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Banca Mondiale**



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## **Ilisu Dam Fact Finding Mission 9<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 2000 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

In response to widespread international concern over the cultural, social and environmental impacts of the planned Ilisu dam in the Kurdish region of South-East Turkey, the Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) of Switzerland, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Austria, Japan, Portugal, Sweden and the USA imposed four conditions that would have to be met by the Turkish government in order for the project to obtain export credit support. The four conditions, announced in December 1999, were as follows:

1. Draw up a resettlement programme which reflects internationally accepted practice and includes independent monitoring;
2. Make provision for upstream water treatment plants capable of ensuring that water quality is maintained;
3. Give an assurance that adequate downstream flows will be maintained at all times;
4. Produce a detailed plan to preserve as much of the archaeological heritage of Hasankeyf as possible.

To assess the progress being made by the Turkish government in meeting the four conditions, an international Fact Finding Mission of Non-Governmental Organisations from the United Kingdom, the USA, Germany and Italy visited the Ilisu area from the 9<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 2000.<sup>1</sup> The Mission met with affected people, prominent municipal officials, lawyers, and local professional associations relevant to the project. Throughout its visit, the Mission was followed by state security police, who also sat in on one interview uninvited.

The Mission concludes that the four conditions imposed by the ECAs have yet to be met – and that the prospect that they will be met in the near future is remote. It will be pressing the ECAs to refuse export credit support for the project.

The Mission's main findings are set out in this preliminary report. The Mission confirms earlier concerns that:

- Conditions in the region make a fair and just resettlement to international standards unattainable;
- Well-documented failures of past and current resettlement projects in Turkey, acknowledged by the Turkish government, have still to be addressed in any substantive way;
- Doubts still exist as to the true number of people who would be potentially affected;
- Consultation with the affected people in the Ilisu area has been piecemeal, inadequate, biased in its format and constrained by an air of intimidation. Some key consultations which the Turkish government apparently claims to have taken place have in reality not occurred;
- Host communities have not been asked to draw up resettlement plans and their budgetary requirements have not been assessed, in contravention of World Bank standards;
- The adequacy of the socio-economic surveys required to meet international standards has been questioned;
- Lack of capacity and institutional fragmentation render a coherent resettlement programme unachievable. Major institutional reforms will be necessary before there can be any confidence that resettlement will be carried out to international standards. There is also a need to overhaul existing compensation procedures;
- Planned sewage treatment facilities in upstream towns are inadequate to ensure water quality in the reservoir area, either because they will not cover the entire population or because they are still at the feasibility stage;
- The downstream impacts of Ilisu may be underestimated because no comprehensive analysis has been undertaken of the cumulative impacts of both Ilisu and its companion downstream dam at Cizre. The two projects are interdependent but have been wrongly represented as separate and unconnected;

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<sup>1</sup> The Fact Finding Mission was organised by the Kurdish Human Rights Project and The Ilisu Dam Campaign. The NGOs represented on the Fact Finding Mission were, in alphabetical order: Campaign "An Eye on Sace" (Italy), The Corner House (UK), Kurdish Human Rights Project (UK), Pacific Environment Research Centre (USA), World Economy, Ecology and Development (Germany).

- Time and financial pressures on investigations and salvage of the archaeological wealth of the affected area render such rescue efforts reckless, haphazard and contrived. More important, efforts to salvage archaeological resources are limited to artefacts and cannot extend to the thousands of caves in the area, even though the cave civilisation is the essence of the irreplaceable treasure that is Hasankeyf.

The Mission comes shortly after the announcement by Skanska, the Swedish company which had a 24 per cent stake in the consortium that aims to build the dam, that it is withdrawing from the project. The company told the *Financial Times* that the decision resulted from “unspecified negotiating problems”. It is widely held within the affected communities visited by the Mission that the company was unconvinced that the project would meet international standards.

The Mission’s detailed findings on the four conditions laid down by the ECAs are set out below.

