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KRG-US January 2025 Newsletter

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Kurdistan Regional Government Representation in the United States

January Newsletter



Congratulations to President Donald Trump on His Inauguration

The President of the Kurdistan Region, Nechirvan Barzani, and the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Masrour Barzani, warmly congratulate President Donald Trump on his inauguration. We look forward to working with the new administration to strengthen the longstanding U.S.-Kurdistan partnership.



Revitalizing Kurdistan's Energy Sector: A Path Forward

During President Trump's inaugural address, he outlined a bold vision for the future of America, centered on the principles of "America First" and a "Peace Through Strength" policy. He also emphasized his commitment to energy independence, even pledging to declare a national energy emergency.

For nearly two years, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) faced significant energy challenges due to the halt in oil exports imposed by the Government of Iraq. Before the suspension, Kurdistan was exporting more than 400,000 barrels of crude oil per day, with around 40 international oil companies operating in the region, including major American energy firms. This blockade resulted in over **\$26** billion in lost revenue and prevented our Western energy partners from realizing a return on their investments.

However, in a significant step forward, the Iraqi Parliament voted to approve amendments to the federal budget law yesterday, paving the way for the resumption of oil exports from the Kurdistan Region. This decision marks an important opportunity to restore economic stability, strengthen investor confidence, and reestablish Kurdistan's role as a player in global energy markets.

The KRG remains dedicated to advancing strong political and economic ties with the Trump administration. During his first term, President Trump's administration worked closely with the Kurdistan Region to defeat ISIS and restore peace to the region. We are eager to collaborate and explore new areas for economic investment and mutual growth. This partnership is vital to promoting our shared interests. Through close collaboration and open dialogue, we can strengthen

economic ties, unlock new investment opportunities, and work toward a more abundant and sustainable energy supply that drives economic growth and stability.



Advancing Education Excellence in Kurdistan

The KRG is dedicated to improving the quality of education across the region, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in a global economy. As part of this ongoing commitment, the KRG Representation in the United States recently hosted an important signing ceremony between the Kurdistan Accrediting Association for Education (KAAE) and two prominent U.S. organizations: the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Middle States Association-Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS). This landmark initiative represents a major step forward in elevating educational standards in the Kurdistan Region.

The KAAE's mission focuses on quality assurance, continuous improvement, and the promotion of transparency and accountability within educational institutions. By establishing rigorous accreditation standards, the goal is to ensure that educational programs meet the highest quality of excellence.

The impact of the KAAE's work will be far-reaching. By fostering collaboration among educational institutions, students, and other stakeholders, the KAAE will create an educational ecosystem that meets local needs while aligning with international standards. These collaborations will empower students with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in a competitive global landscape.



KRG's Commitment to Peaceful Coexistence and Inclusivity in the Kurdistan Region

The KRG remains dedicated to ensuring that all ethnic and religious groups in the region can live together peacefully, contributing to a stronger, more harmonious society. As part of this ongoing effort, KRG Minister of Transportation and Communications, Minister Ano Abdoka, a Chaldean Christian, held several meetings with U.S. officials, think tanks, business leaders, and local community members. The discussions focused on advancing the KRG's goals of promoting

inclusivity, unity, and mutual respect among the diverse populations of the Kurdistan Region.

Notable highlights of his visit included attending the inaugurations celebrations of President Donald Trump and hosting a special gathering with members of the Kurdistan and Iraqi communities, many of whom were prominent intellectuals and business leaders from the Chaldean, Assyrian, Syriac and Armenian communities in Michigan and Canada.

Minister Abdoka will also participate in the upcoming International Religious Freedom Summit and the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C., both of which provide opportunities for advancing religious freedom and coexistence.

Recent Confirmations/Appointments

Key members of the Trump Administration's national security team were confirmed, including:

- **Marco Rubio**, Secretary of State

Rubio was confirmed by an overwhelming 99-0 vote on January 20, 2025. During the hearing, Rubio pledged to continue U.S. support for Kurds in Syria in response to a question from longtime Kurdish ally, Senator Chris Van Hollen (R-MD).

- **Pete Hegseth**, Secretary of Defense

Pete Hegseth was confirmed as Secretary of Defense in a 51-50 vote on January 25, 2025, following a late-night Senate session and tiebreaker vote by Vice President J.D. Vance. As Secretary of Defense, Hegseth will lead U.S. military strategy and defense policy, ensuring the nation's readiness to address emerging threats.

- **John Ratcliffe**, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was confirmed on January 23, 2024, with a 74-25 vote, reflecting bipartisan support for his expertise in intelligence and his commitment to securing U.S. interests both domestically and abroad.

- **Kristi Noem**, Secretary of Homeland Security, was confirmed on January 25, 2025, with a 59-34 vote, to oversee the nation's border security and domestic safety measures.

- U.S. Representative **Mike Waltz**, also a long-standing supporter of the Kurdistan Region and former Co-Chair of the bipartisan Kurdish American Congressional Caucus, has been appointed by President Trump as National Security Advisor, further strengthening the administration's national security team.

Other KRG News:

- **KRG Prime Minister participates in the World Economic Forum**
- **The KRG President Nechirvan Barzani attended the State Administration Coalition meeting in Baghdad.**
- **KRG Prime Minister's call with newly appointed National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz.**

- **State Department DAS Victoria Taylor visits the Kurdistan Region and meets with KRG President and PM**

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