

Extraditing Kurds to Turkey will not help resolve Turkish-Kurdish tension

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Kurdish National Congress of North America

Recently, Spanish authorities decided to extradite two Kurdish political activists, Dr. Remzi Kartal and Mr.Eyyup Daru to Turkey on unclear grounds. In fact, these appear to be the same charges that were thrown out by a German court in 2005.

Spain is a democratic country and as promoter of democracy and preserver of human rights, Spain should be sensitive to the long history of the Turkish oppression against the Kurds. We would expect Spain to join those who are diligently working to find a solution to the Kurdish cause and not contribute to the problem. Spanish authorities should know that Kurdish rights are a human rights issue, a political issue, and cultural issue; therefore for Spain to extradite these Kurdish activists is a violation of its own human rights credo.

Turkey's request for EU membership has not been supported by some EU member nations. We therefore hope that this action on the part of Spanish authorities is not intended as a way to soothe Turkey's disappointment against the decision of some EU members.

Extraditing Kurds to Turkey will not resolve the Kurdish issue. Therefore, instead of continuing to live in a cycle of fear, hate and repression, it is in Turkey's interest to take a step back and look at the long shared history of cooperation between the Turks and the Kurds. Kurds and Turks have come a long way together and have shared many joys and sorrows in the past centuries.

For Turkey to demonstrate that it has the human rights policies of a future EU nation, it would be in their interest to revive this shared history where Kurds and Turks are partners in creating a better future rather than antagonists who live in the past. Turkey holds the key to resolve this conflict.

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