## CONDITION ONE

### **“Draw up a resettlement programme which reflects internationally accepted practice and includes independent monitoring”**

The Turkish government has promised to undertake a resettlement plan to international standards. Earlier this year, the Turkish State Water Authority (DSI) commissioned SEMOR, a Turkish consultancy firm, to undertake surveys of the numbers likely to be affected and their socio-economic conditions in order to draw up a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP). Independently, the Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) hired Ayse Kudat, a sociologist formerly at the World Bank, to review the draft plan. Kudat’s review – sent to the agencies in early August – highlighted more than ten concerns over the draft plan:

- Sweeping institutional reforms within Turkey are needed before “best practice” – as defined by World Bank or OECD guidelines – can be achieved;
- The Turkish government has failed to consider alternatives to the Ilisu project, which violates both World Bank and OECD guidelines;
- The project was approved before a resettlement plan was drawn up, which flouts both World Bank and OECD guidelines;
- The Turkish authorities have failed to draw up a full socio-economic census, which violates World Bank guidelines;
- There are major gaps in information needed to draw up a resettlement plan to international standards;
- No resettlement budget has been prepared – in violation of World Bank and OECD standards – and, it is suggested, a paper commitment from Turkey to make the money available cannot be trusted;
- Major economic and political obstacles must be overcome before it can be ensured that affected people will not be worse off than they were before the project, as the World Bank demands;
- The special provision to protect the livelihoods of women has been ignored, in violation of World Bank guidelines;
- Pastoralists will not be compensated for their land loss, in contravention of OECD guidelines.

The Fact Finding Mission confirmed these concerns. In particular, its meetings with communities affected by past and current projects, notably the Ataturk and Birecik dams, left it with no doubt that the past failures of resettlement in Turkey, highlighted by Kudat and acknowledged by the Turkish government, have still to be addressed in any substantive way.

The Mission also found that consultation with the affected people in the Ilisu area has been piecemeal, partial, biased in its format and inadequate. The Mission was also deeply concerned to learn that many of the key consultations which the RAP claims should have taken place have in reality not occurred. There are doubts, too, about the adequacy of the socio-economic surveys undertaken by DSI: the Mission heard from many villagers that they were asked no questions pertaining to their means of livelihood.

The Mission also concluded that the lack of basic freedom of expression, movement and political rights in the region makes the prospect of a just and fair resettlement unattainable.

### ***Confusion over the number of affected people***

Originally, the project sponsors and the companies involved in the Ilisu project put the number of people affected at 12,000-16,000. Following the findings of a previous Fact Finding Mission in 1999, this number was increased to 25,000. Subsequently, a report by the British government put the numbers still higher - at 35,000. The Kudat report states that even this figure is a gross underestimate. According to Kudat, 78,000 people would be affected by the project.

Kudat's figure includes those evicted (or forced to migrate) from the Ilisu reservoir area as result of internal conflict in the region, but who may wish to return once peace is restored. Kudat does not give figures for this category of affected people. However, she does stipulate that provisions should be made for their compensation. To its credit, the Turkish government has accepted this principle.

The region of eastern Turkey, including the project area, has for decades been devastated by an armed conflict between the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) and the Turkish state. There is no official government or intergovernmental body monitoring or providing help for refugees from the war. However, the Mission met with GOC-DER, a Turkey-wide Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) providing support for those displaced from the region. Interviews were also conducted with a number of villagers forcibly evicted from the Ilisu reservoir area. All expressed a desire to return to their villages but, understandably, given the traumas their forced eviction involved, they are reluctant to do so until peace is fully restored and the area is no longer subject to military rule.

Contrary to Kudat's view that such villagers would be unlikely to request compensation, the opinion of the Mission is that those evicted would demand compensation if their land were flooded by the dam. It is important to stress, however, that those interviewed were primarily seeking justice and an acknowledgement of their rights, and not just monetary recompense.

The Mission obtained a list of 85 villages in the Ilisu area from which all the residents had been forcibly evicted and, in many cases, the villages burned as a result of security operations carried out by Turkish government forces in the 1980s and 1990s. It was suggested by GOC-DER that a minimum of 45,000 people have already been removed from the reservoir area and possibly as many as 50,000. **The ECAs should verify whether Kudat's figures were based on similar estimates and, if not, whether this raises the numbers of potentially and actually affected people. If the numbers are higher than Kudat's estimates, the ECAs should insist on a reassessment of the resettlement budget which has yet to be finalised, in addition to a related re-evaluation of the financial viability of the project.**

The Mission was deeply concerned to learn that no efforts have been made by the Turkish authorities to contact GOC-DER, despite its central role and expertise in assisting evicted communities. It also learned that those forcibly evicted from the reservoir area have not been consulted with a view to assessing their potential compensation claim. The liabilities that need to be met in any resettlement budget are thus largely unknown.

