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KRG-US February 2025 Newsletter

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Kurdistan Regional Government Representation in the United States

February Newsletter



The Road to a Unified Government in Kurdistan

The process of government formation in the Kurdistan Region is moving forward rapidly, as recent discussions between the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic

Union of Kurdistan (PUK) demonstrate a serious commitment to creating a government that is representative, inclusive, and effective.

Following the October 2024 parliamentary elections, the KDP and PUK have been intensively engaged in high-level negotiations to establish a new government. Over the last few months, these talks have showcased both parties' strong determination to collaborate for the benefit of the Kurdistan people.

In recent weeks, significant meetings took place in Erbil, where the two parties focused on drafting a joint work program for government formation. The leadership of both the KDP and PUK emphasized the need to build consensus on key leadership roles and major policy initiatives aimed at addressing the region's most pressing challenges. These negotiations are a clear sign of a positive shift towards cooperation, as both parties are working together to align their priorities while keeping the well-being of the Kurdish people at the forefront of their discussions.

While the KDP and PUK continue their negotiations, the President and Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region have been making significant efforts to maintain and strengthen the Kurdistan Region's relationship with the federal government in Baghdad. Over the past few months, both leaders have made official visits to Baghdad, meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Sudani and other senior officials.

These meetings have focused on crucial issues, including oil exports, federal budget allocations, security coordination, and broader political cooperation. A key topic of discussion has been resolving outstanding financial and administrative disputes between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the federal government, stressing that the Kurdistan Region must receive its fair share of the federal budget.

The ongoing negotiations offer a hopeful outlook for the future of the Kurdistan Region. A shared commitment to unity and cooperation is evident at every stage of the talks. As discussions progress, there is growing confidence that a new government will emerge from these negotiations. The government's priorities will include the rule of law, political stability, economic reform, security cooperation, and relations with Baghdad.

With the talks continuing to move forward, the formation of a new government by the end of April now seems likely. This would not only bring much-needed political stability but also create the groundwork for addressing Kurdistan's economic and security challenges. A unified government could greatly enhance the Kurdistan Region's capacity to navigate both internal issues and broader regional dynamics.



Kurdistan's Energy Sector at a Crossroads

For nearly two years, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has faced major energy challenges due to the Iraqi government's suspension of oil exports. Before the halt, Kurdistan exported over 450,000 barrels of crude oil per day, with around 40 international oil companies—many of them American—operating in the region. This blockade resulted in more than \$22 billion in lost revenue and stalled returns on investment for our Western energy partners.

On February 2, 2025, the Iraqi Parliament approved amendments to the federal budget law, opening the door for oil exports from the Kurdistan Region to resume. This decision is a good start to restoring economic stability, rebuilding investor confidence, and reaffirming Kurdistan's role in global energy markets.

Another key development came with a recent federal court ruling affirming the legality of the KRG's agreements with international oil companies. For Iraq to maintain its credibility, Baghdad must uphold this decision and demonstrate respect for legal authority. Ignoring the ruling would undermine Iraq's judicial system, deter investment, and create further instability.

This ruling also offers Baghdad an opportunity to repair its strained relationship with the KRG. Respecting the court's decision would send a strong signal of cooperation and commitment to regional autonomy, fostering dialogue on broader issues and strengthening overall stability.

The U.S. plays a crucial role in Iraq, both diplomatically and as part of the international community. Ensuring that international oil companies are compensated for their investments and operational costs is essential for maintaining investor confidence. Legal certainty is vital for attracting and sustaining foreign investment—disregarding the ruling would only deter future economic engagement.

A strong, prosperous Kurdistan is integral to Iraq's overall stability. Recognizing the KRG's rights benefits the entire country by fostering economic growth, enhancing security, and promoting long-term peace. Now is the time for decisive action.



Strengthening U.S.-KRG Engagement in the Trump Administration

Ten years ago, the U.S. and the Kurdistan Region stood side by side in the fight against ISIS, solidifying a strong and strategic partnership. Today, with President Donald Trump's second term well underway, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is deepening its engagement with senior U.S. officials to strengthen cooperation across security, economic, and political fronts.

In February, KRG representatives held high-level meetings in Washington, D.C., with key Trump administration officials, members of Congress, and policy leaders to advance shared interests. These discussions focused on maintaining stability in the Middle East, expanding economic opportunities, and reinforcing Kurdistan's role as a reliable U.S. partner.

KRG officials engaged with senior leaders across multiple U.S. government departments, including the State Department, as well as with policymakers and experts advocating for religious freedom, democratic governance, and economic growth. Meetings with both veteran and newly elected members of Congress further explored avenues for strengthening U.S.-Kurdistan political, cultural, and economic ties.

A key message underscored throughout these discussions was that the Kurdistan Region remains the most stable and committed U.S. ally in the Middle East. With a rapidly modernizing economy and growing investment opportunities in agriculture, energy, and infrastructure, the KRG is well-positioned for deeper trade and investment partnerships with the U.S.

However, challenges remain. Preventing the resurgence of ISIS and ensuring the long-term security of the region remain top priorities. Additionally, finalizing the resumption of oil exports from Kurdistan is critical, not only for regional economic stability but also for ensuring returns on investments for American energy companies operating in Kurdistan.

KRG's engagements with US officials reaffirm a shared commitment between Washington and Erbil to address these challenges together. As both sides continue to build on past successes, the U.S.-KRG partnership stands ready to usher in a new era of cooperation, security, and prosperity.

Other KRG News:

- **KRG Prime Minister speaks at the World Government Summit.**
- **The KRG President Nechirvan Barzani meets U.S. Secretary of State at the Munich Security Conference.**
- **President Nechirvan Barzani receives a letter from President Donald Trump**
- **Dr. Shakhawan Abdullah, Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives visits KRG office in D.C.**
- **Representative Aziz delivers keynote speech the UCF conference about Kurds on the global scale.**

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