

MR. SMITH QUESTIONS ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE  
MARC GROSSMAN AT HIRC HEARING, OCTOBER 29, 1997

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DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE

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HEARING  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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OCTOBER 29, 1997

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Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 1998

45-250 CC

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For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office  
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20540  
ISBN 0-16-059000

## EXCERPTED FROM THE HEARING TRANSCRIPT, PP 21-22.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Without reciting the lengthy list of Turkish human rights violations, including the use of torture, it is fair to say that Turkey's record of implementation of OSCE human dimension commitments is very poor. For example, the Committee, to protect journalists, has documented the fact that at least 47 Turkish journalists, the largest number of any country in the world, remain imprisoned.

I would just like to ask you if you can give the current thinking of the Administration on the issue and whether or not there will be an insistence that, if it is to occur, the summit in Turkey sometime next year, that there first needs to be progress in the area of human rights.

And second, we all know that the Romanians had originally talked about making a bid for that, but it was during the election, although that is over now, and we all know that, probably more than anyone else, the Romanians are moving very aggressively in a whole host of fronts to make that democracy work.

Would Bucharest then be an alternative venue, and is that something you might pursue?

Mr. GROSSMAN. Mr. Smith, thank you very much for those questions. Let me try to respond as candidly as I possibly can.

First, sir, I hope that you know my record as the ambassador to Turkey, which was that we spoke about, was committed to and kept after this question of human rights. And I want to say, and I have no fear of saying it out loud and in public, as I have done on many times in the past, that precisely the issues that you raised, banning of torture in Turkey and the fact that there are too many journalists in jail in Turkey—zero is too many—too many journalists in jail in Turkey is very much of concern to me personally—was when I was the ambassador to Turkey, remain now.

I believe, as I said to Mr. Gilman earlier, and to Mr. Hamilton, that an answer to most of Turkey's problems—I don't say all Turkey's problems, but most of Turkey's problems—is more democracy and not less democracy. And I hope, Mr. Smith, you will hear me continue to speak out that way, because that is what I believe and I believe that is what the Administration is committed to. Human rights is a very important part of our agenda with Turkey.

Second, sir, on the question of the OSCE summit, or the summit in Istanbul and here I would take Mr. Lantos' invitation to be candid—we have made a decision about what to do about Istanbul, and we have to do that, I think, sometime before December; and we look forward to continuing in consultation with you about that.

But let me say two things. It is my instinct here—and I just speak personally. It is my instinct here that we want to continue to try to engage the Turks in this conversation about their commitments and about the OSCE and about the kinds of things that they need to do to become more democratic, and I have a very practical piece of evidence here which might lead me to recommendation. I won't say what it is right now, but it might lead me to a recommendation, and that is I happened to be the ambassador to Turkey when Habitat II took place in Istanbul; and I must say, sir, that having this huge international conference in Turkey was a wonderful thing, it was a wonderful thing for Turkish NGO's, it was a wonderful thing for those parts

of civil society in Turkey that didn't have a chance to sort of break out and be part of an international community before. It gave confidence to people in civil society in Turkey that lots of things were happening in the world, and it was a very exciting time. And would I have missed it? No, I think it would be too bad. Did I think it added to Turkish civil society? Yes, I think it did.

So my instinct about this is always going to be one of engagement, and I recognize that that may be a debatable point, but my instinct would be for engagement. My model would be Habitat, and I would need to think about that.

But to answer your question very directly, I can't imagine that we would go forward in discussions with Istanbul without also talking about the requirements and needs and interests of not just the United States, obviously, but other countries as well, and I would say, of many people in Turkey for more democracy in Turkey.

Mr. SMITH. Just very briefly to follow up, I think the opportune time to press for those human rights issues would be before any decision is made, and I think you would agree with that. Second, did Habitat really produce any long-lasting changes in the area of human rights even though that was not the focus of it?

Mr. GROSSMAN. No, sir, and I don't mean to be—I am sorry, can I ask a question?

Mr. BEREUTER. Briefly.

Mr. GROSSMAN [continuing]. Don't mean to be misunderstood.

What I was trying to say was that Habitat, for the purpose it served, which opened up to Turkish people and to NGO's and to civil society there a window on the world, which was more than beneficial.

**EXCERPTED FROM THE HEARING TRANSCRIPT, PP 31-32.**

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, I appreciate that. First of all, I want to acknowledge that our former Member, good friend, and colleague, Tom Evans, from Delaware, is in the room. Welcome to the Committee.