### ***Failures to learn lessons from the past***

Kudat comments: *"In the Turkish context, past failures have been particularly severe with respect to inadequate and inappropriate delivery of resettlement housing, lack of concern with the well-being of self-settlers, transparent participation of affected populations in resettlement decisions, and monitoring of social impacts during and after dam construction."*

It is generally acknowledged that the resettlement programme at the Ataturk dam which affected between 150,000 and 200,000 people<sup>2</sup> has fallen far short of international standards. The Mission met with villagers affected by the project and learned that compensation was frequently inadequate and delayed,<sup>3</sup> that more than 80 per cent received no compensation whatsoever and no replacement houses; and that those few who obtained compensation have often lost that money because of rapid inflation, a lack of familiarity with city life and commercial activities.

Many villagers told the Fact Finding Mission they "were not resettled, but evicted". Others stated that "resettlement had resulted in major social problems, including the breakdown of social networks, clashes and disputes among neighbours over compensation, and resulting injuries and deaths". The Mission also found evidence of a dramatic increase in malaria following the filling of the dam's reservoir and the operation of its associated irrigation canals. These reports are consistent with a recent report by the World Health Organisation documenting a rise in malaria resulting from the development of large dams in the region. Schistosomiasis has also appeared in the area. Given such concerns, the Mission was deeply concerned to hear that efforts by local journalists to publicise health and environmental concerns

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<sup>2</sup> The official figure from GAP authorities is 75,000

<sup>3</sup> Until recently the average yearly inflation ratio in Turkey has resulted to be more than 50 per cent

have been blocked by the authority and resulted in one local newspaper being closed altogether.

The Turkish authorities claim that they have learned lessons from Ataturk, a view that has also been expressed by the companies involved in the Ilisu dam. However, the Fact Finding Mission found that villagers resettled earlier this year as a result of the Birecik dam experienced the same problems as those resettled at Ataturk, at the very time that the authorities and the project proponents were reassuring the international community, including Export Credit Agencies, that everyone would be properly compensated and that there would be no repeat of the Ataturk debacle. Several cases contesting compensation have been taken to European Court of Human Rights.

The Fact Finding Mission met villagers at Birecik who testified that, in some cases, they had been forcibly evicted from their villages. Others told the Mission of numerous families who received no compensation whatsoever, because they did not have land rights, and who still have not been given houses despite promises that they would be rehoused. Villagers who have been moved to new resettlement sites complained that their new houses are over-crowded and had not even been finished when they moved in. One oustee told the Mission, "In the new villages, it is like death".

Of particular concern is the absence of any viable employment for those resettled. One result is that those who received compensation are rapidly running through their savings. Many see no prospect other than emigration to local conurbations, where services are already overstretched and unemployment levels are high. The Fact Finding Mission was particularly alarmed to learn that several of the abuses in resettlement at Birecik have occurred within the last year – a time when the Export Credit Agencies were being assured that the problems of resettlement in Turkey were in the past. **The Mission recommends that no export credits be approved for Ilisu until there is clear, independently verified evidence that the problems of past resettlement have been satisfactorily addressed and resolved.**

### ***Lack of land titles***

The lessons from Ataturk and Birecik are clear: those who lack title to land do not get compensated despite assurances that they will be. It is therefore of grave concern that the vast majority of people in the Ilisu reservoir area lack titles to land. In Hasankeyf, for example, the Mission confirmed Kudat's estimates that the vast majority are landless.

Assurances from the Turkish authorities that, in the case of Ilisu, those without title will be compensated must be treated with extreme caution. Past experiences suggest that such assurances are more honoured in the breach than in the observance. In Hasankeyf, the Mission learned that residents who were moved out of the caves in the 1960s were provided with houses, but that they were not awarded title to them until three years ago - at which point they had to pay for the houses, even though they already paid for them when they first moved in. The experience at Birecik is also significant, given that the authorities failed to fulfil promises to compensate those without land.

