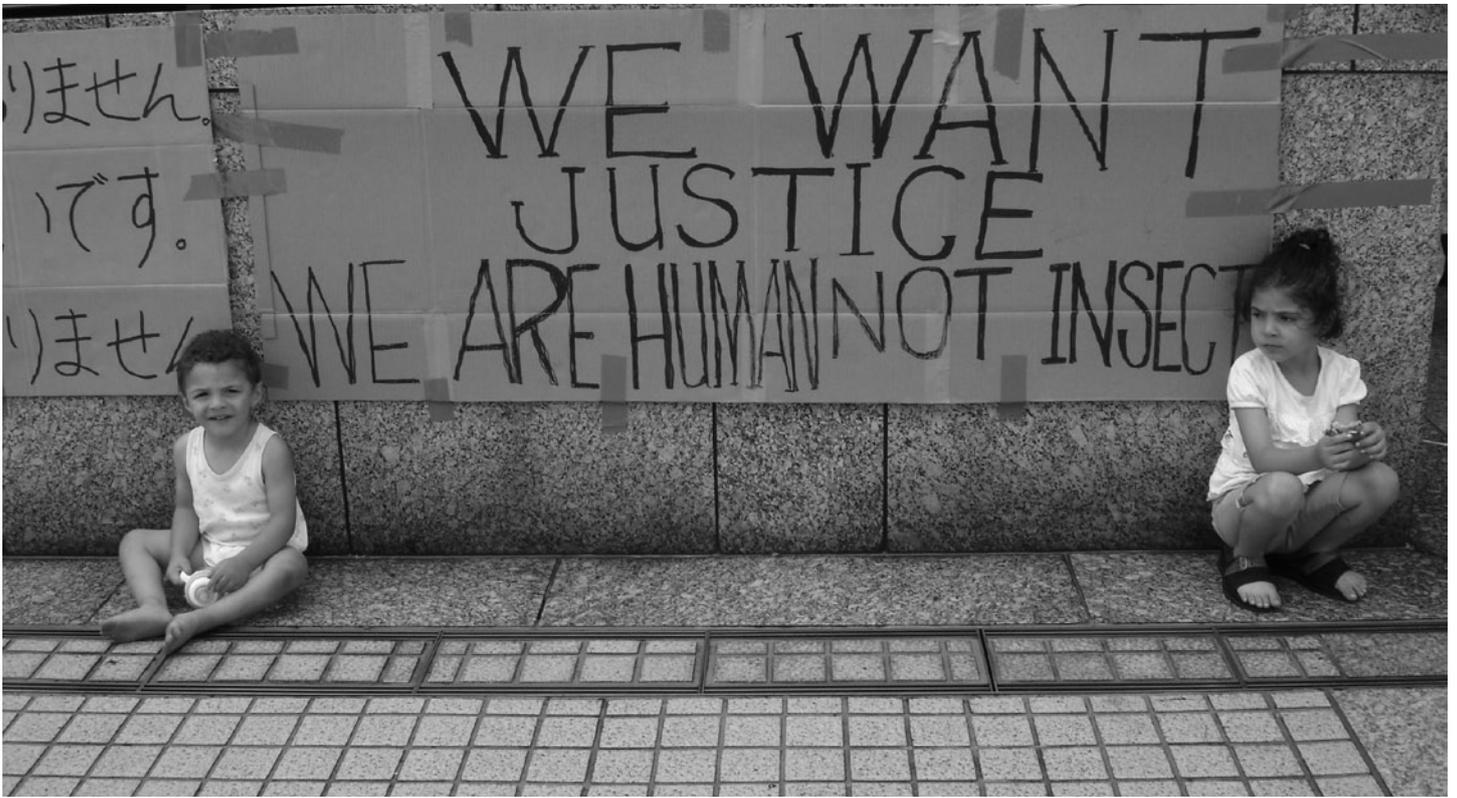
In *Amiryan v. Armenia* the applicant, Sargis Amiryan, an authorised election assistant for the opposition candidate, was arrested after his participation in a demonstration in Yeveran. Following brief questioning by the police, Mr Amiryan was taken before a judge and sentenced to 15 days 'administrative detention'

which was later commuted to a fine in the Criminal Court of Appeal. In *Sapeyan v. Armenia*, Zhora Sapeyan, chairman of a popular people's party – Hanrapetutyin, experienced similar treatment by the police. Mr Sapeyan was arrested by plain clothed officers of the Criminal Investigation Department on his way to a separate demonstration in Yeveran on the 26 February 2003. He was given 10 days detention which was similarly commuted to a fine in the Court of Appeal. Mr



ABOVE: KHRP applicant Zhora Sapeyan

Sapeyan participated in another demonstration on 14 May 2003 and was again detained by police officers following the demonstration.