Mr. Ambassador, just let me ask you again. In reflecting on your statement with regard to the OSCE summit, I wonder about the lesson learned from the U.N. Habitat conference held in Turkey several months ago.

The lesson learned may be the wrong one, and I say this with all due respect. When we are talking about shelter and something around which there is a clear consensus—more housing, better housing, cleaner housing, and things of that kind—it does not provoke a government to crack down on opposition. Last night Mr. Hoyer, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Solomon, Mr. Markey, and I introduced a resolution, H. Con.

Res. 179, which would express the sense of Congress that until there is progress in the area of human rights the venue ought to be changed. I asked you about Romania, whether or not that might be suitable, and perhaps you might want to respond to that because, again, they are breaking their backs to try to move toward democracy, human rights, civil society and the whole list of items that all of us enjoy. There is disappointment in Bucharest that they were not invited to be part of NATO during this first round. This might be one way of at least recognizing their progress.

The sense of the Congress, the operative line just says, "until there is progress". It is a concern. I just want to raise that in the context of the Habitat Conference. We know that the NGO's that are getting raided are the human rights foundation of Turkey, and their chapter offices throughout Turkey are the ones whose doors are being crashed and whose people are being dragged away. And as you know so well, as former ambassador, journalists when they write ill of the ruling party sometimes find themselves being arrested. In a way, that is a major part of civil society.

As much as all of us in politics sometimes loathe the reports we get from newspapers, I, like many of my colleagues, would defend freedom of the press to the hilt because it is one of the greatest protections of our democracy. Yet they have targeted the journalists in a very special way. So I would hope, as the thinking progresses on this, that the Habitat experience might be taken into consideration.

I argued the same thing unsuccessfully, when the women's conference was held in Beijing. I was in Beijing for a week. I co-led the delegation for Congress to that. And I was amazed—I don't read Chinese, but I got the Chinese newspapers every day and had somebody who could understand Chinese read major headlines to me and some of the articles. I would then juxtapose that with what was going out to the rest of the world, which was critical of Beijing, as it ought to be, versus what was being used for internal consumption. The Chinese regime saw it as a major public relations coup, that somehow we were honoring the human rights of women in China, when you and I know that that regime treats women as second-class citizens and commits crimes like forced abortions and other heinous acts. I am certain, especially given the control over the press, that this kind of summit will lead to that same kind of internal press. There might be some negative articles, but those journalists might find themselves in jail as a result.

So I would just ask that the Habitat conference be seen as significantly different from this kind of conference, which is seen as a reward of sorts. I would ask if that would be part of your consideration. Ours is a bipartisan resolution, and we do think that there is a venue that might be better. Unless there is progress, we would be tripping over ourselves to say, "Turkey, that is just fine and dandy".

So it is a conditional sense that we have that we really want to see some progress. I just commend that to your thinking.

Mr. Grossman. Mr. Smith, thank you very much. I certainly take your point.

I obviously take lessons from where I can find them, and I certainly am not trying to argue with you. The only point I was trying to make on Habitat was exactly the point you made, which is, how do you expand civil society; and Habitat helped us do that and, more importantly, helped Turks do it for themselves.

You properly said, and I said, I haven't made a decision. I was trying to inform myself and I am grateful for your views.

Mr. Smith. Again, it is how they treat their opposition. The threat doesn't come from shelter building, but it does come from somebody who says, wait, I don't like this policy. The next thing you know, they get the knock in the middle of the night from the police.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Grossman. Yes, sir.

S. CON. RES. 59, INTRODUCED BY SENATOR D'AMATO,  
OCTOBER 31, 1997 III

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

## S. CON. RES. 59

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the human rights situation in the Republic of Turkey in light of that country's desire to host the next summit meeting of the heads of state or government of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 31, 1997

Mr. D'AMATO submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the human rights situation in the Republic of Turkey in light of that country's desire to host the next summit meeting of the heads of state or government of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Whereas the Republic of Turkey, because of its position at the crossroads of Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Middle East, is well positioned to play a leading role in shaping developments in Europe and beyond;

Whereas the Republic of Turkey has been a longstanding member of numerous international organizations, including the Council of Europe (1949), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1952), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (1975);

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Whereas Turkey's President, Suleyman Demirel, was an original signer of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;

Whereas the Republic of Turkey proposed in late 1996 that Istanbul serve as the venue for the next OSCE summit, a prestigious gathering of the heads of state or government of countries in Europe, Central Asia, and North America, including the United States;

