

May 25, 2017

With given opportunity, I would like to, first express my gratitude to Chairman Dana Rohrabacher and Chairman Ed Royce and all Ranking members for sponsoring this hearing and making it happen in such a short time frame.

As citizen of United States of America, I fill very strong for my rights and I am honored to be here to testify on peaceful protest attack on May 16th 2017.

On May 16th, I was among those peaceful protesters, by exercising my freedom of speech, I was expressing my personal opinion on President Erdogan's White House welcome event.

I believe that the individuals like Mr. Erdogan who systematically abuses his authority, by violating human right, pressing press, imprisoning second largest party's co-chairs and its member's, committing war crimes, and strongly supporting a terrorist group like ISIS has no space in the White House of the United States of America.

I am Ezidi, Kurd dissident by origin, and my Ezidi people have suffered significantly in the aftermath of the ISIS attack on Sinjar district, on August 3rd, 2014.

Moreover, on March 2016 Erdogan's visit to Washington D.C. he had an event at Brookings Institute, where I and many Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks and Kurds have joined to a peaceful protest, as a result of Erdogan's angriness he has contacted to President Aliiev of Azerbaijan, to attack Armenian Artsakh, the attack continued for 4 days. In the aftermath of the 4-day attack around 80 Armenian soldires were killed and one Ezidi origin solder was beheaded by Azeri solders, that solder happen to be my cousin... That said, I have many rights to express my angriness with Erdogan's abusive behavior.

I was a part on peaceful protestors in front of the White House and once the event was over. Me and others have walked towards Massachusetts Avenue, to Turkish Ambassador's Residency. There was a large group of people in front of the Turkish Ambassador's Residency. As soon as we arrived, we begin to hear cursing's and screaming's at us. I could tell that the atmosphere became very tense once pro-Erdogan's group saw us.

Police has just asked us to stay where we are, we stood and simply begun our chanting as we did in front of the White House. I can tell that we didn't have enough police officers right away, there was about 5 or 6 officers, but they were doing their best job.

As we were chanting, I saw another group, of about 5 people, merging into existing pro-Erdogan's group and running towards us. Those people were dressed differently, they were wearing dark sunglasses and hacky t-shirts under unbuttoned shirt, they were wearing, I think, military boots. And I saw-water bottles were thrown to us, one of which heat my leg and it hurt me as if something burned my leg, then I saw cell phones flying around.

It happened very quickly, I didn't have time to think to run away or to protect myself.

Next thing I know, I was on the ground and someone was kicking me in the head. I remember a thought, "Ok, I am on the ground, what's the purpose of beating me?" and then I lost unconscious.

When I opened my eyes, I think it was over. I tried to get up, but my legs were too heavy, I don't know why. I believe police officer has helped me to seat, and I felt a massive headache, and pain in my back and my neck.

I got shocked when I saw my friend's faces covered with blood.

That evening I spent in the George Washington Hospital. The doctor gave me a pain killer and recommend to do a cat scan to check my head condition, but I refused since I don't have insurance. I got discharged.

Next morning when I opened my eyes, I felt extremely dizzy. I closed my eyes but it got only worse. I tried to get up but I've lost my balance and collapsed.

I am thankful to my friends who came to visit me and have convinced to go back to the hospital. As a result, I end up in ER again, this time they did a cat scan and diagnosed me with minor brain injury, doctor explained that there are some little bruises on my brain, they discharged me and have recommend to rest, and stated that it will take me up to 6 weeks to recover. I am still suffering and I can't take total care of myself. Some days I feel good in the morning, and in the afternoon I'm getting worse.

I don't feel save to be alone, and I don't feel save when I am in the city a lone. I have a feeling that someone is following me or watching me. I don't know if I'll ever overcome all this problems, but I've been thinking, it would've been better for me to never open my eyes. I am not use to, to not feel confident about myself and to not be able to take care of myself.