ABOVE: Kurdish children protesting Japan asylum laws outside UN, Tokyo, July 2004

KHRP appeals to UN for Kurd in Japan

On 4 August, KHRP appealed to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees on behalf of Mehmet Gül, a Turkish Kurd seeking asylum in Japan. Mr. Gül had fled Turkey following a series of arrests, during which Turkish authorities allegedly tortured and

ill-treated him. Mr. Gül arrived in Japan in 2001 and applied for asylum. He was sent to Higashi Nihon immigrants detention centre in Ushiku on 24 June 2004, after his asylum application was denied. Since Mehmet Gül's detention in this immigration centre,

his medical and mental condition has seriously deteriorated. Despite his serious medical condition, Japanese authorities have not provided him with any medical assistance. KHRP expressed its deep concern about this asylum case to Mr. António Guterres, UN

High Commissioner for Refugees, regarding the fate of Mr. Gül should he be deported back to Turkey, and urged the Commissioner to address his case with the Japanese Ministry of Justice.

KHRP Executive Director meets with applicant Mustafa Koku to discuss the implications of his case, following the European Court's judgment in June 2005 that the Turkish Government had failed to safeguard his brother, Hüseyin Koku, and in failing to investigate his disappearance and death. The judgment represented the culmination of a lengthy legal battle, and affords some measure of redress to the applicant



The Kurds in Turkey – EU Accession and Human Rights



KHRP has arranged a promotional deal with publishers Pluto Press, enabling members and friends to take advantage of a 20% discount on the book 'The Kurds in Turkey – EU accession and Human Rights' by Kerim Yildiz.

With a foreword by Noam Chomsky, this is the most up-to-date critical analysis of the problem faced by the Kurds in Turkey.

Turkey has a long history of human rights abuses against its Kurdish population – a population that stretches into millions. This human rights record is one of the main stumbling blocks in Turkey's efforts to join the EU. The Kurds are denied many basic rights, including the right to learn or broadcast in their own language.

This book provides a comprehensive account of the key issues now facing the Kurds, and the prospects for Turkey joining the EU. Kerim Yildiz outlines the background of the current situation and explores a range of issues including civil, cultural and political rights, minority rights, internal displacement and the international community's obligations regarding Turkey.

Kerim Yildiz is a leading human rights defender and Executive Director of the Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP). He has received the Sigrid Rausing Trust's Minority and Indigenous Rights Award for his contribution to protect human rights and promote the rule of law. He is also a board member of other human rights and environmental organisations. KHRP was most recently short listed for the Liberty/Justice/Law Society Human Rights Awards in 2004. Kerim Yildiz is the author of *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present, Future* (published by Pluto Press, 2004)

Special Offer

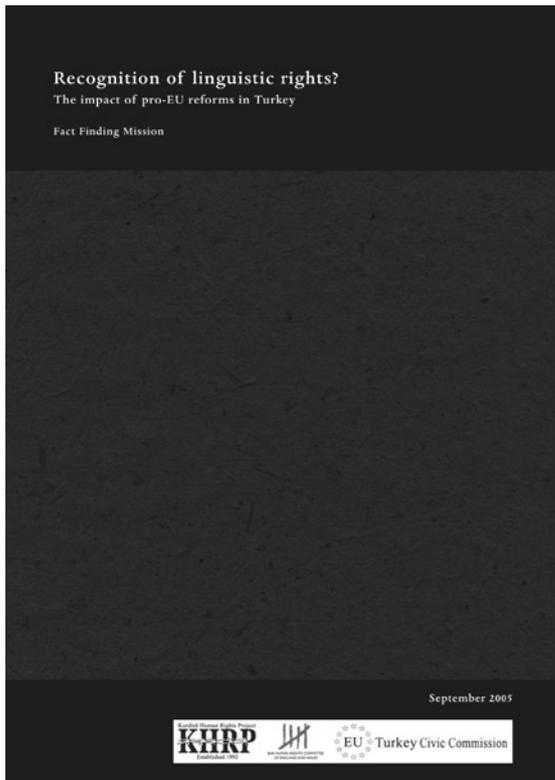
KHRP subscribers and friends can now take advantage of Pluto's discount scheme to purchase the book for £20.00 instead of the cover price of £25.00. Orders within the UK can be made by phoning 01264 342832, fax your order on 01264342788, or email your order to pluto@thomsonpublishingservices.co.uk. For orders outside the UK, please phone +44 (0)1264 342761 or email pluto@thomsonpublishingservices.co.uk. You can also visit the Pluto Press web site with secure online ordering, at www.pluto-books.com. Please quote reference PL0024894 in order to received the book at 20% below the cover price. Please be advised there will be an additional standard delivery cost.