Whereas a decision on the venue of the next OSCE summit will require the consensus of all OSCE participating states, including the United States;

Whereas the OSCE participating states, including Turkey, have declared their steadfast commitment to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms, the protection and promotion of which is the first responsibility of government;

Whereas the development of genuine democracy in Turkey is undermined by ongoing violations of international humanitarian law as well as other human rights obligations and commitments, including provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents, by which Turkey is bound;

Whereas the Department of State has found that serious human rights problems persist in Turkey and that human rights abuses have not been limited to the southeast, where Turkey has engaged in an armed conflict with the terrorist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) for over a decade;

Whereas flagrant violations of OSCE standards and norms continue and the problems raised by the United States

Delegation at the November 1996 OSCE Review Meeting in Vienna persist;

Whereas expert witnesses at a 1997 briefing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (in this concurrent resolution referred to as the "Helsinki Commission") underscored the continued, well-documented, and widespread use of torture by Turkish security forces and the failure of the Government of Turkey to take determined action to correct such gross violations of OSCE provisions and international humanitarian law;

Whereas the Government of Turkey continues to use broadly the Anti-Terror Law and Article 312 of the Criminal Code against writers, journalists, publishers, politicians, musicians, and students;

Whereas the Committee to Protect Journalists has concluded that more journalists are currently jailed in Turkey than in any other country in the world;

Whereas the Government of Turkey has pursued an aggressive campaign of harassment of nongovernmental organizations, including the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey; branch offices of the Human Rights Association in Diyarbakir, Malatya, Izmir, Konya, and Urfa have been raided and closed; and Turkish authorities continue to persecute the members of nongovernmental organizations who attempt to assist the victims of torture;

Whereas four former parliamentarians from the now banned Kurdish-based Democracy Party (DEP) Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan, and Selim Sedak remain imprisoned at Ankara's Ulucanlar Prison and among the actions cited in Zana's indictment was her 1993 appear-

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ance before the Helsinki Commission in Washington, D.C.;

Whereas the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights has expressed concern over the case of human rights lawyer Hasan Doğan, a member of the People's Democracy Party (HADEP), who like many members of the party, has been subject to detention and prosecution;

Whereas many human rights abuses have been committed against Kurds who assert their Kurdish identity, and Kurdish institutions, such as the Kurdish Cultural and Research Foundation, have been targeted for closure;

Whereas the Ecumenical Patriarchate has repeatedly requested permission to reopen the Orthodox seminary on the island of Halki closed by the Turkish authorities since the 1970s despite Turkey's OSCE commitment to "allow the training of religious personnel in appropriate institutions";

Whereas members of other minority religions or beliefs, including Armenian and Syrian Orthodox believers, as well as Roman Catholics, Armenian, Chaldean, Greek and Syrian Catholics, and Protestants have faced various forms of discrimination and harassment;

Whereas the closing of the border with Armenia by Turkey in 1993 remains an obstacle to the development of mutual understanding and confidence, and friendly and good-neighborly relations between those OSCE participating states;

Whereas the Republic of Turkey has repeatedly rebuffed offers by the Chair-in-Office of the OSCE to dispatch a personal representative to Turkey for purposes of assessing developments in that country;

Whereas, despite the fact that a number of Turkish civilian authorities remain publicly committed to the establishment of rule of law and to respect for human rights, torture, excessive use of force, and other serious human rights abuses by the security forces continue; and

Whereas the Government of Turkey has failed to meaningfully address these and other human rights concerns since it first proposed to host the next OSCE summit and thereby has squandered this opportunity to demonstrate its determination to improve implementation of Turkey's OSCE commitments: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*  
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3            (1) the privilege and prestige of hosting a sum-  
4            mit of the heads of state or government of the Orga-  
5            nization for Security and Cooperation in Europe  
6            (OSCE) should be reserved for participating states  
7            that have demonstrated in word and in deed stead-  
8            fast support for Helsinki principles and standards,  
9            particularly respect for human rights;

10           (2) the United States should refuse to give con-  
11           sensus to any proposal that Turkey serve as the  
12           venue for a summit meeting of the heads of state or  
13           government of OSCE countries until the Govern-  
14           ment of Turkey has demonstrably improved imple-  
15           mentation of its freely undertaken OSCE commit-  
16           ments, including action to address those human

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1 rights concerns enumerated in the preamble of this  
2 resolution;

3 (3) the United States should encourage the de-  
4 velopment of genuine democracy in the Republic of  
5 Turkey based on protection of human rights and  
6 fundamental freedoms; and

7 (4) the President of the United States should  
8 report to Congress not later than April 15, 1998, on  
9 any improvement in the actual human rights record  
10 in Turkey, including improvements in that country's  
11 implementation of provisions of the Helsinki Final  
12 Act and other OSCE documents.