The Mission notes with considerable concern that land registries do not even exist for some of the villages that would be affected by Ilisu. According to the Kudat report: "*It is of utmost importance for DSI to provide guidance by earmarking the lands that are to fall under the reservoir for partially affected displaced communities. DSI should establish procedures to do so for the large number of displaced settlements without a land/title registration system.*" **The Mission recommends that no export credits be awarded until such land registration has been satisfactorily completed.** This is important not only to ensure that landless families currently living in the reservoir area are properly compensated in the event of the dam being built, but also to ensure that those (possibly as many as 50,000) who have been forced to migrate from the reservoir area due to the conflict also receive just compensation.

### ***Inadequate consultation***

International standards require full consultation with affected communities, in addition to a full socio-economic survey. The Kudat report notes that a total of 2,100 households have been consulted, covering 45 settlements, a third of households in Hasankeyf, and "over 100" displaced households. This is out of a total of 183 settlements to be affected by the Ilisu dam. In effect, less than a third of the settlements affected have been surveyed. Others, admits Kudat, were not consulted because of the security situation in the region: "*Some communities, although not displaced, were not accessible for security reasons at the time of the socio-economic surveys*".

The Fact Finding Mission interviewed villagers in Hasankeyf who expressed concern over the consultation process. They stated that SEMOR, the consultancy firm contracted by the DSI, had interviewed 300 people of whom 80 per cent were illiterate or could not speak Turkish. The women and elderly people had to work through translators provided by SEMOR rather than family members, which many found socially awkward. The villagers were told that the decision to build the dam had been taken and they were then given options as to how they would like to be resettled: did they want a new village elsewhere? or cash to resettle by themselves?

A questionnaire in Turkish was handed out. The first question asked villagers whether or not they were in favour of the dam. Many told the Mission that they felt that they had no option but to answer in the affirmative, although opposed to a dam that would flood Hasankeyf. This was in part due to the perception that the dam was a *fait accompli* and, in part, due to their experience that opposition to the dam is misconstrued by the authorities as evidence of sympathy for the PKK movement.

Villagers told the Fact Finding Mission that they were concerned that the answers they gave to the questionnaire may have been subsequently altered. They stated that SEMOR representatives filled the forms in with pencil, but asked them to sign the form in ink. "We are worried that our answers were changed when SEMOR got back to their hotel". As the Fact Finding Mission was unable to see copies of the questionnaires used, it was unable to pursue this matter further. It strongly recommends that ECAs request copies of the original documents.

It was represented to the Mission by villagers that the socio-economic survey undertaken by SEMOR may not have been as rigorous as claimed in the Kudat report. Villagers interviewed in a settlement outside Hasankeyf told the Mission that SEMOR had questioned them about the yields of their harvest, the ownership of the houses, the number of animals they owned and other issues related to their socio-economic status. However, villagers interviewed in Hasankeyf were adamant that no such questions had been put to them in the questionnaires they completed.

The Mission acknowledges that it interviewed only a small number of villagers during its visit. However, the consistency with which villagers of Hasankeyf denied being asked about their socio-economic status merits investigation by ECAs.

It is clear that no efforts have been made by the authorities to consult directly with local municipal officials in Hasankeyf on the resettlement plan or other issues related to the dam. Officials interviewed told the Mission that they had not been consulted on the archaeological rescue plan for Hasankeyf. No one in Hasankeyf and Batman to whom the Mission spoke had seen a copy of the draft Resettlement Action Plan – or indeed heard from SEMOR since its one week visit to the area. The Mission also notes that village and town level officials have not met with their counterparts in areas where people are being settled from past dams. The opportunity of learning from past experience is therefore being lost.

The Fact Finding Mission was disturbed by the pressure that has clearly been exerted on Hasankeyf residents to express support for the dam. The Mission was told of a recent visit by a Swedish delegation to the town when banners were displayed in favour of the dam, carrying slogans such as "I love my country, I love my dam". No banners opposing the dam were permitted. The Mission also heard of the difficulties that villagers have had in organising events to express the opposition to the dam. In July, for example, the Save Hasankeyf Platform had organised a festival to celebrate Hasankeyf, but permission was denied for any petition to be circulated and for any interviews to be given to the press. Given the very serious consequences attendant on being suspected of sympathising with the PKK, the authorities' association of opposition to Ilisu with separatism is a major deterrent to any meaningful dissent. Put bluntly, people are frightened to take a public position against the dam.

