

United States – State Department Betrayal of Kurdish Trust

While the Kurdish leadership in Iraq is engaged in a campaign to rally Kurds around a new American backed constitution and on the same day that the European Union chastised Turkey for human rights violations and questioned Turkey's membership prospects, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice negated what the Kurdish leadership is promising its people in Kirkuk and reiterated United State's unwavering support for the brutal government of Turkey waging a war against the people of Northern Kurdistan (Eastern Turkey) and their political parties. In a meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, she made it clear that the faith of Kirkuk and PKK are sealed and that *"Operations against the PKK in Iraq are a matter of timing, not a matter of principle"*, and that *the views of Turkey and the U.S. overlap on sensitive issues such as the Iraqi cities of Kirkuk and Tal Afar.*

This statement is a clear contradiction to the goals stated so frequently by the US, trying to bring democracy, respect for human rights, and peaceful conflict resolution to the Middle East. The US should not waver on these principles just to placate a repressive regime. The PKK has stated publicly, their struggle to gain the rights of the Kurdish nation in Turkey will be through peaceful means. The US should welcome and encourage such move, and in the same time pressure the Turkish regime to recognize the rights of Kurds in Turkey and enter a dialogue with PKK.

This unfortunate and untimely meeting strengthens what the world and the Kurds have known: The world has criticized the US for the so called "Terrorist Organizations" list and its use, drawn up to serve the needs of the moment by the State Department regardless of the nature of the organization. Kurds have also been suspicious that once an Arab dominated central government is in place in Baghdad; their rights will again be violated. Arabization and genocide in Kurdistan just as the ethnic cleansings in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda need to be remedied and yet, Ms. Rice dismisses Kurdish claims to the same treatment as other victims. This is a complete reversal and betrayal of the promises and the trust that some Kurdish leaders put in the US government and it has not helped the prospects for a united Iraq where 98% of the people of Northern Iraq have voted for independence.

Kurdish National Congress of North America urges the US State department to reconsider a policy of indulging Turkey that has been a failure and is in direct contradiction to the policy of US's European allies and not to alienate Kurds, the only friends of democracy and of the US in the region. We also urge the Kurdish leaders in Southern Kurdistan to take issue with the double talk out of the State Department and to insist on an explanation as to the conspiracy brewing against the people of Northern Kurdistan, Kirkuk and Tal-Afar.

For information, please call 408-834-5557 email knc@kurdishnationalcongress.org

Date published: Thursday, September 29, 2005