13 SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit  
14 a copy of this concurrent resolution to the President of  
15 the United States.

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LETTER TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE MARC  
GROSSMAN, DATED NOVEMBER 3, 1997

ALFONSO D'AMATO, New York, Chairman  
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey, Co-Chairman

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**COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**  
224 FORD HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-8455  
(202) 226-1901  
FAX: (202) 226-4100  
E-MAIL: CSCOE@MAIL.FORDHOUSE.GOV

SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
JOINT U.S./CANADIAN COMMISSION  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

November 3, 1997

The Honorable Marc Grossman  
Assistant Secretary of State for European  
and Canadian Affairs  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Ambassador Grossman:

We are writing in anticipation of Thursday's OSCE Permanent Council meeting, at which Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz is expected to make a personal appeal in support of Turkey's bid to host the next OSCE summit, to urge the Department and the U.S. delegation in Vienna to take full advantage of this opportunity to make a clear statement on longstanding human rights concerns in light of the Turkish proposal. The United States should insist on concrete improvements before joining any consensus on the Turkish proposal.

We have repeatedly communicated our concerns to the Department over the past year and wish to reiterate our continued opposition to Turkey as the venue for the next OSCE summit until such time as there has been a demonstrable improvement in that country's implementation of OSCE commitments. The privilege and prestige of hosting an OSCE summit should be reserved for participating States that have demonstrated steadfast support for Helsinki principles and standards -- particularly respect for human rights -- in word and in deed.

Such linkage is not new in the OSCE. When, in the mid-1980s, Moscow expressed an interest in hosting a human rights conference of Helsinki signatory states, the United States and several other OSCE countries insisted on specific human rights improvements before they would agree to the Kremlin's proposal. This approach contributed to a tremendous improvement in the Soviet Union's human rights record. Should we expect any less from our allies in Ankara?

Unfortunately, Turkey has squandered the opportunity to demonstrate its determination to improve implementation of Ankara's freely undertaken OSCE commitments over the past 12 months. Given your years of service in Turkey, you are well aware of the actual human rights situation on the ground, and the concerns we have raised are not new. You can also appreciate the fact that hoping against hope does not promise to bring about the kinds of improvements in Turkey's human rights performance that we all desire.

Frankly, developments in Turkey over the past few days underscore the sad state of human rights in Turkey. A week ago we learned of the imprisonment, reportedly for up to 23 years, of Eber Yaguzdereli, for a speech he made in 1991. The same day, a three-judge panel backed down after police officers who are accused of torturing 14 young people in 1995 refused to appear in court.

The Honorable Marc Grossman  
November 3, 1997  
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Such developments make it all the more important to make use of every opportunity, such as Thursday's Permanent Council session, to press for the resolution of outstanding human rights cases and concerns in Turkey. Simply put, Mr. Secretary, Turkey's desire to host an OSCE summit must be matched by concrete steps to improve its dismal human rights record.

As you are aware, last week we introduced identical sense of the Congress resolutions in the Senate (S.Con.Res. 59) and House (H.Con.Res. 179) with respect to the human rights situation in Turkey in light of that country's desire to host the next OSCE summit. (See attached copy of S.Con.Res. 59.) Our proposal does not call for an outright rejection of Ankara's bid to host an OSCE summit, but urges the United States to refuse to give consensus to such a proposal until such time as the Government of Turkey has demonstrably improved implementation of its freely undertaken OSCE commitments. This is the message the United States should convey to Prime Minister Yilmaz when he appears before the Permanent Council later this week.

A decision on Turkey's desire to host an OSCE summit should not be forced by an artificial deadline, such as the December Ministerial Council meeting in Copenhagen. If the Turkish leadership needs additional time, we should give it to them. Accordingly, our resolution calls for the President to report to the Congress by April 15, 1998 on any improvement in the actual human rights record in Turkey.

