

29 Questions to Ozkan Murat From Home Buyers Pressure Group

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Have any of our members seen him on these tours?

On 1 December 2005 Mr Soyer chaired a meeting between the Homebuyers Pressure Group and various Ministers and other officials so that our problems could be heard by all. Mr Murat was at that meeting. The Prime Minister set up a Task Force at that time consisting of members of the various government department and authorities, who would tackle the individual property related problems.

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By Miarian STOKES
Home Buyers Pressure Group

INTERIOR Minister Özkan Murat, has always been a very elusive man for the Homebuyers Pressure Group despite

the fact that his Ministry is responsible for the bulk of our problems. So, when we heard that he wanted to meet the citizens and residents of the TRNC in order to establish their needs and problems first-

hand, we couldn't believe that he was actually coming to see us!! He would be in the Kaymakamlik Office in Girne on Tuesday 19th September at 10am.

A long list of questions
Armed with a long list

of general questions compiled from our database of problems and members with their own particular problem, we arrived early to get a good seat. No, it was not going to be an open forum type of togetherness, everyone was given a number and Mr Murat would see us one at a time, not as a group. What! Looking at the crowds and knowing the intensity of the problems we thought we should have taken a packed lunch and maybe a sleeping bag for our long wait.

A bored waiting

The queue got longer, the sun got hotter and we waited our turn, the first number we had among us was 12. At least refreshments were available free of charge. Getting very bored waiting we decided that rules are for breaking and why should he not see us as a group as most of our problems are similar which would save us and Mr Murat a lot of time. After what seemed an eternity it was time for number 12 and the 30 or

so of us who had endured the long hot wait trundled into the office, thinking that they would stop us. Özkan Murat sat at Savas'desk and the office was lined with mannequins (we think they are otherwise known as Directorates of his Ministry) and, when he they saw us all, there was no antagonism, they simply tried to find seating for us all.

Missing no opportunity

We introduced ourselves and said that we would start with our list of general questions first and then the individuals would present their own particular problem. Speaking through an interpreter he said "No, I don't have time today to deal with all this, I can make another appointment to see me at my office". No way. Did he not realise that it is almost impossible to see him in his office. Our members never like to miss an opportunity to air their problems so we stuck firmly to our seats and got on with the business of

informing the Minister and his Directorates exactly what is happening in the TRNC. Remember, the purpose of his campaign is to learn the needs and problems firsthand.

Murat is not aware!

Mr Murat was very charming, appeared to listen with an open mind, and said that he was not aware of the seriousness of our situations. Not aware?? On 19 October 2005, unable to see the Interior Minister himself, we presented a detailed list of rogue builders, lawyers and estate agents and the problems they had caused to Ali Alnar, Undersecretary to Mr Murat. At that time Mr Alnar said that he would have all the information translated into Turkish so that they could gain a better understanding of the entire situation. Then, as we could not get hold of either Mr Murat or Mr Alnar again we eventually contacted the Prime Minister's office to complain.

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Another subject that was raised was the TRNC Court and general Legal System which is viewed as a fiasco by those of us currently in that situation. Mr Murat said that, if we give him our Court Case numbers, he would investigate what has been happening that give us this impression.

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telling us that he doesn't know anything about our problems !!

Protecting clients

Despite the fact that they couldn't spare us the time and they were all getting a bit fidgety as it was now past their usual lunch time, an hour and a half of discussion took place. Mr Murat informed us that new estate agent regulations would be in force in approximately 3 months which should safeguard all foreign property investors. These regulations would be effective retrospectively so, in theory, should solve some of our problems.

Formal complaint to Baro!

Discussions' took place regarding the responsibilities of estate agents when marketing properties and lawyers when drawing up Property Sales Agreements and, from our understanding of Mr Murat's responses, they should be liable to protect their clients. He also stated that if we felt our lawyers had not acted appropriately we could make a formal complaint to Baro (the Law Society of the TRNC). Some of our members have already taken this route but to no avail.

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The members posed their particular problems, but of course Mr Murat was not in any position to provide any answers or solutions, as this was the first time he had learned of such problems !!!!!!!

For the first time!

Although the discussion matter of the meeting was extremely serious the general mood of the meeting was lively and good-natured. This had been the first time that some of our members actually had the chance to get their problems across to a member of the government and it gave them a little encouragement and a strand of hope for the future. None of our members, however, received a clear or positive response to their questions.

Next meeting on 3rd October





See it with
your own eyes!

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Fiasco

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The Homebuyers Pressure Group meeting with Mr Murat was arranged for 10am on Tuesday 3rd October 2006 and we handed him our list of general questions so that he can be more prepared for that meeting. As he pointed out he is a lawyer and a politician so we should trust him. We all left the room laughing but, unless we see some positive changes in the future, our merriment will be short-lived.