However, the Mission was told by one prominent citizen who must remain anonymous, "I am now declaring that we don't want a dam that would flood Hasankeyf. If you see anything written or said by me to the contrary, it is because I have been put under pressure".

### ***Host communities***

International guidelines stipulate that host communities – those which will receive the people evicted by Ilisu – must be consulted. The Kudat report claims that such consultations have taken place. However, independent sources suggest otherwise.

The Kudat report claims that "*Consultations were held with governors, mayors and representatives of the government agencies responsible for RAP implementation.*" However, the Mission specifically asked the Mayors of Diyarbakir and Batman whether or not they or their office had been consulted. **The Mission was told that no such consultation had taken place.**

Both Mayors stressed the problems that the two cities were already experiencing in providing infrastructures – schools, hospitals, health care, sewage, etc. – for the existing population, which has massively swelled because of immigration due to the upheavals of the conflict and the forced eviction of many villages.

Major efforts are being made to address these issues and, in Diyarbakir, the Mayor expressed confidence that, with international funding, current infrastructure development (including 50,000 to 60,000 new houses) “would enable the city to deal with the problems of past immigration”. However, an influx of new migrants from Ilisu would place a number of additional strains on infrastructure with which neither city could cope without central government funding. No request has been made by the central government to either Diyarbakir or Batman to produce a report about their funding requirements and no promises of funding have been forthcoming.

The Mayor of Batman stressed his concerns over further immigration to the city, noting that in addition to infrastructure problems, the number of people committing suicide in the city has risen three fold in the last 15 years. This problem is, in his view, directly related to the traumas of village evictions, subsequent migration and the problems the villagers have encountered in trying to settle and start a new life.

The failure to consult host communities and their elected representatives breaches World Bank guidelines on two counts. First, the guidelines require such a consultation: “*The [resettlement] plan should address and mitigate resettlement’s impact on host populations. Host communities and local governments should be informed and consulted. . . Conditions in host communities should improve, or at least not deteriorate.*”<sup>4</sup> Second, the guidelines require a detailed resettlement budget to be prepared as part of the Resettlement Action Plan: “*Where large-scale population displacement is unavoidable, a detailed resettlement plan, timetable and budget are required.*”<sup>5</sup> Without a detailed assessment of the budgetary requirements of the host communities, any budget proposed under the RAP would misrepresent the true scale of resettlement costs and overestimate the financial viability of the project. The Mission notes that assessing these budgetary requirements will require detailed and lengthy consultation and research over a period of several months. ECAs should ensure that such a budget for host communities is in place – and properly assessed – before accepting the Resettlement Plan.

The failure of the Turkish authorities to assess the budgetary needs of the host communities adds to – and reinforces – concerns already raised by the Kudat report, which noted that, as of the beginning of August, no resettlement budget had yet been prepared for the project. Kudat also suggested that a paper commitment from the Turkish authorities to make the money available cannot be trusted.

#### ***Relying on presumed economic growth to relieve post-project impacts***

According to the World Bank, resettlement projects should ensure that those resettled are not worse off than they were before the project. The Kudat report makes it clear that there are major economic and political obstacles to fulfilling this standard. Contrary to World Bank guidelines, the draft RAP relies solely on the hope of future economic growth to protect the livelihoods of those who will be resettled.

The Fact Finding Mission confirms that future economic growth in the region is ultimately contingent on the successful outcome of a peace process that will bring an end to conflict and the restoration of democratic rule. Currently the region is under Emergency Rule, severely curtailing basic freedoms. This point was made to the Mission repeatedly. The Mission also notes that commercial companies and international development agencies have also expressed concern over the security of future investment whilst the region remains under Emergency Rule.