Meanwhile, the Commission looks forward to working with you and your colleagues at the Department to advance our common objective of encouraging improved implementation of OSCE commitments by the participating States, including Turkey.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, M.C.  
Co-Chairman



ALFONSE D'AMATO, U.S.S.  
Chairman



STENY HOYER, M.C.  
Ranking Member

LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT,  
DATED DECEMBER 5, 1997

ALFONSO DIAMATO, New York, Chairman  
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey, Co-Chairman

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Sen. Christopher Bond, Missouri  
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
JAMES H. DUNN, 1000 WEST 17TH STREET  
DENVER, COLORADO 80202-3200  
PHONE: (303) 733-4100

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
236 FORD HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6400  
(202) 225-1991  
FAX: (202) 225-4199  
E-MAIL: CSC@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV

December 5, 1997

The Honorable Madeleine K. Albright  
Secretary of State  
Department of State, Room 7226  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Albright:

We write today to bring to your attention our concerns regarding the Helsinki Process on the eve of your departure for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's 1997 Ministerial Meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. Paradoxically, as the OSCE completes a period of significant operational success and faces the possibility of an expanding role in regional affairs, we believe that the core attributes that give the Helsinki Process its unique vitality, relevance, and effectiveness are in jeopardy. We believe that this situation requires determined U.S. leadership to save the OSCE from diversion from its critical and still uncompleted tasks.

Distinct from other international institutions, the core of the Helsinki Process is its human dimension, and the human dimension's vitality and relevance depend on public insistence that its principles are upheld and implemented by each participating State. In recent years, a combination of factors has marginalized and devalued the human dimension, so that human rights violators are not pressured effectively to correct their misconduct.

Public diplomacy, and especially U.S. public diplomacy, is the lifeblood of the human dimension. Our work encourages voting publics in the western democracies to tackle cases and causes aimed with OSCE human rights principles. Issue disaggregation caused by the OSCE's institutionalization, the European Union's struggle to develop a common foreign and security policy (with a distilled consensus EU view being presented by one member State at OSCE meetings), and indecisive international response to genocide in the former Yugoslavia contributed to the human dimension being ignored by the news media and relegated to obscure OSCE meetings.

The major issues facing the Copenhagen Ministerial should be seen in this context. We believe that European Security Model development is headed in the right direction, and agree with the policy objective of avoiding the creation of a hierarchy of institutions. Because of Turkey's grievously poor human rights record, we oppose the Turkish proposal that Istanbul host the next OSCE summit. We have respectively introduced resolutions in the Senate and House calling for the U.S. to deny consensus to this proposal until Turkish human rights performance changes.

The Honorable Madeline K. Albright  
December 5, 1997  
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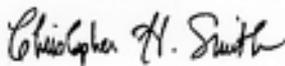
for the better. In this regard, the Ministerial could provide an appropriate venue to communicate the specific issues of immediate and priority concern to the United States.

Regarding the implementation review process, we understand that the Director of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Ambassador Gerard Stoudmann, will present a paper calling for study and recommendations on how best to strengthen this unique component of the OSCE. We agree that the process needs to be realigned and strengthened, and strongly believe that the United States should be resolute and determined in its effort to maintain a distinctive, open review process focused on implementation of agreed commitments and obligations.

Commission staff have provided more detailed views on these points and other human dimension issues to Department officials in a memorandum. The close working relationship between your officers and our staff can only strengthen the Helsinki Process and increase the effectiveness of our joint efforts to promote U.S. values and advance U.S. interests within the OSCE.

We appreciate your kind attention to these concerns and look forward to hearing from you upon your return about the results of the Ministerial.

Sincerely,



Christopher H. Smith, M.C.  
Co-Chairman



Alfouse D'Amato, U.S.S.  
Chairman

**QUESTION SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY JOHN SHATTUCK**

**HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 3, 1998**

**TURKEY**

**Question.** With respect to Turkey's bid to host the next OSCE summit, you are probably well aware of opposition I have voiced given that country's dismal human rights record—a view shared by a bipartisan group of my colleagues on the Helsinki Commission. When Secretary Grossman appeared before this Committee last October, we discussed the proposed summit and he stressed the positive impact such high-profile meetings can have on civil society in Turkey.

As you may be aware, the OSCE convenes an implementation review meeting immediately preceding summit meetings. In light of Secretary Grossman's remarks, and mindful of your upcoming trip to Turkey, have you raised or will you raise the possibility of Turkey hosting the implementation review meeting as well as the summit, should—and I stress should—Ankara actually institute genuine human rights reforms that lead to real change?

**Answer.** We share your concerns about the human rights situation in Turkey and have raised these issues with the Government of Turkey. We have raised the possibility of an OSCE Implementation Review Meeting in Turkey, preceding an OSCE summit meeting, with Turkish government officials. The Turkish Government is willing to consider hosting such an event if proposed by the OSCE. While Istanbul is still the only summit venue under consideration, its candidacy is currently being blocked by one OSCE participating state. It is unclear how or when this impasse may be resolved in the near future, leaving open the possibility of an alternative venue for the 1999 summit.

LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT,  
DATED MARCH 18, 1998

J. ALFONSO DIAMATO, New York, Chairman  
CHRISTOPHER N. SMITH, New York, Co-Chairman

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Don Han/Robert Johnson	Frank P. Gray/ Virginia
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Lynda B. Johnson/ New Jersey	John H. Brown/ Maryland
Harry Paul/ Nevada	Edward J. Griffin/ Massachusetts
Bob Cochran/ Florida	Richard L. Garcia/ Minnesota
Robert C. Ferguson/ Massachusetts	Locher Robinson/ Michigan, Secretary

ALTERNATE SECRETARY: ROBERTA KENNEDY  
JANET COOPER/PAUL (Chairman of the Staff)  
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MARTIN J. WOODWARD/STEPHEN W. WOODWARD

WIRETEL & TELETYPE: GARY DE LUCA  
SECRETARY: PAUL WOODWARD/STEPHEN W. WOODWARD

COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
236 FORD HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0400  
(202) 225-1801  
FAX: (202) 225-4188  
E-MAIL: CSCE@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV

March 18, 1998

The Honorable Madeleine Korbet Albright  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

We understand that the OSCE Permanent Council is expected to revisit the issue of the date for the next summit meeting in keeping with the decision of the Copenhagen Ministerial Council and that there may be an attempt to set the venue as well. In this regard, we continue to oppose Turkey's bid to host the next OSCE summit in Istanbul given Ankara's failure to meaningfully address longstanding human rights concerns, including concerns the Commission has raised with Turkish officials and shared with you last July and with Secretary Christopher back in November 1996. Accordingly, we urge you in the strongest possible terms to oppose the Turkish proposal to host the next OSCE summit in light of Turkey's continued dismal human rights record. One need only review the interventions of the U.S. delegation at the November 1997 Warsaw OSCE Implementation Review Meeting to appreciate the scope of ongoing human rights abuses in Turkey. In addition, we understand that the Turks appear to be backsliding on ODIHR initiatives on prison guard training and judicial reform.

We need not repeat the lengthy litany of these well know abuses -- from the widespread use of torture and the repression of the Kurdish minority to restrictions on political expression. A survey of developments from the past few weeks alone vividly document the dismal state of human rights in the Republic of Turkey.

Last week a Turkish court decided to acquit ten policemen reportedly responsible for torturing 14 students in Manisa. After a half-hour of deliberation, the three-judge panel decided that the evidence was not sufficient to convict the officers despite eyewitness testimony and independent forensic medical findings. The verdict in this high-profile case sends a message of impunity to others involved in the practice of torture.

The Turkish authorities continue to aggressively target the leadership of the People's Democracy Party (HADEP), the main legal pro-Kurdish political party, for harassment and prosecution. Two former parliamentarians from the now banned Party for Democracy (DEP) were sentenced for so-called "separatist propaganda." Meanwhile, the Democratic Mass Party (DKP) faces possible closure. Taken together with the banning of various political parties, these actions form a disturbing pattern of restricting political expression in Turkey's fledgling democracy.

The Honorable Madeline Korbet Albright  
 March 18, 1998  
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Despite indications from Turkish authorities that the state of emergency in the southeast would be lifted, the National Security Council of Turkey recently extended that status in Diyarbakir, Hakkari, Sirir, Sirmak, Tunceli, and Van provinces for a further 4 months.

The Kurdish Research and Culture Institute of Istanbul, visited by members of a Commission delegation in January, have been brought before the Istanbul State Security Court on charges of conducting Kurdish language courses without authorization. The teaching of the Kurdish language is prohibited in Turkey, a country in which a quarter of the population is made up of Kurds.

With respect to freedom of expression, several intellectuals have recently been sentenced for past statements or articles while dozens of journalists remain jailed and new cases are opened against others. According to the U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists, 34 journalists were in prison at the end of 1997 - more than in any other country.

While the Turkish leadership has been more willing to engage in discussion of human rights issues, the bottom line must be the actual human rights situation on the ground in Turkey. Important as dialogue may be, discussion is no substitute for concrete deeds. Unfortunately, the bold steps the Commission and the Department had hoped would be forthcoming have simply not materialized and the prospects for meaningful change appear quixotic.

