

Statement of the Riigikogu On Iraqi Kurdistan Independence Referendum

Recalling that:

- the right of self-determination of peoples' upon which the Republic of Estonia was founded in 1918, is a cardinal principle of international law that continues to be in force through the Charter of the United Nations;
- the Republic of Estonia respects the principle of territorial integrity;
- the borders of states can only be changed peacefully, through democratic, free and fair expression of will of people;
- in 1920 the participant countries in World War I signed the Treaty of Sèvres under which they recognized the right of the Kurdish people to a self-determination referendum.
- that the Republic of Estonia, represented by General Johan Laidoner, Chairman of the League of Nations Committee, participated in determining the existing state border of Iraq;
- the Republic of Estonia has suffered 20 casualties as killed or wounded in defending the democracy of Iraq since 2003;
- the Republic of Estonia always strives for peaceful resolution of conflicts;

the Riigikogu, the Parliament of the Republic of Estonia:

1. Affirms that it respects the territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq, as long as preserving it will not bring along violent suppression of the human and political rights of the Kurdish minority in Iraq;
2. Understands the legitimate aspirations of the Kurdish people in exercising their right to national self-determination;
3. Invites all parties to maintain a peaceful, transparent, democratic and mutually respectful attitude after the Iraqi Kurdistan independence referendum;
4. Calls upon all countries of the region not to interfere with the internal affairs of the Republic of Iraq;
5. Calls upon the Government of the Republic of Iraq and the Government of the Kurdish Autonomous Region, in the post-referendum situation, to solve the question of the status of Iraqi Kurdistan through negotiations
6. Expresses hope that the Iraqi Kurdistan independence referendum of 25 September will be a step in nonviolent resolution of the status of the Kurdish minority in Iraq by reconciling the right to self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity.

Eiki Nestor
President of the Riigikogu