**Given the economic and political instability of the area, the Mission therefore believes that future economic growth cannot be presumed. Even if the hoped-for growth does occur, it is the view of many of those whom the Mission interviewed that growth cannot be relied upon to secure employment and services for the thousands of people who would be affected by the Ilisu dam and its accompanying downstream project at Cizre. Central government support would also be needed: such support, however, does not appear to be forthcoming.**

#### ***Institutional failures and the need for reform***

Although the Kudat report is upbeat in its assessment that some aspects of the proposed Resettlement Action Plan will meet international standards at least on paper, it highlights major institutional limitations that stand in the way of the Plan’s realistic implementation. These include a lack of institutional capacity and a lack of communication between implementing agencies. Kudat argues that overcoming these problems will require sweeping institutional restructuring

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<sup>4</sup> World Bank Operational Directive 4.3

<sup>5</sup> World Bank Operational Directive 4.3 (4)

and reform. The Kudat report states: “*In a number of areas, additional data will have to be collected if best practice is to be achieved. Also, new institutional arrangements should be formulated and agreed upon between concerned institutions.*” It continues: “*The GAP framework alone will not resolve all the institutional complexities of the resettlement projects. There is a need to have a more unified institutional framework, a single earmarked budget for resettlement implementation, and mechanisms for quality assurance, enforcement and monitoring and evaluation . . .*”

The Kudat report points out that the ability of the DSI to implement and enforce the RAP is hampered by the security situation and by the lack of coordination with other institutions which each act independently and have separate budgets. All five provinces affected by the proposed construction of the Ilisu dam are still under Emergency Rule and, as Kudat comments, “*the Ministry of Interior and the military have very different sets of priorities*” from the DSI. The complexity and magnitude of how best to address the needs of previously displaced populations “*goes beyond the ability of the project and the solutions require the decisions of security agencies*”.

The Mission supports these views. In addition, it found evidence that the laws on expropriation and compensation failed to ensure that compensation be prompt, adequate and effective – the standard required by international law. Under current procedures, the ownership of all immobile properties and resources to be expropriated should be determined by a cadastral survey. A valuation committee consisting of five permanent members, including two representatives of the affected communities, and five others should then be established in each district to value the expropriated property.

Under the current resettlement policies, landowners who are dissatisfied with the evaluation have just one month to appeal. Moreover, an effective appeal requires the services of an attorney, which those in the lowest income groups are unable to afford. Typically, an appeal can take one year and involves visits to the local court, which can be time-consuming and expensive for poorer villagers. In addition, many villagers are simply unaware of their legal rights to appeal and the one-month period in which to do so. Many, as mentioned above, are illiterate and are often intimidated by the process. Some speak only Kurdish.

Even where a challenge is successful and higher compensation is agreed, it may take years before such compensation is paid. Although this will incur extra costs for the authorities, who must pay a penalty for non-payment, the country’s high inflation rate makes non-payment a cheaper option than payment. By the time villagers receive the compensation they are due, its extra value is likely to have been significantly reduced by inflation. The consequence is a system riddled with loopholes that benefit the state and which results, on average, in only one sixth of the compensation due ever being paid.

Without a proper legal framework that guarantees prompt compensation that is not conditional upon holding title to land, the Turkish government’s assurance that everyone affected by the Ilisu project will be compensated lacks credibility. **In the absence of such a legal framework, ECAs should not support the project.**

### ***Resettlement and Regional Conditions***

Previous Fact Finding Missions and independent reports on the Ilisu project have stressed the difficulties of achieving a just resettlement programme in an area which continues to be wracked by conflicts and which remains subject to emergency laws, none of which have yet been repealed. The Kudat report notes how security considerations have restricted access to villagers, thus preventing a full assessment of their population densities and the socio-economic status of villagers.

The Fact Finding Mission found additional evidence of the impacts of emergency rule in the region. These include a climate in which people are afraid to express their views; human rights groups, other NGOs and the independent press face a constant threat of closure; mayors from pro-Kurdish parties have been arrested; and people are generally intimidated from forming any organised opposition to the project. The Mission itself was followed by state security police throughout the week that it was in the region, with a police officer sitting in on one interview uninvited.

## **CONDITION TWO**

**“Make provision for upstream water treatment plants capable of ensuring that water quality is maintained”**

Concerns have been expressed that current levels of sewage and other waste entering the Tigris river, principally from Diyarbakir, Batman and Siirt, will severely degrade the water quality of the proposed Ilisu reservoir, threatening public health and leading to possible eutrophication and the release of a significant quantity of greenhouse gases. This issue was not properly assessed in the original Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the project (yet to be released to the public) but was highlighted in a subsequent evaluation of the project commissioned by the British government.

