

May 11, 2006

The Honorable
J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Notification of Arms Sales to Turkey

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As you are aware on April 28, 2006, the Department of Defense sent a notification to the Congress, through your office, regarding the proposed \$162 million dollar Foreign Military Sale to Turkey for 50 AGM-84K Joint Standoff Land Attack Missiles-Expanded Response (SLAM-ER) in addition to associated equipment and services.

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency "News Release" of April 28, 2006, states that "Turkey will use the SLAM-ER as a standoff weapon on its F-16 aircraft." What does this mean? It is our belief that Turkey intends to use these weapons for offensive purposes, which could include attacks against the Kurds inside Iraq. If that happens, the U.S. and its allies in Iraq stand to lose control of the last bastion of stability that exists currently within Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, in the interests of the United States we urge you to raise objections on behalf of the Congress to this impending sale of military missiles.

Since the 1980's, Turkey's brutal suppression of its Kurdish minority has been accomplished with U.S.- supplied arms as documented in reports by the State Department, the World Policy Institute, the Federation of American Scientists, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The grant and sale by the U.S. of arms to Turkey these past decades has made the U.S. an **accessory** to Turkey's horrific human rights record against its Kurdish minority.

Similarly, Turkey's illegal use of U.S.- supplied arms in its 1974 invasion and continuing occupation of Cyprus, and the U.S.'s failure to immediately halt arms to Turkey as required by U.S. law, and the failure to denounce Turkey's aggression, as most nations did, made the U.S. an **accessory** to Turkey's invasion of and occupation in Cyprus.

Despite the end of the Cold War, Turkey has a military inventory far beyond its legitimate defense needs. Who is threatening Turkey? Each year Turkey spends a disproportionately large amount of its resources on its military. This not only reflects the military's deeply entrenched influence over Turkish society, but also drains away resources better spent on economic reform, that is desperately needed if Turkey is ever to achieve the minimum economic criteria for EU accession. The result is chronic financial distress necessitating periodic requests for emergency assistance from the International Monetary Fund

(IMF), the World Bank and the U.S. taxpayer. Ceasing U.S. arms supplies will contribute to a more rational allocation of Turkey's resources, thereby bringing about badly needed economic reform. Halting further arms sales or transfers will also eliminate a stimulus for the regional arms race.

The U.S., in its own best interests, should not give any further military aid nor authorize any military sales to Turkey until Turkey ends its occupation of Cyprus, now in its 32nd year and removes its 40,000 Turkish armed forces illegally in Cyprus and 120,000 illegal settlers/colonists from Turkey; halts its suppression of the religious freedom and its persecution of the Eastern Orthodox Christian Ecumenical Patriarchate; halts its actions suppressing the ethnic Kurdish minority in southeastern Turkey; halts its illegal incursions in northern Iraq; and recognizes the Armenian Genocide.

The U.S. should stop further sales or transfers of arms and military technology to Turkey and should continue an arms embargo until Turkey supports a democratic, workable, financially viable and just solution to the Cyprus problem and demonstrates significant improvement in its human rights and religious freedom record.

Further, the vast majority of U.S. military sales to Turkey have been subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. In many cases, these taxpayer funds are supporting military production and employment in Turkey, not in the United States. Of the billions of dollars in U.S. weaponry delivered to Turkey in the past two decades, it is estimated that a very large percentage, possibly as high as 77% of the value of those shipments, has been directly or indirectly financed by grants and subsidized loans provided by the U.S. government.

Mr. Speaker, can you please provide us with information on how Turkey is proposing to pay for these missiles?

In addition, this potential sale to Turkey negatively affects the military balance in the region and U.S. efforts to encourage a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question. Turkey has used American supplied weapons and bombs in the past to harmfully invade Cyprus in 1974. On July 20, 1974, Turkey invaded the Republic of Cyprus with illegal use of U.S.-supplied arms and equipment in violation of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the UN Charter article 2 (4), the preamble and article 1 of the NATO Treaty and customary international law. Turkish pilots flying American supplied planes dropped American-made bombs (including napalm bombs), terrorizing and killing innocent Greek Cypriot civilians in Nicosia, Famagusta, Kyrenia, and elsewhere. The Turkish air force consistently violates Greek airspace over the Aegean Sea.

Turkey has violated U.S. law in the past by transferring from Turkey to Cyprus 12 U.S.-supplied M-48 tanks and other arms. Since December 22, 1987, 22 U.S.C. 2373 absolutely prohibits the transfer by Turkey of U.S. supplied arms to Cyprus without regard to whether the arms remain in the control of the Turkey military.

Subsection 2373 (e) (1) reads as follows:

(e) Arms sales agreements to prohibit transfer to Cyprus

(1) Any agreement for the sale or provision of any article on the United States Munitions-List...entered into by the United State after December 22, 1987, shall expressly state that the article is being provided by the United States only with the understanding that it will not be transferred to Cyprus or otherwise used to further the severance or division of Cyprus.”

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in the interests of the United States we urge you to raise an objection on behalf of the Congress to this impending sale of military missiles to Turkey.

Respectfully,

Gene Rossides

cc: Senator Bill Frist, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Harry Reid, Senate Minority Leader
Representative John Boehner, House Majority Leader
Representative Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader
Representative Henry Hyde, Chairman, International Relations Committee
Representative Tom Lantos, Ranking Member, International Relations Committee
Representative Jerry Lewis, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
Representative David Obey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
Representative Duncan Hunter, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
Representative Ike Skeleton, Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Senator Joe Biden, Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Senator Thad Cochran, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Robert Byrd, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator John Warner, Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
Senator Carl Levin, Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee