

March 9, 2015

The Rt. Hon. Angela Merkel  
Bundeskanzlerin  
Bundeskanzleramt  
Willy-Brandt-Straße 1  
10557 Berlin  
Germany

Reza Moridi, PhD, MPP  
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Dear Madam Chancellor:

**Re: Nowruz**

As you know, *Nowruz*, "[The] New Day" in Persian, which traditionally marks the astronomical beginning of Spring is a cultural heritage.

Nowruz is a time of great joy and family festivities celebrated by people from diverse ethnic communities for thousands of years. It is a secular holiday that is shared by people of many faiths and cultural backgrounds who trace their heritage back to the ancient Mesopotamian civilization and the Persian Empire.

I believe hundreds of thousands of Germans whose ethnical origins are from Iran, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the north Caucasus, Kurdish inhabited regions of eastern Turkey, northern Iraq and Syria, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, as well Parsis (Zoroastrians) and Ismaili's celebrate Nowruz around March 21st each year following traditions they inherited from their ancestors. Nowruz is also celebrated by the Bahai's around the world.

In 2008, the Ontario Legislature and in 2009, the Parliament of Canada respected this cultural heritage of many Canadians through the Motion put forward by me and the *Nowruz Day Act, BILL C-342* respectively, stating that, in each and every year, the vernal equinox (first day of spring) shall be known as "*Nowruz*".

Nowruz is on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as of 2009. In 2010, the UN's General Assembly recognized the International Day of Nowruz, describing it as a spring festival of Persian origin with over 3,000 years of tradition which is celebrated by over 300 million people worldwide. It was proclaimed as an official UN observance because it promotes peace and solidarity, particularly in families.

I understand that the Iranian-German community (Iranische Gemeinde in Deutschland e.V.) has launched a campaign requesting that the first day of Spring be recognized as *Nowruz* in the Federal Republic of Germany.

I am glad to support this initiative as I believe that Nowruz brings a message of peace, harmony, joy and friendship to people from various cultural backgrounds. This recognition not only will enrich the German cultural values, it will also highlight contributions of the Iranian-Germans to Germany over the past 100 years.

Sincerely yours,

Reza Moridi  
Member of Provincial Parliament

Copy: Ehsan Djafari, Der Vorsitzende des Vorstandes  
Iranische Gemeinde in Deutschland e.V.