Madam Secretary, the bestowing of the privilege and prestige of hosting the next OSCE summit on Turkey by default would be completely unacceptable. Our steadfast position is that the United States should refuse to give consensus to any proposal that Turkey serve as the summit venue until the Government of Turkey has demonstrably improved implementation of its freely undertaken OSCE commitments.

Respectfully yours,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, M.C.  
 Co-Chairman



ALFONSO D'AMATO, U.S.S.  
 Chairman

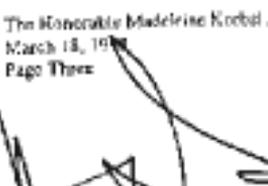


STENY H. HOYER, M.C.  
 Ranking Member, House



FRANK R. LAUTENBERG, U.S.S.  
 Ranking Member, Senate

The Honorable Madeline Korbet Albright  
 March 18, 1998  
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MARK EDWARD FOLEY, M.C.



SPENCER ABRAHAM, U.S.S.



EDWARD J. MARKEY, M.C.



OLYMPIA SNOWE, U.S.S.



HARRY REID, U.S.S.

LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT,  
DATED FEBRUARY 12, 1999

COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

234 FORD HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

(202) 225-1901

February 12, 1999

The Honorable Madeleine Korbel Albright  
Secretary of State  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

We write to reiterate our concerns over the deplorable state of human rights in the Republic of Turkey in light of the recent Oslo Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Ministerial Council decision to convene a Summit Meeting of Heads of State or Government this November in Istanbul. Notwithstanding expressions of concern over Ankara's failure to implement a wide range of OSCE human dimension commitments, the United States labored to secure a consensus in support of Turkey's bid to host this prestigious event. Now that this fateful decision has been taken we urge the Department to press for improved human rights implementation in Turkey, while keeping open the possibility of not participating in the Istanbul summit should the situation deteriorate further.

One year after a Commission delegation visited Turkey, our conclusion is that there has been no demonstrable improvement in Ankara's human rights practices and that the prospects for much needed systemic reforms are bleak given the unstable political scene that is likely to continue throughout much if not all of 1999. A review of the Department's own human rights indicators for Turkey confirms a complete lack of progress on these critical issues: decriminalization of freedom of expression; release of imprisoned parliamentarians and journalists; reopening of human rights NGOs; and ending the state of emergency in the southeast. Statements by the U.S. delegation to the 1998 Warsaw OSCE Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension Issues provide ample documentation of Turkey's clear, gross and uncorrected violations of OSCE commitments.

Imagination, courage, and persistence will be necessary both in Ankara and in Washington if we are to move beyond the unacceptable status quo. Continuous engagement with the Turks on human rights is essential. A bilateral human rights mechanism should be put into place immediately for this purpose. While the United States should press for systemic and legal reforms, priority should be given to the resolution of individual human rights cases. The Commission stands ready to work with relevant officials at the Department to develop such lists.

The Honorable Madeleine Korbel Albright  
 February 12, 1999  
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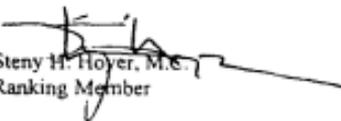
In an attempt to bolster civil society in Turkey, the United States should encourage Ankara to agree to host the Review Conference that will precede this year's OSCE summit. Such a development would provide Turkish human rights NGOs with an invaluable opportunity to participate in an OSCE meeting devoted at least in part to human dimension issues. Holding the Review Conference in Turkey would also provide an important fora for our allies in the European Union to pursue their human rights concerns with the Turks. Finally, we urge the Department to closely monitor preparations and modalities for any OSCE meeting to be held in the Republic of Turkey to ensure that arrangements are fully consistent with past practices concerning openness and access to such meetings.

With respect to modalities for Review Conferences, we urge the United States Mission in Vienna to press for modifications along the lines of those adopted in 1998 for the Implementation Meetings on Human Dimension Issues. The recent experience at the Warsaw Meeting was very positive and enabled non-governmental organizations to maximize their participation, providing for a much more dynamic meeting.

Madam Secretary, an Istanbul OSCE summit is certain to be steeped with symbolism beyond the substance of such a high visibility convocation. Ankara's continued failure to resolve longstanding human rights issues and individual cases will have an impact on the credibility of the OSCE and stand as a potential embarrassment for the U.S. President participating in a summit in Turkey. Our steadfast position is that the United States should insist that the Government of Turkey demonstrably improve implementation of its freely undertaken OSCE commitments.

