

International Conference on Kurdish Women for Peace and Equality

The Kurdish National Congress of North America

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P R E S S R E L E A S E - M A R C H 2 0 , 2 0 0 7 **International Conference on Kurdish Women for Peace and Equality**

[The Conference was dedicated to the memory of the late Mrs. Soraya Serajeddini Previous Executive Vice President of the Kurdish National Congress](#)

Resolution & Suggestions For The International Conference on Kurdish Women for Peace and Equality

On March 8th, 2007 the Kurdish National Congress of North America held its first International Women's Conference in Southern Kurdistan in Yaki Shubat Hall of the KRG in Erbil to address issues relating to Kurdish women around the globe . The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), through the Minister of State for Women Affairs, sponsored the conference. The conference was held under the leadership of the President of the Kurdistan Region Mr. Masoud Barzani, and attended by the Speaker of the Parliament Mr. Adnan Mufti, the Governor of Hawler Mr. Nawzad Hadi, Minister of State for Women Affairs Dr Jinan Qasim, Members of the Kurdish Parliaments, Ministers, Government officials, President and Secretaries of the Kurdish parties from Eastern and Western Kurdistan, Kurdish and non-Kurdish NGOs, intellectuals and personalities from all parts of Kurdistan and the rest of the world.

The conference discussed a variety of subjects, addressing the obstacles facing

the advancement of the Kurdish women's movement in all aspects of Kurdish women's lives inside and outside Kurdistan. The conference created a new debate platform and a fresh look at the problems facing Kurdish women. The conference recognized that advancing the role of Kurdish women in society is crucial to the development and the Kurdish people. Understanding the importance of women's empowerment for the development of a free and democratic nation, realizing there exists no alternative to women's participation in all echelons of the Kurdish community, pinpointing how crucial it is to increase opportunities for Kurdish women to network with each other, and valuing the exchange of ideas between individuals and groups, and believing in the power of a core group of people to create social change and advancement of their rights.

The participants of the first International Conference on Kurdish Women for Peace and Equality call for:

A. The establishment of an international steering committee for future activities: Commit them to become more organized on behalf of the empowerment of Kurdish women, Pledge them to create additional opportunities for Kurdish women to share knowledge and resources with each other; and Dedicate them to change the status quo for the betterment of all who live in Kurdistan.

B. The Resolution committee of the International Conference on Kurdish Women urges the legislative branch to:

1. Build a housing complex for Anfal women, which must include a Culture center to:

- Remove the negative emotional effect by providing continuous consolation, emotional therapy and medical help.**
- Eliminating high percentage of illiteracy.**
- Providing training with the tools to work and depend on themselves rather than the government or other member of the remaining family. Their dependence on the family often results in abuse and cruelty against them.**
- Create jobs for them as a priority for the government and the public to help them to get out of the depression they are in.**

2. Ensure punishment by law for any kind of abuse against women.

3. Find powerful mechanisms for preventing abuse such as Honor Killing, self brining forced by abuse, beating, verbal and physical abuse under the law,

4. Prevent tribal settlement by law in Honor killing cases.

5. Ensure punishment by law for forced prostitution by the husband or any member of the family.

6. Prevent forced circumcision by law for women, which violates religious and civil rights.

7. Change the civil rights law, which has existed since 1959, by protecting women's rights regarding divorce and polygamy. The law must protect the rights of women and men at the same time, where women and men have the rights to 50% of all money, properties, business and household belongings held at the time of the divorce. The polygamy must be prohibited, only if there is a medical issue involved and this must be regulated by law.

8. Establish Community Culture centers in every city, small town, and village to perform the following:

- **Professional training:** occupational center such as job skills, computer, medical assistant, sewing, housekeeping, business, language, etc.
- **Emotional therapy:** counseling, phone hotline, art therapy.
- **Family (children):** Childcare provider, workshops, activities and games.
- **Social events:** dance classes, photography, theater performances, exercise facilities (sport complex).
- **Educational:** To provide educational opportunities, group workshop, Language training hygiene workshop, recruitment opportunity to get jobs, website for the center capable of broadcasting all the activities in the center, and to prevent genital mutilation.

9. Ensure the Government provides land, financial support and security protection to the current NGOs to build new shelter homes to protect the women from cruelty and abuse in each city, small town and village to provide:

- **Counseling services** to help men and women put their lives together back under one roof free from physical abuse and to preserve the family integrity. Also, to emphasize on the future of the children and the negative effects on them in the long term.
- **Medical help** to remove the negative aspects of the abuse and rebuild confidence to be part of the society again.
- **Job training** to prepare women to be financially independent of their husband and the family.

10. Increase the role of the women in the Kurdistan Regional Government and all other legislative branches. The women in Kurdistan must be given important ministerial posts to show true support by the government. The percentage of the women in Ministry is among the lowest in the world.

11. Ensure the Government creates job opportunities for women to be independent financially of their husband and other members of the family, because economic independence of women will result in self-confidence and lowering the abuse against them.

12. Increase the role of the women in the leadership of Kurdish political parties to

reflect the true sacrifice they have given to advance the cause of the Kurdish people to gain rights for self-determination.

13. The Government must strengthen the responsibility of the Ministry State for Women Affairs, where they have control on all the women NGO to coordinate their efforts to advance women's rights in all aspects of life. The ministry can play an important role as a liaison between the government and the NGOs to make the NGOs more efficient and effective. The ministry must establish a think tank group from women in and outside Kurdistan as an advisory group to the ministry to deal with all the issues related to the future of women in Kurdistan and bridge women in Kurdistan with international partners around the world.

14. Strengthen networking to advance and coordinate women's rights globally:

- 1. Create a network between Kurdish women's organizations in Kurdistan.**
- 2. Create a network between Kurdish women's organizations in Europe.**
- 3. Create a network between Kurdish women's organizations and other worldwide organizations such as American and European women organizations.**

The conference delegates salute the Kurdish Parliament for the percentage of the women in the Parliament, which ranks high among parliaments in the world. The delegates look forward to increase their number in the next Parliamentary election based on their qualifications not the quota. The conference strongly emphasizes the role of engaging men in women's issue and the women were delighted by the percentage of men present in the conference and discussions. This was the first time there is high percentage of men present in any women's conference in Kurdistan. This phenomenon will help the women to advance the role and rights in the near future. Also, help the men to understand the importance of the role of women to be partners in building a new society. The Kurdish National Congress is committing itself to continue advancing the cause of women in Kurdistan to gain their full rights through such conferences and advises all the NGOs in Kurdistan to coordinate their efforts with other NGOs outside Kurdistan. All speeches and papers presented at the conference will be published in a special booklet soon. For more information regarding the conference, please contact: Mrs. Soraya Fallah, email: sorayaf40@yahoo.com,soraya@vokradio.com, or email KNC at: knc@kurdishnationalcongress.org, For more detail Please visit www.kncna.org, <http://www.vokradio.com/>

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