"Kurdish Human Rights Project has compiled a stellar record in promoting and significantly advancing the case of human rights in this tortured part of the world. In the coming years, its tasks will be even greater, and concerns reach well beyond the Kurds, severe as their problems are."
Professor Noam Chomsky

Pictured above: KHRP Executive Director Kerim Yildiz with Professor Noam Chomsky at KHRP, London

Recognition of Linguistic Rights? The Impact of Pro-EU Reforms in Turkey – Fact-Finding Mission Report



KHRP/ BHRC/ EUTCC 2005

A joint fact-finding mission to Turkey's south-east has found that demand for Kurdish language education remains high, in spite of the closure of all seven of the area's private language schools in July 2005. Government and media reports have suggested the closure of the schools was due to lack of interest from students. The prevalent view in the region, however, lays the responsibility with Turkish authorities, for failing to provide adequate legislative and material support to enable the schools to survive. Restrictions on the use of Kurdish language in broadcasting and education were weakened last year, following decades of prohibition. In its report, the mission finds there continues to be widespread demand for education in public schools and universities in the Kurdish language. A petition urging educational institutions teach in Kurdish as well as Turkish has now received thousands of signatures. This report details the current status on restrictions on linguistic rights in Turkey and the efficacy of pro-EU reforms. It concludes that lifting restrictions on education and broadcasting in Kurdish would be a giant step towards a multicultural, pluralist and ultimately peaceful Turkey.

ISBN 1900175932 £10.00 & £2.00 P&P or www.khrp.org

The Status of Internally Displaced Kurds in Turkey and Compensation Rights – Fact-Finding Mission Report



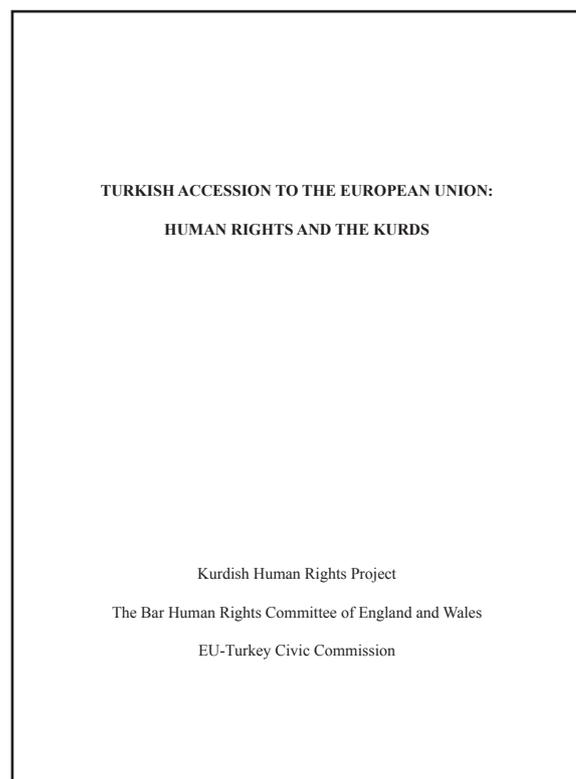
KHRP/ BHRC/ EUTCC 2005

This report presents the findings of a joint KHRP/ BHRC/ EUTCC fact-finding mission to Diyarbakir, sent in June 2005 to investigate the compensation rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs). An estimated 3 million people, overwhelmingly of Kurdish origin, remain IDPs in Turkey following a campaign of displacement that peaked in severity in the mid-1990s. A recent domestic Law on Compensation for Damage Arising from Terror and Combating Terror (Law No. 5233), passed as part of EU accession negotiations, offers IDPs the possibility of full compensation for material losses incurred from the conflicts. However, the fact-finding mission found that adequate redress remains out of reach for the majority of IDPs, due to prohibitive provisions including in the appeals process. In practice, insufficient resources have been devoted to resolving IDPs' situation in practice.

