

## Remarks With Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul After Meeting

### Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Enseboga Airport Lounge

Ankara, Turkey

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**FOREIGN MINISTER GUL:** (in Turkish) I am honored to host our ally and friend, U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Rice, and I believe that the timing of this visit also indicates the importance attached by the two countries to the relations, and I believe that this is a very important visit that Dr. Rice is paying to Turkey. Turkey and the United States are two allies for quite a very long time, and they are not only allies in military issues, but they are also allies in cultural and commercial issues as well. Our relationship is based on common values, and one important common value for the two countries is democracy. Of course, the two allies will always be cooperating and will be in close collaboration in the fields of peace and prosperity, economic development, and the struggle against terrorism.



In our meetings today, we had an opportunity to sincerely discuss the regional issues about our neighboring country, Iraq, and other issues in detail. I believe that the two countries will be able to follow the issues that we have discussed today, and that we will have even closer collaboration and cooperation as two allies. I would once more like to thank Ms. Rice for her visit to Turkey, and I would like to wish her a safe journey back.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you very much, Minister. I have very much enjoyed my brief visit here to Turkey, and look forward to returning at a future time. We have had very fruitful discussions, and I wanted to come here as a part of my first trip as Secretary of State to talk about the very important strategic relationship that the United States and Turkey enjoy: a relationship that is based on interest, a relationship is based on a common view of the future, but most importantly, a relationship that is based on common values.

I wanted also to come to talk about some of the most important issues before us. We did talk about Iraq, and I reiterated the commitment of the United States to a unified Iraq, the territorial integrity of Iraq, to an Iraq which is at peace with its neighbors, an Iraq in which all Iraqis regardless of religious or ethnic background -- Sunnis, Shia, Turkmen, Kurds and other minorities -- are all welcome and respected. I also wanted to talk to the Minister, and we had a good opportunity to talk about America's commitment that Iraq's

territory should never be a place from which terrorism can be committed against its neighbors. That is what it means to be at peace with your neighbors, and indeed, from the American point of view, whatever terrorist organizations wish to perpetrate crimes against populations have to be treated the same. Whether it is the al-Qaeda, or the PKK, or the Palestinian rejectionists, terrorism is simply not an acceptable tool in the modern world. I wanted to be certain that the Minister and his colleagues knew of America's commitment to rid the region of terrorism, including terrorism that might take place from the territory of Iraq.

We also had a very good opportunity to talk about future issues, the importance of getting back on track to a resolution of the Cyprus issue. We had an opportunity to talk about our hopes for a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and here I was very much pleased to receive the advice and counsel of the Minister, who has recently been in the Middle East. I am now on my way there, and we will be in contact about what we can do to promote the opportunities for a sustained momentum toward peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Finally, we had an opportunity to talk about our hopes for the broader Middle East: a Middle East of reform and opportunity, a Middle East in which democracy flourishes and which there are transparent governments. We talked about the special role that Turkey can play in that initiative, and our joint desires for a Middle East in which all people live in freedom and liberty and prosperity.

Thank you very much Minister, and I want to thank also the Prime Minister for last night and President Sezer, and we look forward to working with you.

**QUESTION:** Madam Secretary, your next stop is in the Middle East, where the momentum is picking up and events are moving very rapidly, obviously. My question is, exactly how is the United States going to be represented in this process? At your Senate confirmation hearings, you mentioned about a special envoy, vaguely. We are also hearing reports about possibly creating some sort of mechanism within the State Department to monitor this process. Can you list elucidate for us please?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, we are examining how the United States might best organize itself to be an active partner in what is now, we hope, a sustained momentum toward progress in the Palestinian-Israeli issue. I believe I said that while we have no objection to a special envoy in theory, we have to determine when that would be most helpful if indeed at some point in time it is. So, I would not expect to have any announcements about a special envoy, but we are looking to how best to organize, not just the Department of State but its relationship to the parties on the ground and to our missions there, so that we can be active partners. We'll probably have more for you on that as it unfolds. We're still working on some aspects of it, but it's extremely important and the Minister and I had very good discussions. He's just recently met with Prime Minister Sharon and with President Abbas, and he was able to give me some good counsel on what I might do when I'm there.

**QUESTION:** Turkish Prime Minister Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that anti-American tendency is on the rise in Turkey and it is seemingly not valid on Turkey, but also for the other democratic countries. What is your comment on that, and do you think unless the United States revises its policies in Iraq the trend can turn events reverse? And do you claim that American policies try to bring democracy to the Middle East. Don't you think that the peoples of democratic countries doesn't understand the United States?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, on the last point it's entirely possible that there isn't a full understanding of American policies and what America desires. It is incumbent on us to talk more about it, to be able to talk to our friends so that our friends can talk more about what the United States stands for. Obviously, in the relationship with Turkey, we have together stood together through the Cold War, as members of NATO to face down imperial communism and to see the development of a vibrant and prospering democracy here in Turkey. The United States has been a supporter of the now accession of that vibrant democracy into the European Union, when Turkey has met the conditions that are necessary for that. We've been active with Turkey in supporting its economic reforms and its relationship to the International Monetary Fund.

