



Subcommittee on Human Rights: Parliamentary Question

Brussels, Belgium

14 July 2011

Subject: Announcement of Iraqi Turkmen Hearing

Below is the full transcript of Metin Kazak's Parliamentary Question:

Chairman (translated): And now I'd like to go over to the third question which was asked by The question relate to the minorities in Kirkuk in Iraq. Over to you.

Mr Metin Kazak: Thank you very much chairman. As the United States prepares to withdraw its forces from Iraq and the European Union is working to expand its cooperation with Baghdad, the city of Kirkuk and its vulnerable population of Iraqi Turkmen remains as much as ever a flashpoint for violence that may prove the biggest threat to the stability and security of Iraq as a whole. While violence throughout Iraq has been declining, Kirkuk is experiencing a rise in bombings, assassinations and intimidations that target Iraqi Turkmen and others in a potent demonstration of ineffective local government and security structure, a loss of faith in the central government and deepening mistrust in a process that seems to be working against the city's historic Turkmen community. So, there have been voices urging the United States to retain a presence in Kirkuk to protect the Iraqi Turkmen community, for greater representation of Iraqi Turkmen in the federal administration, expansion of the power associated with the Kirkuk governate and government council and for a reassessment of Iraqi Turkmen social and political situation in Kirkuk. So my question, what with this perspective to the European External Action Service, is how they see this cost and what steps is the EAS taking to support a peaceful and equitable solution to the question of Kirkuk and the second and additional question is what action is the European External Action Service taking to support initiatives intended to promote deep and meaningful dialogue between political parties, including all Iraqi Turkmen parties associated with the disputed territory of Kirkuk. Thank you.

Chairman (translated): Thank you very much. Now I would like to give the floor to representative of the EEAS to answer to this question.

Commission: Thank you very much Mr Chair. I have an answer that has been provided to me by the Iraq desk of the EAS, which, more than the specific situation in Kirkuk emphasizes that a very substantial proportion of EU support has been given to the most vulnerable Iraqis, many of whom are internally displaced, living in areas with dense minority group populations. EU assistance has ranged from humanitarian assistance to support for the protection and promotion of human rights to the rehabilitation of schools and it has been systematically based on principles of non-discrimination and impartiality. The EU has also provided support to Iraq in its efforts to re-establish rule-of-law and effective governance including through the EUJUST LEX mission. In general terms the Foreign Affairs Council addressed the issue of violence against minorities at its meeting of November 2010 and adopted conclusions stressing that the new government in Iraq would need to rededicate itself to the pursuit of national reconciliation, representing the interests and needs and protecting the human rights of all Iraqis regardless of ethnicity or creed. In terms of the question on dialogue, the EU fully supports the United Nations which has been in the lead on this issue and is playing a prominent role in facilitating physical dialogue on the disputed territories between Iraq's minorities. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has continued to work with the new Iraqi government and the Kurdistan region government to ensure follow-up to the high level task force for advancing the issues of disputed internal boundaries and the status of Kirkuk. Thank you.

Chairman (translated): Thank you very much. Would Mr Kazak want to ask a follow-up question?

Kazak (translated): Thank you president. I would like to thank the representative of the



European External Action Service for this answer. I believe the answer clearly that the complicated situation I've brought up in my question is not fully realized. This is a region that needs special attention; it's a region in a very delicate and very worrying situation. The Iraqi Turkmen community needs special attention and I expect the European External Action Service to really pay attention to this question because we are talking here about breeches of basic human rights. These people are godforsaken and this is the third community in Iraq in terms of size that has been victimized by the great powers and the way they govern the situations so we are going to organize a hearing on the matter.

Chairman (translated): Would the commission like to answer the question?

Commission: Thank you Mr Chairman. I will simply relay the information to the relevant colleagues. And we look forward to receiving information about the hearing and to ensure proper representation there. Thank you.