The Fact Finding Mission met with the Mayors of Diyarbakir and Batman to learn of plans to address sewage problems in the cities. In Diyarbakir, the first stage of a new sewage treatment plant has been commissioned with funding from the German government through Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau (KfW). The companies involved include Lurgi Bamag GmbH, Passavant-Roediger Anlagenbau GmbH, and Vinsan Veziroglu Insaat Sanayi Ve Ticaret A.S. In Batman, a feasibility study will be undertaken shortly but no plant has yet been commissioned and project finance has still to be arranged.

The Mission welcomes these initiatives. The planned project in Diyarbakir will go a long way to remedying the severe sewage problems currently faced by the city. However, the Mission is concerned that the new sewage treatment plant will not be sufficient to secure the water quality of the Ilisu reservoir. Even when all the proposed plans are in place, 20 per cent of the sewage from Diyarbakir (whose population is currently estimated at 1.7 million) will still not be connected to the sewage system. This will leave the waste from some 340,000 people untreated, with potentially severe consequences for water quality in the reservoir. As noted above, the sewage treatment plans for Batman are still only at a feasibility stage.

The Mission concludes that this condition has not been met and cannot be met until the one hundred per cent coverage is guaranteed for Diyarbakir, Batman and Siirt, with full project plans and finance in place.

### **CONDITION THREE**

#### **“Give an assurance that adequate downstream flows will be maintained at all times”**

Concern has been expressed by Syria and Iraq over the downstream impacts of the Ilisu project, the fear being that Turkey will deny water to downstream states. Recognising that Turkey is obliged under international law to consult with its neighbours on any project which might infringe on their rights to the shared waters of the Tigris, the British government has stated that “there should be a published assurance that the required consultation of neighbouring states has been carried out.”<sup>6</sup> No such consultation has yet taken place.

The Mission did not inquire directly into the impacts of Ilisu on downstream flow. However, independent engineers who have assessed the project told the Mission that, contrary to claims by the project sponsors, Ilisu is not intended only for generating hydroelectricity. The dam was planned for use in conjunction with a further 45-metre dam downstream at Cizre, which will irrigate some 66,000 hectares. The water from Ilisu’s reservoir will be used to feed this dam and ensure a year-round supply of irrigation water. The two projects should therefore be considered as one when considering their impacts on downstream flow, although construction at Cizre will begin three years after Ilisu, owing to its smaller size.

The Mission was also told that the site of the Ilisu dam was specifically chosen to allow for the maximum reservoir size – 11 billion cubic metres. Alternative sites are available on the Tigris which would produce the same amount of power (3.8 billion kWh/year) but with a significantly smaller reservoir.

The Mission asked DSI for project documents but was told that no documents on either project are available to the public – and that they will not be available until construction has begun.

The link between Cizre and Ilisu suggests that the impacts on downstream water flow can only be assessed properly if both dams are considered together. **The Mission therefore calls for a strategic environmental assessment to be made a condition of approval for any export credits, in order to evaluate fully the cumulative impacts of the two projects on the river basin as a whole. Export Credit Agencies may also wish to inquire whether or not the project sponsors misrepresented the nature of the Ilisu project, given its connection with the proposed Cizre dam.**

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<sup>6</sup> Lean, G., “Dam backed by Blair flouts international law, says Syria”, *The Independent on Sunday*, 16 July 2000.

The Mission also notes that a major reason given by its proponents for supporting the dam appears to be the belief that the dam would enable Turkey to exert political control in the region. As a member of the state security police put it to the Mission: “The dam means power – who has the water has the power.”

## CONDITION FOUR

### “Produce a detailed plan to preserve as much of the archaeological heritage of Hasankeyf as possible”

A previous Fact Finding Mission to the region, on visiting Hasankeyf, established that only a minute amount of exploratory excavation of the site was already occurring. This was under the supervision of Professor Olus Arik. This Mission sought to establish the extent to which that exploratory excavation had increased or expanded in its ambit. The Mission’s specific objectives were:

- To discover what methodologies were now being used to analyze the site at Hasankeyf and other sites of paramount archaeological significance in the region due to be submerged by the reservoir;
- To discover what plans have been put in place with the intention of saving, *ex situ*, a proportion of the artefacts of Hasankeyf and other sites of paramount importance;
- To discover the extent to which there has been or is any ongoing consultation with local populations over the importance and significance to them of their monuments, graveyards, and places of worship.

