HISTORY MADE IN PARIS ON MARCH 28, 2015

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Category: Opinions

Hamo Moskofian, Paris-Beirut, 30 March 2015

It took months of intensive and often secret contacts in a dozen cities in Iraqi Kurdistan, Germany and in Belgium to realise the international "Mission Impossible" which became successful in the last minute, thanks mostly to the intervention of His Excellency President Masoud Barzani of Iraqi Kurdistan, the son of legendary Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani.

Yerwant Amenian, Raffi Hovanissian, Mikail Aslan, Ali Halo, Souren Seraydarian, Shabo Akgul

And what was the mission? To bring Iraqi Kurdistan MPs Yerwant Amenian and Ali Halo to Paris to attend the historic Fourth Congress of of Western Armenians held in the French capital March 28-29. The mission was capped with victory (obtaining entry visas to France for the two Kurdistan politicians) when the Iraqi Kurdistan government intervened directly to facilitate the process.

Amenian, a third-generation offspring of Genocide survivors, addressed the gathering on the first day of the 4th Congress and said that his grandparents had sought refuge in the Kurdish border city of Zakho, where Kurdish leader Shamdin Beg had saved the lives of countless Armenians. The Kurdish leader had done so despite the fact that most Kurdish tribal chiefs had refused to assist the desperate Armenians. The Armenian MP said, "to this day Iraqi Kurdistan is the only country, after Armenia, which provides millions of dollars to build Armenian churches and compounds on its territory."

MP Halo admitted the negative role played by most of the Kurdish leadership during the Genocide. He officially apologized and said that Iraqi Kurdistan had accomplished considerable compensation to the Armenians—"a nation with whom Kurds have had friendly relations from Zoroastrian times."

He added that Kurds extended a friendly hand to Armenians for reconciliation. "We want to start a new dawn of peace and solidarity between our two nations—nations of the same origins, living in the same territory for millennia and who became victims of the satanic projects of the Ottoman Empire and the so-called modern Turkey," said the Kurdish MP.

He added that it was time to look forward to the future and welcomed Armenia's recent decision to open a consulate in Erbil—"the capital of the de facto state o Iraqi Kurdistan."

The two MPs met two other prominent guests at the gathering: Shabo Akgul from Germany who is the leader of the "Mesopotamia Peoples' Union of Turkey" and famous Zaza singer musician Mikail Aslan also from Germany. Both Akgul and Aslan addressed the gathering. For details on the Akgul speech please see "Unprecedented First Steps on a Long Journey". In addition to his speech, Aslan sang several bars from an old Armenian song.