ISBN 1900175916

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Turkish Accession to the European Union: Human Rights and the Kurds



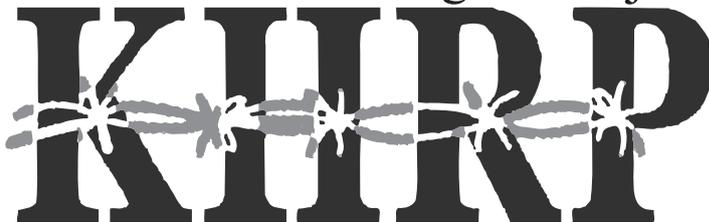
KHRP/ BHRC/ EUTCC

In preparation for the Second International Conference “Turkey, the Kurds and the EU” in September 2005, this report was compiled to provide a background on the Kurdish issue ahead of Turkey’s EU accession bid. Since late 2004 the human rights situation locally has worsened with an increase of torture cases and measures on freedom of expression, of association and of assembly remaining suppressive. The next stages of the EU accession will be crucial: if the EU fails to compel Turkey to adequately fulfil her obligations, there is a real threat to significantly undermining not only the democratic rights of Kurds but also the democratic credentials of Turkey and the EU.

Calendar of Events

19 - 30 September 2005	OSCE /ODHIR Annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw, Poland
19 – 20 September 2005	EU-Turkey Civic Commission Second International Conference on EU, Turkey and the Kurds, Brussels
21 September 2005	International Day of Peace
3 October 2005	EU Turkey accession talks
15 October 2005	World Rural Women’s Day
17-18 October	World Economic Forum, Moscow, Russia
17 October	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
24 October	United Nations Day
24 - 30 October	Disarmament Week
29-30 October 2005	KHRP Water Policy Conference, Diyarbakir, Turkey
3 - 5 November 2005	Hope 2005 International Conference on Human Rights, Mumbai, India
16 November	International Day for Tolerance
20 November	Universal Children’s Day
25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Kurdish Human Rights Project



Established 1992

Project Information

THE ORGANISATION

The KHRP is a non-political, independent human rights organisation, founded in December 1992 and based in London. Its founding members include human rights lawyers, barristers, academics and doctors.

The Project is registered as a company limited by guarantee (company number 2922108) and is also a registered charity (charity number 1037236).

The KHRP is committed to the protection of the human rights of all persons within the Kurdish regions of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere, irrespective of race, religion, sex, political persuasion or other belief or opinion.

Aims

- To promote awareness of the situation of Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere.
- To bring an end to the violation of the rights of the Kurds in these countries.
- To promote the protection of the human rights of the Kurdish people everywhere.

Methods

- Monitoring legislation, including emergency legislation, and its application.
- Conducting

investigations and producing reports on the human rights situation of the Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere by sending trial observers and fact-finding missions.

- Using reports to promote awareness of the plight of the Kurds on the part of the committees established under human rights treaties to monitor the compliance of states.
- Using the reports to promote awareness of the plight of the Kurds on the part of the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the national parliamentary bodies and inter-governmental organisations including the United Nations.
- Liaising with other independent human rights organisations working in the same field, and co-operating with lawyers, journalists and others concerned with human rights.
- Offering assistance to indigenous human rights groups and lawyers in the form of advice, training and seminars in international human rights mechanisms.
- Assisting individuals in the bringing of human rights cases before the European Court of Human Rights.

YES I/We would like to support the work of KHRP
Please find enclosed a donation for

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2 New Burlington Place
(off Regent Street)
LONDON W1S 3HP

Tel: 020 7287 2772
Fax: 020 7734 4927
Email: khrp@khrp.org

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