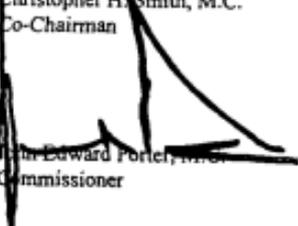
The Commission stands ready to work with you and your colleagues at the Department to advance the cause of human rights in Turkey in anticipation of the Istanbul OSCE summit.

Sincerely,

  
 Steny H. Hoyer, M.C.  
 Ranking Member

  
 Edward J. Markey, M.C.  
 Commissioner

  
 Christopher H. Smith, M.C.  
 Co-Chairman

  
 John Edward Porter, M.C.  
 Commissioner

LETTER FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY BARBARA LARKIN,  
DATED MARCH 17, 1999



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

MAR 17 1999

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of February 12 addressed to Secretary Albright concerning the OSCE Summit Meeting being convened in November in Istanbul.

The U.S. joined with all other OSCE member states last year in reaching consensus on the selection of Istanbul as the summit site. We share your concern over continuing human rights problems in Turkey and regularly raise these concerns with Turkish leaders. Nonetheless, we believe that holding the OSCE Summit in Istanbul helps advance our human rights agenda with Turkey because it will focus attention in Turkey on human rights issues and on Turkey's compliance with OSCE obligations.

We have been working with other OSCE member states to finalize plans for this year's Implementation Review Conference. We are encouraging the OSCE to hold at least part of the Review Conference in Istanbul, to focus on human dimension issues at the Istanbul meetings, and to engage broad indigenous and international NGO participation there in keeping with modalities adopted during the 1998 Human Dimension Implementation Review Meeting in Warsaw. Assistant Secretary Grossman and Assistant Secretary Koh look forward to discussing these issues with you further on March 18.

We hope this information is useful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Larkin  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs

The Honorable  
Christopher H. Smith,  
Co-Chairman,  
Commission on Security  
and Cooperation in Europe,  
House of Representatives.

**STATEMENT OF VAN Z. KRIKORIAN, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA**

**MARCH 18, 1999**

Chairman Smith, Co-Chairman Campbell, and CSCE Commissioners, I thank you for the opportunity to submit a written statement on behalf of the Armenian Assembly of America.

The Armenian Assembly is a national non-partisan, non-profit organization that promotes public understanding and awareness of issues of concern to Armenian-Americans and many other Americans of good will. Our organization promotes the rule of law, human rights and strengthening civil society via the indigenous non-governmental community. US AID funded the Assembly to promote the development and growth of Armenia's NGO sector, including organizations dedicated to human rights, the rule of law and social welfare. Now in its fifth year of operation, our program has served over 700 NGOs. The Assembly has also been an active participant in OSCE and CSCE conferences in the past.

Mr. Chairman, the Armenian Assembly joins scores of other NGOs in urging that the forthcoming Istanbul Summit of Heads of State or Government provide for the broadest possible participation by the international community. NGOs, particularly those active in human rights, the environment, and security matters, should not only be allowed, but be encouraged to participate fully in the Istanbul Summit. Prior to the Summit, the international NGO community should also be encouraged to engage comprehensively in any preparatory review meetings. The selection of Istanbul for the biennial Summit was controversial.

Given Turkey's long established record of failing to meet OSCE and other international norms on human rights, minority rights and the rule of law, many expressed strong reservations with the selection. Turkey's continuing denial of the Armenian Genocide, including the suppression of free speech on the issue, as well as its often times destabilizing role in the peace and security of the region, are among the valid reasons for concern. Ultimately, consensus was achieved and Turkey was accorded the privilege of serving as Summit host. We call to the CSCE's attention that Armenia withdrew its reservation despite Turkey's refusal to establish normal and full diplomatic relations, to end the blockade of Armenia which is in violation of U.S. and international laws, and the failure to support the current OSCE peace plan on the Nagorno Karabagh conflict. It is our understanding that prior to consensus being reached, Turkey assured the United States that the international NGO community would be accorded unfettered participation in the preparatory review meeting in Turkey, as well as the Summit. We call on the CSCE and the Clinton Administration to insure that Turkey fulfills these commitments. Specifically building on the OSCE tradition of full NGO engagement, we expect that the host country's NGO community will be allowed to establish a Parallel Activities Committee and Secretariat. We further expect that the Parallel Activities effort will be free from government interference and will be open to all domestic and international NGOs. We believe such a step will ultimately serve the cause of the OSCE, and more importantly, a healthy Turkish society.