The Mission first made a visit to the Birecik dam at the Belkis/Zeugma site. There were no archaeologists on site to consult. The excavations at Zeugma are already well-documented as being sophisticated but wholly inadequate. The speed with which the Birecik dam has been constructed and filled has conclusively deprived civilisation of the opportunity to document and map the enormous quantity of significant remains now lying at the bottom of the reservoir. At the very least, what is known to have been destroyed is a Roman Legion camp, a Roman bath and an early Bronze Age cemetery. In addition, countless mosaics and frescoes at Roman villas at Zeugma have been lost. What has also been lost is the cultural and natural wealth of the ancient settlement of Apameia and that at the mounds of Tilbur, Tilbes, Tilmusa and Horum. It is worth noting that it would be inconceivable for such archaeological degradation and vandalism to have been sanctioned in a country belonging to the European Union.

The Mission had the opportunity to speak to a number of resettled communities who were deeply aggrieved that they had been forcibly parted from their heritage and that they were no longer able to worship in their traditional places or to tend the graves of their families. In summary, the work which was done so hastily at Birecik to preserve the archaeological heritage of the region is devastatingly inadequate in almost every particular.

The Mission then visited Hasankeyf itself. The Mission was not able to establish contact with any of the archaeologists who are thought to be working on the site. It was established that many artefacts have already been removed to be preserved *ex situ*. It is clear that some mapping has been done and that there is a continuing excavation. There is a certain amount of labelling that can be seen on parts of the site. Conversations with local dignitaries reveal the existence of a tremendous sense of cultural heritage, in particular, the enormous expanse of time – some 10,000 years – which is bridged at Hasankeyf. These conversations also indicate the extent to which, for the last 30 years, those dignitaries have seen Hasankeyf in a state of enforced decline.

It is not possible to ascertain whether or not any sophisticated methodology has been used on this site to determine what it contains. However, villagers could assert that there has been no recent aerial photography or ground radar. They have only observed digging and brushing. The Mission was conducted around Hasankeyf by people whose families had only recently ceased to occupy the caves, which had been carved thousands of years ago into the side of the mountain. Those families were forced to move from the cave, against their will, into housing next to the river, with which they are not satisfied. Whatever plan is made to preserve artefacts from this site, it will be impossible to preserve the ancient caves themselves since they will inevitably be flooded if the dam goes ahead. The caves are integral to the essence of - and are an irreplaceable part of - the site. Indeed, they are the reason why the site has received such international acclaim.

The archaeological rescue condition imposed by the Export Credit Agencies assumes that Hasankeyf is the only site of major cultural significance which is facing submersion. This is not so. International archaeological interest is revealing that this site is one of a series of sites to be flooded which are a crucial part of humanity’s understanding of its transition from hunter-gatherer to settled agriculture. It is now becoming clear to the archaeological community that seven years

– the estimated time that it would take to construct the dam – is wholly insufficient to make either an accurate or a complete survey of what would be lost in the resulting flood.

Meanwhile, according to sources within the archaeological profession, the findings of international teams of archaeologists have not been made public, and it is not clear that all findings have been wholly revealed to the Export Credit Agencies. The Mission will not be able to reveal in detail these findings unless permission is obtained from Turkish authorities. We strongly urge Export Credit Agencies to request permission to make this information publicly available, both for themselves and for society as a whole.

The site at Hasankeyf is now thought to be at least as important as the site at Ephesus in Western Turkey. The latter has now been under excavation for one hundred years, and even now the excavation remains incomplete. According to sources within the archaeological profession who are familiar with these sites, such time frames are the norm. The accelerated time frame for excavation in the Ilisu project area is unrealistic and contrived. **The Mission concludes that the constraints of time and money imposed by the dam construction schedule make a mockery of any claims that a full and competent investigation of the archaeological wealth of the affected site is being made.**

## Conclusion

The Fact Finding Mission concludes that the four conditions imposed by the Export Credit Agencies have still to be met – and the prospect that they will be met in the near future is remote. It will therefore be pressing the ECAs to refuse export credit support for the project.

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