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## KRG-US June 2025 Newsletter

1 message

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# Kurdistan Regional Government Representation in the United States

## JUNE NEWSLETTER



### U.S. Energy Investment in Kurdistan Grows Despite Obstacles

The energy partnership between the United States and the Kurdistan Region continues to be a priority. With the Iraq-Turkey Pipeline (ITP) still offline and political uncertainty clouding future exports, Washington has stepped up pressure on all parties to resolve the impasse. At the same time, U.S. companies are expanding their operations in the Kurdish Region, signaling long-term confidence in the Region's potential.

These developments reflect a deeper strategic alignment between the U.S. and the Kurdistan Region, and a shared interest in energy security, market stability, and economic development.

### **Reopening the ITP: A Strategic Priority**

Since the ITP was shut down over two years ago, following an arbitration ruling between Iraq and Turkey, the Kurdistan Region has lost a major source of revenue, and U.S. energy companies have faced growing operational uncertainty. Before the suspension of oil exports, the pipeline had moved more than 400,000 barrels of oil per day, crucial not only to the Kurdish economy but also to Iraq's overall export capacity.

The U.S. has made clear that getting oil exports flowing again is a priority. Senior American officials have been engaging with Baghdad, Erbil, and Ankara to help find a workable solution. The goal is straightforward: resume exports, stabilize the market, and rebuild investor confidence. Without progress, the risk is stagnation, both economically and geopolitically.

### **U.S. Companies Are Doubling Down**

American energy companies are not backing away from the Kurdistan Region—in fact, they're deepening their presence. Despite ongoing export restrictions, U.S. energy companies have continued operations and are moving forward with new agreements and development plans.

Recent deals signal growing interest in natural gas, with U.S. companies actively exploring projects that could meet local demand in Iraq and eventually supply regional markets, including Turkey and Europe. These efforts are positioning the Kurdistan Region as a key piece of a broader energy strategy.

While these investments make strong business sense, they also align with U.S. policy objectives. Expanding energy partnerships in Kurdistan supports diversification, helps stabilize a volatile region, and contributes to building a more secure and resilient global energy network.

### **Expanding U.S.–Kurdistan Energy Cooperation**

The Kurdistan Region has consistently proven to be a reliable and stable partner in energy development. For more than a decade, U.S. companies have played a key role in building the Region's oil and gas sector, making energy as one of the most potential areas for greater cooperation.

Looking ahead, there's strong potential to do more. Reopening the Iraq-Turkey Pipeline (ITP), ensuring a stable environment for existing operations, and exploring new opportunities in gas production and infrastructure are all practical next steps. Natural gas, in particular, holds significant potential to meet the growing energy needs of both the Kurdistan Region and the rest of Iraq.

For both sides, the energy relationship is built on long-term goals: reliable production, sustainable development, and shared technical and commercial interests. With continued collaboration, U.S. and Kurdistan Region partners can help unlock new opportunities that benefit industry and consumers.

## **KRG U.S. Representation Steps Up Advocacy Amid Regional Tensions and Economic Strain**

As regional tensions rise and economic pressures mount on families in the Kurdistan Region, the KRG Representation in Washington has intensified its outreach to U.S. policymakers. In recent weeks, Representative Treefa Aziz met with congressional and administration officials to reaffirm the importance of a stable and sustained U.S.-Kurdistan partnership.

These efforts come at a time when shifting regional dynamics and financial uncertainty are testing long-standing alliances. The discussions in Washington highlighted the worsening economic situation in the Kurdistan Region, where delayed salaries and rising costs are affecting more than a million civil servants and retirees. The message was clear: continued U.S. assistance and support to help address these economic pressures is not only a humanitarian imperative- it is critical to ensuring long-term peace and stability and directly serves U.S. national interests in the region.

The Kurdistan Region remains a safe haven for religious minorities, hosts over a million displaced people, and is a key partner in the ongoing fight against ISIS. These realities form the foundation of a partnership rooted in shared values and mutual interests. Security cooperation between the Peshmerga and the U.S.-led coalition continues to anchor regional security. Continued congressional support for the Peshmerga is essential to sustaining this cooperation and ensuring the safety of both local populations and coalition forces. As ISIS remnants and other extremist threats persist, U.S. backing for Kurdish security forces remains a critical component of broader counterterrorism efforts and regional stability.

The KRG's active advocacy in Washington reflects its commitment to resilience, regional peace, and a strong, forward-looking relationship with the United States.



### Zakho and Moorhead Sign Friendship Agreement, Deepening U.S.–Kurdistan Ties

The cities of Zakho, in the Kurdistan Region, and Moorhead, Minnesota, have signed a Friendship Agreement that lays the groundwork for closer cultural, educational, and civic collaboration. The agreement reflects a growing effort to connect communities in the Kurdistan Region with counterparts across the United States.

At a ceremony attended by local officials, civil society leaders, and community members, Mr. Guhdar Shekoo, Head of the Zakho Independent Administration, and Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson formalized the partnership. The agreement outlines shared goals in education, culture, governance, and public service, with a strong emphasis on people-to-people exchange.

“This partnership with Moorhead is a proud moment for our city,” said Mr. Shekoo at the signing. “It represents a bridge of friendship and mutual respect between the people of Kurdistan and the United States. We believe in the power of collaboration to shape a better future.”

The Friendship Agreement provides a flexible, non-binding framework for cooperation. Initial areas of focus include student and faculty exchanges, virtual classrooms, language partnerships, and opportunities for cultural programming. Universities, educators, and community organizations in both cities have already expressed interest in supporting these efforts.

The initiative was largely driven by Kurdish-American community members in Minnesota. Moorhead is home to a growing Kurdish-American community, many of whom maintain strong ties to Zakho and the broader Kurdistan Region. Their advocacy and engagement were instrumental in building the foundation for this cross-cultural relationship.

As both cities move forward, the Zakho- Moorhead agreement serves as a model of how local partnerships can contribute to broader U.S.- Kurdistan ties through practical, community-driven engagement. It builds on earlier efforts, including Erbil’s sister city relationship with Nashville, Tennessee, and Ankawa’s partnership with Sterling Heights, Michigan.

## Other KRG News:

- **A major tourism project was announced: [check it out.](#)**
- **Kurdistan’s President and Prime Minister welcome the announcement of a cease-fire.**
- **[Check out the latest article by Yerevan Saeed on the financial pressure on the Kurdistan Region.](#)**

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