So, right here in Turkey, I think we have an example of what a relationship and friendship with the United States can mean. And even when there are differences as there have been and undoubtedly will be in the future, it is not a comment on the strength of the relationship, the centrality of the relationship to the two countries. And I would just say to the countries of the Middle East that we recognize, and President Bush recognized when he was at Whitehall in Great Britain, that for too many years administrations, Democratic and Republican, were not sufficiently attentive to the aspirations of the people of the Middle East to live in freedom and liberty. This is a universal value that the United States doesn't hold alone, and certainly would never presume to impose forms of government on other people. Dictators impose; democracies support and nurture each other toward a democratic development as we have done here in Turkey. So if we are not getting the message out, I hope that we will be better at doing it.

As to Iraq, we are turning of course to a new chapter in Iraq with the elections that took place last Sunday. They were the first elections for the Iraqi people on what is definitely going to be long course toward the development of a free and prosperous, democratic and united Iraq. But, it was an important step, and we are encouraging, as are our Turkish allies, encouraging the Iraqis now to use that election, and those who come to power as a result of it, to build an Iraq that is respectful of and inclusive of all Iraqis who wish to build a democratic future together. But, the Iraqi people faced down the fears that the terrorists tried to impose. They went to the polls, they demonstrated that they have a desire for freedom, and I think we had good discussions about how we can support this process going forward.

**QUESTION:** Thank you both very much. I have a question for each of you, and sort of related...we talk about getting messages out, and as you know, every day in the Arab media and in Muslim media, we see some of the worst slander against Jews. I wonder,

Secretary Rice, what you will be saying to the Palestinian parties, and to others in this region, that you haven't already said before to curb incitement. And as we are on the eve of a summit meeting between the Israelis and the Palestinians, what message would you send to Arabs and Muslims throughout the Middle East and throughout the world about the fundamental nature and character of Jews as a people and whether they deserve respect?

**SECRETARY RICE:** James, I believe that when we were at Aqaba, or actually Sharm-el-Sheik before Aqaba, there was a very good discussion with the Arab leaders who were there, including Crown Prince Abdullah and King Abdullah of Jordan...Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia...President Mubarak of Egypt and the King of Bahrain, that... and, of course, then Prime Minister Abbas...that the key in many ways to progress is to change the perceptions of each other and the realities of each other if indeed there is going to be a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Israel deserves to live in peace in the Middle East and the Jewish people deserve the respect of their neighbors. We have been very clear that incitement cannot be countenanced; it cannot be ignored, that it is not possible simultaneously to say that you want a peace between the Israelis and the Palestinian that is lasting, and at the same time ignore or countenance some of the most horrific caricatures of Israelis or anti-Semitism in any form. Both sides need to make certain that they are representing positive images of each other, of their cultures. These are great civilizations. Both Arab and Islamic civilizations, and, of course, the Jewish civilization, are great civilizations that have contributed greatly to human progress, and continue to contribute to human progress. And that needs to be the message that underlies the desire for the states to live in peace. And so, it is indeed a very important message. I think that President Abbas himself has spoken out from time to time about the need to end incitement, and we would expect all parties -- Arab, Israeli, Palestinian -- to do what they can with their populations to prepare the ground for the peaceful establishment of two states living side by side.

**FOREIGN MINISTER GUL:** (in Turkish) A short while ago I paid a visit to Israel and Palestine. And as I have seen there as well, there is still an optimistic climate. And I believe that if the suicide attacks by the Palestinians and the killings by the Israelis come to an end, then I believe it will be possible for a mutual understanding on the issue by both sides, and already there is such an understanding.

As the peace process is realized, I believe that when it becomes obvious that the Palestinians and Israelis can live side by side, then I believe such negative impressions and feelings will come to an end, as well. And on the other hand, it had been a fact throughout history that the Jews and Muslims in fact never had wars against each other. And I believe that when both the Israelis and the Palestine people do have their own governments, then it will be possible to see security in the region and then a new understanding will emerge, and therefore we should all be contributing positively to this process.

**QUESTION:** Minister Rice, Turkey and U.S. have some problems, both sides were uncomfortable; for example, Turkey has been criticizing U.S. for its policies in Iraq and U. S. disliked the criticisms. And within this respect, what is your expectation from the Turkish government to avoid the highly increasing anti-Americanism in Turkey and in the region? And what U.S. will do to reduce the anti-Americanism, considering Turkey's concerns in Kirkuk and PKK? Thank you.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you. We of course are working together on underlying concerns, like the presence of terrorist organizations that need to be dealt with. The United States has listed, of course, the PKK as a terrorist organization. We had discussions about the importance of a Kirkuk that is a city in which all Iraqis are welcome and respected, and the need for the Iraqis themselves -- and it is going to be their responsibility as a new government -- that will be a message jointly from the United States and Turkey that all of these things need to be resolved within a democratic context, but within a democratic context that brings all Iraqis, regardless of ethnic or national background, to a place that they can be respected in Iraq and be represented and be a part of the new Iraq.

We will work on the underlying difficulties that we've faced, but as I said, friends have differences from time to time, and the important thing we remember that we are still friends. And in doing so, we also said, each of us that we have a responsibility with our publics because we have democracies to speak out for how important and central this relationship is to both of us; to remind all of us and our people of the long history that we have together, of what we have achieved together, of what we have supported for one another, and of what a prosperous future we have in working on the many difficult and complicated issues ahead, as well as the bright opportunities ahead.

So, I believe that if we continue to talk about not just the differences that we have, while working on those differences, but also the many positive elements of the Turkish-American friendship, the many times that Turkey has supported America, and America-Turkey, that any sense that this relationship is somehow not worth sustaining will simply go away. The Turkish population and the American population have to know that this is a critical relationship for both our futures. Thank you.

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