

Kurdish Human Rights Project

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KHRP PUBLIC STATEMENT

Swiss Bank Backs out of Ilisu Dam Project: KHRP Urges Remaining Funders to Follow.

KHRP welcomes the long-overdue decision of the Swiss Zuercher Kantonalbank to pull out of the highly controversial Ilisu Dam project. Zuercher Kantonalbank, along with other European institutions funding the Dam project have come under massive public pressure to withdraw, given the enormous damage the Dam would cause to the lives and homes of the riverine populations of south-east Turkey, Iraq and Syria.

The project fails to meet international standards in the areas of environmental protection, resettlement plans, and cultural preservation. It threatens to displace over 50, 000 people, completely destroy a 9000 year old heritage site and irreparably damage a unique natural habitat. The Turkish government also failed to consult with local communities affected by the project or with neighbouring states, in violation of international law. Iraq has repeatedly expressed concerns about the situation, but Turkey is moving forward with plans despite the lack of negotiations.

KHRP Executive Director Kerim Yildiz today stated: " Several weeks ago KHRP made it clear that investment in the Ilisu dam amounted to investment in mass displacement, pollution, drought and regional instability. KHRP welcomes Zuercher Kantonalbank's decision to withdraw from the Ilisu dam project. KHRP and its partners further call on the remaining funders of the project to duly follow Zuercher Kantonalbank's example and withdraw immediately from the project."

For further information on Ilisu please see KHRP's latest briefing paper, *The Ilisu Dam Project - A Flawed Plan is Revived Unchanged* , which provides a full background to the Ilisu issue, and details how the renewed project still fails to meet international standards, just as it did back in 2002. The briefing paper can be accessed on the KHRP website at www.khrp.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Kurdish Human Rights Project is an independent, non-political human rights organisation dedicated to the promotion and protection of the human rights of all people in the Kurdish regions. It is a registered charity, founded and based in London

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